

Briggs accomplishes Air Force dream

By JACOB MARROCCO

James A. Briggs Jr. has faced his share of adversity in accomplishing his dream of graduating from the Air Force Academy.

Before having to adjust to a hybrid learning model as the COVID-19 pandemic struck last March, Briggs thought his visions of following in his grandfather's footsteps might be over. While taking part in basic training, he broke his ankle during a run and believed it could be a career-ending injury.

Instead, he affixed a

black boot cast to his leg and took part in every other facet of basic training outside of running. His mother, Deborah Zolkos, told the Sun Rise that Briggs would perform more pushups or another grueling task while others were jogging in the Colorado heat.

It's his dream, and he was going to fight through the pain required to see it through.

"He really thought they were going to send him home and that was the end," Zolkos said. "The only thing he couldn't do

was run. Any time they were running he'd get to do pushups or something else. He went through that, too, so he's a pretty resilient kid. The weather and terrain out there is tough – one minute it's snowing, the next time it's 80. He was out there when it was hot, too."

Briggs grew up in Johnston, graduating from the high school before heading to the Air National Guard. He was named U.S. Sen. Jack Reed's primary nominee when applying to the Air Force Academy, the same mili-

tary branch where his grandfather served. The acceptance rate teeters on single-digits, but "he never gave up."

"[He] was very involved with the Police Explorers through Johnston, he did the civil air patrol as well when he was in high school," Zolkos said. "When he got in to the academy, he just found [out] recently he got in to pilot school ... he hasn't been assigned a base yet, but he'll be going to pilot school to be a pilot."



JAMES A. BRIGGS JR.

■ BRIGGS - PAGE 11



Leading the charge

Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena helped give vaccinations this past Monday during a clinic at the Citizens Bank campus. For more photos, turn to page 6. (Sun Rise photo)

Race for Matt and Grace Golf Tournament set for Aug. 20

By SUN RISE STAFF

The fourth annual Race for Matt and Grace Golf Tournament is set for Aug. 20 at the Connecticut National Golf Course.

The annual event helps benefit both the Race for Matt and Grace and Friedrich's Ataxia Research Alliance, or FARA. The cost per player is \$125, which includes 18 holes of golf, \$10 in raffle tickets and souvenirs. Registration begins at noon and the tournament begins at 1. Lunch is served and food is available all day long on the course.

Tee signs are available to honor loved ones for \$50, while

sponsorship flags at \$75 apiece. Those interested in becoming a major sponsor can do so for \$500. If you would like to sign up for any of those options, contact David Interlini (401-255-0178, dinterlini@gmail.com), Ryan Sukaskas (401-413-5494, ryansukaskas@gmail.com) or Vincent Vecchione (401-578-6649, vinvec11@gmail.com).

Players must register by Aug. 1 to secure their spot, and payments must be received by that same deadline. Folks may register as an individual or a foursome, and checks may be made payable to "Race for Matt and Grace," with payment remitted to Irene Veator, 47 Beaver Dam Road, Bridgewater, MA, 02324.

Rep. Fellela awards legislative grant to JHS music department

By PETE FONTAINE

Rep. Deborah A. Fellela may be an East Providence High School alum, but she has taken tremendous pride in promoting and helping countless Johnstonians since she was first elected to the District 43 House seat back in 2006.

That's especially true when it comes to Johnston High School's national award-winning music department, which Fellela last week presented with a \$1,000 Rhode Island House of Representatives legisla-

tive grant check.

"I am always happy to support the Music Department whenever I can," Fellela said after the check presentation inside the JHS Janice D. Mele Memorial Library. "Mr. [Ronald] Lamoureux does an extremely great job teaching the students and building their supply of instruments."

Fellela, who serves on three different House committees and is the senior deputy majority leader, added: "I noticed the Music Department recently had a mattress

fundraiser and Ron told me that did well. For me, I feel strongly that our arts are important to the community and helps these students further with their endeavors."

For the record, the JHS Music Department became the first group of its kind in Rhode Island to enlist the services of Custom Fundraising Solutions (CFS) and back in April held its fourth and most successful Mattress Sale that generated \$3,000 that Lamoureux – as well as Fellela

■ GRANT - PAGE 12



DYNAMIC DONATION: Johnston state Rep. Deborah A. "Deb" Fellela presents JHS Music Department Chairman Ronald Lamoureux a state legislative grant check for \$1,000 that will help purchase more world-class equipment. Looking on are Dr. Bernard DiLullo, superintendent of Schools; JHS Choral Director Matt Gingras; and Dr. Donna M. Pennacchia, JHS principal. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

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Really, it was in-person

While like so much this year, the Rhode Island Academic Decathlon competition was held virtually. That didn't stop Johnston that fielded a team and once again finished in the top tier of schools. But when it came to scholarship awards to senior gold medalists, House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi put aside the Zoom meetings and invited recipients to the Veterans Auditorium to make the presentations in person Tuesday afternoon. He is pictured here with Sarah Monahan, who won a gold medal in music and plans to attend New York University, Rep. Deborah Fellela and Audry Mahony who won gold medals in science and social science and will be attending Smith College. (Sun Rise photo)



BIRDS OF A FEATHER: The Winsor Hill Elementary fifth-graders kicked off their flamingo fundraiser at the Johnston Police Station once Chief Joseph Razza asked to participate. Pictured, from left, are Brody Dutilly, Corey Ogden, Jordan D'Elia, Enzo Pistacchio, Matthew Duquette-Siswick, Mia Rubino, Brea Rianna, Sophia Rubino, Ella Farrell and Briana Lapati. (Submitted photo)

Fifth-graders' flamingos flaunt Johnston

Johnston, which has recently been home to trotting turkeys and a stray steer, is now being flocked by flamingos.

These flamingos haven't been blown off course or escaped from Roger Williams Park Zoo. They're the pink plastic lawn ornaments made famous during the 1950s and '60s, and they've been placed around town by the fifth-grade class at Winsor Hill Elementary.

With the challenges they've faced during the pandemic, the students are looking to have fun and make some memories during their final year at the school. They