

PART 1 OF 2

# A severely burned boy finds hope in Boston

A boy, badly burned by fire, travels from Burundi to Boston in an extraordinary journey of resilience and devotion.

By [Scott Helman](#) April 23, 2015, 11:00 a.m.



Alex Gitungano (left) had little parenting experience when he assumed full-time care of Leo Ikoribitangaza in the summer of 2014. JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF/GLOBE STAFF

**T**HEY WEREN'T STRANGERS, exactly, but they weren't close, either. Not yet. And here they were, stuck together behind a blue door in Room 218 on the

second floor of the Constitution Inn in the Charlestown Navy Yard.

It was early summer of last year. Alex was 25; Leo was 4. They'd come from Burundi in East Africa, unlikely partners on an unlikely journey. Leo, who had suffered horrific burns on his face after falling in a cooking fire at home, was due at [Shriners Hospital in Boston](#) for extensive treatment. Alex was his caretaker. They'd come filled with hope, eager for Leo to finally get advanced care, to embark on their American adventure. Promise, however, soon gave way to profound isolation.

Room 218, which they had booked using donated funds for two weeks, had a couple of beds, a round table with chairs, and a mini-fridge and broken microwave set against a painted cinder-block wall. They relied on food — bread, milk, peanut butter, Barnum's animal crackers, Pringles — from a Tedeschi's around the corner. The vending-machine snacks and ice cream bars remained out of reach, because Alex hadn't figured out US coins. He made tea in the coffee maker.



A Charlestown hotel served as Leo and Alex's first US home. ALEX GITUNGA

As the ninth of 10 siblings from a poor family, Leo was accustomed to eating once a day, gobbling up what he could each time. Now he was eating so much that his belly bulged like an upside-down bowl. Alex had to teach him: We're in America now. People don't eat like that in America. Alex imparted many such lessons, all in Kirundi, their native language. Don't jump on the bed with shoes! Don't touch the TV screen! Don't kick that woman's dog! Don't throw stones at birds! Leo, who came from a remote village, had barely spent time in the Burundian capital, Bujumbura, let alone a city like Boston. He didn't know any better.

Everything rested on Alex's shoulders. Alex cleaned Leo when the boy used the bathroom. Alex chased down the housekeepers when Leo wet the bed night after night. Alex tried to navigate the T using a Boston map included in a gifted copy of *Make Way for Ducklings*. Alex suddenly found himself overwhelmed by the burden. He'd never been a parent. How would he care for this wounded, spunky boy in a place where they didn't know a soul? What was God's plan?

*I can't do this. I can't do this.*

It was quite a thing, what Alex had taken on — putting his life on hold to help a child he'd known a short time, and for no money. His heart was eager, his faith strong. They'd made it to Boston on good will, good fortune, and, Alex believed, divine providence. They expected to stay for maybe six months, but that was up to the doctors. Leo would require several surgeries, with days of recovery in between. When they weren't at Shriners, Alex hoped, they would explore the city and make new friends. He wasn't sure where they'd be sleeping after two weeks.



Alex outside a Christian children's home in Gitega, Burundi. CARLEY SERWAT

Sometimes, after he put Leo to bed, Alex — who stands 5-foot-8, is trim, and keeps his hair short — walked the streets of Charlestown, alone among its forbidding brick and stone buildings. He saw young professionals returning from work and revelers on their way out. More than anything, he craved social contact. He loved people. He had traveled some in Africa and spoke five languages. He aspired to be a man of the world. These people, with their indifferent bustle, seemed a world away. He was struck by how strangers would smile, say hello, and keep walking. The Americans Alex had met in Burundi were some of his closest friends. But they were Christian missionaries, a self-selected group. Here, he felt invisible. They'd left the warm familiarity of home for this?

As low as Alex was, though, it was a wonder he and Leo had made it this far. They were a generation apart and knew different backgrounds, but both had persevered, overcoming long odds to survive childhood. They'd felt the generosity of others and the love of God.

However uncertain their future was in those early days in America, they did have a future to contemplate. And that was something.

THE STORY BEGINS WITH TIM VAN AARDE, a missionary from South Africa, whose chance visit to a rural hospital in early September 2013 catalyzed a marvelous chain reaction of humanity — many hands, each performing a discrete task, working in synergy to save a life. This human chain would transcend continent, language, race, religion, and culture. You'd never believe it if it weren't true.

The 42-year-old van Aarde had been in Burundi since 2008. Backed by two South African churches, he'd spent years training local pastors in the countryside. That day in 2013, he went to the hospital in Makamba, nestled among the mountains of southern Burundi, to see a pastoral student's wife, who had contracted malaria. A nurse approached van Aarde and told him of another patient. "There's someone you ought to meet," she said.

His name was Leonidas Ikoribitangaza. His surname meant "God performs miracles." He was 3 years old. His family lived in a small house with no running water or electricity. His father was involved in a local church, his mother farmed. They lived on beans, corn, sweet potatoes, and other crops they grew on a small plot.



In Burundi, one of the poorest countries on the globe, Leo (in red shirt) lived with his parents and nine siblings. CARLEY SERWAT

One day about a year earlier, Leo had been asleep at home. His mother, according to Alex, went to the hospital with Leo's baby sister. At some point, Leo woke up and joined a brother and sister by the indoor cooking fire, which was built on the ground. Leo's siblings went to play outside. Left alone, the 2-year-old fell and lodged his face between hot cooking stones. Hearing Leo's screams, neighbors pulled him out, but not fast enough. The fire had ravaged his face and head and singed his right arm. His lips, nose, and right eyelid were gone or badly damaged.

The family had no money, so they sold what they could to pay for treatment at the hospital in Makamba. People told Leo's mother, Elvanie Niyonizigiye, to forget about him. "Why are you caring about this child?" they said, according to Alex. "He's already gone." She refused to give up. She stayed with him in the local hospital, where Leo

languished for the better part of a year. It wasn't much of a hospital. The staff had done what they could with painkillers and bandages, but Leo remained at grave risk.

The presence of a *mzungu*, or white person, near Leo's village was not an everyday occurrence. Leo's mom had heard talk of a white pastor — van Aarde — and believed he could be her best hope of getting Leo more advanced care, Alex says. Without intervention, there was a chance Leo might go blind or even die from infection. Elvanie approached van Aarde with Leo on her back, his head covered by a blanket. When she pulled it back, van Aarde was shocked. "I could see the wounds were fairly open, that he had not really received any treatment," he says. Others around them gasped. Van Aarde's colleague, a fellow pastor, turned away. It was too much, seeing a child suffering like this.

Driving to Bujumbura, van Aarde couldn't shake the thought of Leo. He began lining up specialists in the region who could maybe help, and he leaned on a fellow pastor for fundraising assistance. But with van Aarde leaving soon for South Africa, Leo wasn't a project he could fully take on.

Van Aarde connected with Alex, whose full name is Alexis Gitungano, and with Ladd Serwat, a 23-year-old from Idaho. Alex spoke English and enjoyed a good reputation in the missionary community. Ladd and his wife, Carley, also 23, had been working in Burundi, one of the world's poorest countries, for a year. Alex and Ladd, who'd met at Youth for Christ, went together to van Aarde's house, where van Aarde told them Leo's story and showed them photos. Alex and Ladd initially felt overwhelmed by the prospect of helping Leo. It would mean raising a lot of money, traveling with him for treatment, and who knew what else. "I was kind of surprised," Alex says. "Like, why are people calling me to do this? I'm not qualified in all this stuff." Meeting Leo in person, confronting his disfigured face, Alex hesitated. *This is too much.*



Carley and Ladd Serwat, missionaries from Idaho, worked closely with Alex to get Leo to the United States for treatment. CARLEY SERWAT

But it wasn't. Alex and Ladd weren't going to walk away, especially after Leo so defied their expectations. Instead of a sad-faced kid with a broken spirit, they found an exuberant little boy, somersaulting through life. "I knew in my heart," Alex says, "that maybe it was something God wanted me to do." Before long, Alex's compassion, his faith, and his selflessness would be tested in ways he never imagined. All of those traits and more he'd learned as a boy, watching his mother hold their family together through war, genocide, and near starvation. It was quite an education.

**THE DAY ALEX, HIS MOTHER,** and his three sisters fled Burundi, they left nearly everything in the house. A neighbor had just been killed. They feared they'd be next. They packed what clothes and pots they could and caught buses to the border with Zaire, now



the Democratic Republic of Congo, about 15 miles away. There they crammed into a taxi bound for the nearby city of Uvira — refugees with no plan, no real destination.

It was 1993. Alex was 5 years old. That October, Melchior Ndadaye, Burundi's first democratically elected president from the majority Hutu ethnic group, was assassinated by a wing of the military, which was dominated by Tutsis. Alex remembers watching the funeral on TV at a neighbor's house. Burundi was a tinderbox. "You could feel that something was going to happen," he says. Escalating violence between Hutus and Tutsis drew the country into civil war, a precursor to the genocide that would soon rive neighboring Rwanda. Alex doesn't reveal his own ethnic background — "I don't believe in ethnic groups," he says. What he does say is that no one was safe. "People were killing each other, no matter who you were."

When the war broke out, Alex had been living with his mother and sisters in Bujumbura, at the northern tip of Lake Tanganyika. He was the middle of five children; his older brother lived with the family sporadically. Alex's father had other wives and was largely absent. The family had little money. His mother supported them by selling ground-up peanuts and corn, tomatoes, and other goods in the market.



Alex (front row, center) with relatives during a 2001 trip to Rwanda, where his mother lost nearly her entire family to genocide. ALEX GITUNGANNO

As a boy, Alex was active and loved to play, especially soccer. He could be angry and willful, but he was independent, kind, and famously fastidious. Most kids would sit on the ground without regard for their clothes, Alex's mother, Rachelle, says through a translator. Not Alex. He sat on his flip-flops to keep clean. He attended Sunday school at a Free Methodist church. Every night before bed, the family gathered to pray.

Once in Zaire, it was all about survival. They had no money, no livelihood. They depended first on international aid, Alex says, but that was short-lived. His mom sold her clothes to keep her children from starving, as many others did. At one point, their sole sustenance was a soupy solution of Coke mixed with milk and ketchup. "I was very skinny," Alex says. Alex's mother eventually started earning money selling food. They found a new church, their faith growing despite the hardship. Alex taught himself to

make and sell soccer balls, wrapping rope and plastic bags from the trash around pieces of mattress foam. His mom, who was from Rwanda, learned in 1994 that nearly her entire family had been killed by neighbors with machetes. She was shattered. Alex cried for days.

Over three years in Zaire, Alex and his family felt less and less safe. Zaireans resented the refugees, he says. His mother was once pulled off a truck by soldiers to be killed. The driver saved her life by claiming, falsely, that her father was Zairean. She also nearly died of malaria. The threats grew so severe by 1996 that they had to flee back to Burundi. With the roads too dangerous, the only way out was across Lake Tanganyika by boat, at night. They sold everything they had — pencils, silverware, clothes, plates — to raise money for the trip. The night they planned to leave, soldiers prowled the banks of the lake looking for foreigners.

“Are you Burundian?” they asked, shining flashlights in people’s faces. “Are you Rwandan?”

Alex’s mom bowed her head to pray. A soldier pointed the beam at Alex and his family, then continued on. “The heart was beating very fast,” he says.

They boarded a wooden boat. It soon began to sink and returned to shore. Alex and his family were ordered off. They would have to try another night. On their way back home, they came upon a group of young guys with machetes. Alex and his family jumped in the bush to hide. The next night, they tried again. Once on the boat, Alex fell asleep near the edge and almost tumbled into the water. His mother pulled him back. They finally made it across. The morning after they left, they were later told, a death squad came looking for them.

Now back in Burundi, they were refugees once again — with nothing, once again. They stayed briefly with a relative, then moved temporarily into a carpenter’s shop. It was another new beginning. But Alex’s mother possessed a strong will and entrepreneurial spirit. She began to sell tomatoes and onions in a new market, leaving early in the

morning and returning at 6 or 7 p.m. They moved to a small house in another, safer part of Bujumbura. The country was still at war, but things had calmed down. Alex and his sisters returned to school.

“It was like Christ was in my family — my mom,” Alex says. “She gave her life. She worked hard so we can be where we are.” His mom says she had help. “It was God’s miracle,” she says.



Alex's mom, Rachelle. ALEX GITUNGANO

As Alex got older, he developed a love for music and became more active at church. He grew into a father figure. He helped his sisters with school fees when their mom could

not. Even if he came home late, his sister Angele says, he would wake everybody up, ask about their day, and make sure they were OK. “He gives so much of himself to others,” Angele, a 24-year-old university student, says through a translator.

“I got that inheritance from her,” Alex says of his mother. “And that’s what I want to share with other people.”

WHEN MISSIONARIES FIRST found Freddy Uwizeyimana, about 14 years ago, he was a child beggar in a market in northern Burundi. He wore a shroud to obscure his mangled upper body, but his horrendous condition was plain.

Several years earlier, as a 6- or 7-year-old, Freddy had suffered an epileptic seizure and landed in an open cooking fire. He lay in the flames until his grandmother smelled something burning, came inside, and screamed for help. The fire melted away much of Freddy’s face, removing the distinction between his head and neck. His lips and mouth disappeared, leaving his teeth exposed.

In the years afterward, he was rejected as an outcast — possessed by demons, some said. A Canadian missionary who saw him begging arranged treatment by a Russian doctor in Rwanda, who worked on Freddy for five months. Over the next 10 years, Freddy became a Christian, went to school, and learned some English. He’d come a long way, but by 2011 he was in constant pain and needed additional surgery. Simon Guillebaud, a prominent preacher and NGO leader in Burundi, raised some \$10,000 for Freddy’s care through friends and supporters worldwide. “His indomitable spirit is simply inspiring,” Guillebaud wrote of Freddy in his e-mail appeal.

Alex, meanwhile, had enrolled at Hope Africa University in Bujumbura to study clinical and social psychology. He’d also been taking after his mother — building homes for people, caring for a dying man from Rwanda who had no family, cleaning his church on Fridays. Sometimes people called him pastor. The title made him uncomfortable. A friend of Alex’s in Youth for Christ, who worked closely with Guillebaud, told Alex about Freddy. They needed an English speaker to volunteer to accompany Freddy to Kenya for

treatment. Alex's English, after all the time he'd spent with foreign missionaries, was pretty good.

Alex was taken aback by Freddy's picture. He said he would think about it. He went home to talk and pray with his family. The answer came to him quickly. He would do it. "God gave me a heart of compassion," he says. "I didn't know that I had that heart." When he first met Freddy in person, at a hospital in Bujumbura, he was afraid. "Why did I accept to do this?" he asked himself. As they got to know each other, his reservations faded.



Before helping Leo, Alex aided another burn victim, Freddy Uwizeyimana, shown getting medical care in Rwanda with Alex.  
ALEX GITUNGANO

He and Freddy traveled to Kenya together in the summer of 2011, the first time either had been on an airplane. The operation was supposed to take four hours. It lasted 12. Doctors took skin grafts from Freddy's leg. They did facial reconstruction. They built new lips. They removed tension from his gnarled fingers. While he waited, Alex wanted to do something to support Freddy, so he fasted. "I want to suffer as he's suffering," he decided. A couple months later, Alex took Freddy to Rwanda to get Freddy's skin staples removed. On subsequent breaks from college, Alex traveled with Freddy to Kenya a second time for more surgery, and then a third. He told only close friends and family what he was doing.

Alex cleaned saliva from the scarf that Freddy used to cover his face. He slept next to him on the bed, to better care for him. All the while, he tried to build Freddy's faith in God. Alex helped Freddy over the course of nearly all of his college career. In between, he interned at a psychiatric hospital and wrote a 90-page thesis in French on the integration of medical, social, and psychological therapies. He finished college in June 2013.

Working with Freddy was a purely volunteer role — Alex was not paid beyond travel and living expenses. He treated it like a rolling internship, a chance to practice his counseling. Freddy was embarrassed at his appearance. He didn't want anyone to look at him. Alex encouraged him to feel proud of who he was. "You look nice," Alex would say. "Don't hide yourself."

Today, Freddy, now in his late 20s, no longer covers his mouth. His life has improved, he says through a translator. He is catching up on his studies after missing many years of school, wants to be a doctor, and yearns to train outside of Burundi. He hopes to help others like he was helped. Alex is like a brother, Freddy says. No one else would have done for him what Alex did.

After Alex graduated, and after his work with Freddy concluded, he had a hard time finding a job. He continued volunteering, helping out at a couple Christian schools. He wanted to support his family and to start a family of his own. He also hoped to return to school for counseling. As 2013 went on, he was searching for a purpose.

THE BUS RIDE FROM BURUNDI to Uganda was 17 hours. Leo sat on Ladd Serwat's lap trying to sleep. But sleeping was hard. Without a right eyelid, he couldn't shut the world out. Sitting there, as the hours passed, watching this 3-year-old kid struggle to simply rest, Ladd resolved: They wouldn't stop until Leo was better. There was no way.

This was in March 2014. Alex had found his purpose: Leo. Alex, Ladd, and Carley Serwat had quickly become Leo's surrogate parents. On this bus ride, Ladd was accompanying Leo and Leo's mom to a Ugandan hospital, where a doctor planned to repair Leo's

damaged eye. The primary goal, in Uganda and in Rwanda — where Alex had taken Leo for treatment a few months earlier — was to save Leo’s vision.



Leo’s parents say it’s sad he’s so far away, but they’re thankful for the care he’s receiving. JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF/GLOBE STAFF

Ladd and Carley, meanwhile, had been sharing — through e-mails, blog posts, and Facebook status updates — Leo’s story with their friends, family, and faith community back home. Where Leo once had one *mzungu* on his side in Tim van Aarde, now he had an army of them, everyone captivated by this dynamic village boy undeterred by pain and suffering.

The trip to Uganda ultimately proved disappointing. The hospital staff were difficult to communicate with and discharged them soon after surgery, Ladd says. Leo’s face was not healing well; he would develop another infection when he came home. He also got malaria. The best thing that happened during their time in Uganda had nothing to do with Uganda: They got a message from Peter Glanville.



Glanville, who was 34 and living in Spokane, Washington, knew Ladd and Carley from church. He'd been following their updates from afar, a bit enviously. He'd spent time in Africa, too, and part of him longed to be back there. When he saw the photos of Leo, he says, he began weeping uncontrollably. "Seeing Leo just crushed me," Glanville says.

"I'm sure you are fully aware of this," he wrote to Carley on March 14, 2014, "but there are groups that regularly get kids to the U.S. for surgeries. Let me know if you want information."

"Wow that is amazing!!!" Carley wrote back. "Let me talk to Ladd and see what he thinks!"

At first, the prospect of bringing Leo to America seemed fanciful to Alex, Ladd, and Carley. Day by day, as their commitment to Leo grew, and as it became clear Uganda had been a failure, they began to wonder: Maybe Alex and Leo really could go to America together.



Leo and Alex left Burundi with Ladd and Carley Serwat, the Idaho missionaries. CARLEY SERWAT

It was Glanville who had first mentioned Shriners, the fraternal organization that operates 22 medical centers in North America. Ever since his own son had received treatment in the Shriners system, Glanville had been impressed with its care and mission of treating needy kids for free. Over their 93 years, Shriners hospitals have treated more than 1 million children from across the world.

Very early one morning, Glanville rang up Shriners Hospital in Boston, which, he'd learned, specialized in burn care. He told a nurse about Leo's case. He soon followed up with more details and photos. Glanville, who was studying to be a physician's assistant, became the liaison between Ladd, Carley, and Alex in Burundi and Shriners in Boston, often stepping out of class to take calls on his cellphone.

He struggled, as Ladd and Carley did, with the enormity of what they were attempting. “Are we really supposed to do this?” he thought. Glanville also wrestled, as many others helping Leo would, with a more fundamental moral question: What did it mean to pluck one kid out of Africa when the need was so vast? But what would it mean if they didn’t? What would happen to him? They pressed on — Ladd, Carley, and Alex in Burundi, and Glanville in Spokane. On April 23, 2014, a surgeon and care coordinator from Shriners signed a letter to US authorities in Burundi saying Leo had been accepted for “immediate care.” Now they just had to get Leo to Boston.

Ladd and Carley’s church back home in Hayden, Idaho, had been asking members to pray for Leo. The Anthem Friends congregation wanted to do more, says Dave Scammell, 37, who oversees its mission and community initiatives. When Ladd and Carley decided to push to get Leo to the United States, Scammell says, Anthem was ready to support them, spiritually and financially. Here was a way to live out Jesus’s message, he says. “This feels like what he taught.”

Thousands of dollars came in, much of it hand-delivered to Ladd and Carley by church members who traveled to Burundi, and by Scammell himself, who at one point met Ladd in India, where the church had another project. “It’s amazing what can happen when a group of people share a burden,” Glanville says.

In the spring of 2014, Ladd and Alex began preparing the paperwork for Alex and Leo to travel to the United States — the visas, the power of attorney Alex needed to act on Leo’s behalf, the medical recommendations from doctors and personal testaments from friends. They discovered that bringing Leo with them was fruitful. Pity opened doors. They got it all done in just a couple of months, culminating in a tense but ultimately successful visit to the US Embassy in Bujumbura.

Alex’s family eagerly awaited news of whether he and Leo had been granted visas. His mother fasted. When Alex finally got home, at the end of the day, he couldn’t resist messing with them. He walked in the house, sat down, and put his hands on his head,

trying to look morose. “Alex, tell me what happened,” his mother said. Alex couldn’t keep a straight face. As he began to smile, everyone knew.

Alex was excited. Not only would Leo get the best possible care in the United States, going to America would also be a great experience for both of them. His heart was heavy, though, because he felt guilty not providing for his family. “I was worrying — ‘I’m going to the United States. I’m not doing anything. Just a volunteer job,’ ” he says. And yet he felt this calling from God to be Leo’s “feet washer,” following the example of Jesus.

When it was time to leave, on June 28, 2014, Alex prayed with his mother in his room before saying a tearful goodbye. Leo’s parents came to the Bujumbura airport. It was a moment of both sadness and promise, Leo’s father, Leonidas Niyongabo, says through a translator. Leo was going far away, but with Alex, someone they trusted deeply, and for the best reason.



Leo cried after parting with his parents at an airport in Burundi in June 2014. CARLEY SERWAT

Ladd and Carley planned to fly with Alex and Leo to Ethiopia, where they'd go separate ways — Alex and Leo to the United States, Ladd and Carley to Europe. Leo, wearing a striped polo, long khaki shorts, and brown shoes, cried when they parted with his mom and dad. “We’re pulling him away from his parents, and there’s this look of panic, like, ‘Those are my parents, and they are walking in the other direction!’ ” Carley says.

From that moment, Leo clung to Alex and didn’t let go. One chapter was ending, another had begun. They were going to America.



Leo before his cooking fire accident. ALEX GITUNGANNO

WHEN THEY SPLIT IN ETHIOPIA, Ladd and Carley say, they felt triumphant but also apprehensive. They'd made it this far — this was *really* happening — but Alex and Leo's journey had just started.

Alex and Leo flew on to Rome, then to Washington, D.C., and then to Logan Airport. In his haste, Alex had forgotten the backpack full of toys they'd bought for Leo. He gave Leo crayons and paper on the plane instead, but Leo didn't know what to do with them. He'd never tried to write anything. They watched cartoons and movies. Leo ate a lot.

They landed in Boston on the afternoon of Sunday, June 29. Alex had \$1,000 in his pocket. Dina Chu, a Newton woman whose cousin had known Ladd and Carley from church, volunteered to pick them up at Logan. Chu, then 59, had read up on Burundi and bought US and Burundian flags near Faneuil Hall. She and her husband found Alex and Leo near the baggage carousel in Terminal E. Alex gave them big hugs.

Chu drove them to Charlestown, helped them settle in at the Constitution Inn, and took them for chicken, rice, and beans at a nearby cafe. Leo shoveled the food in like it would disappear, she remembers. The next day, Chu took them to Shriners to get oriented. Leo was expected to have his first surgery within a couple weeks, with several more to follow over the coming months.

Misgivings, though, began to creep in. The excitement Alex felt at being in America was tempered by homesickness and doubt. He started to worry about his life, about the sacrifice he was making.

It didn't help that friends were getting married and doing things twentysomethings typically did. He read their Facebook posts with envy. "I don't know where I'm going. I don't know what my future is going to be," he says. "I left my family. I left everyone."

"God, help me," Alex prayed. "Because this is hard."

Then one morning, God's answer came. The voice told him: By helping Leo, you're praising me.

"Surrender your life to me and I will take care of you," Alex heard God say. "Just trust me."

Trust was the only choice Alex had. He hoped it would be enough.

[PART 2: Alex and Leo try to build a life in Boston as Leo's surgeries begin and new challenges come.](#)

Scott Helman is a Globe Magazine staff writer. E-mail him at [scott.helman@globe.com](mailto:scott.helman@globe.com) and follow him on Twitter [@swhelman](https://twitter.com/swhelman).

Show comments

---

©2022 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC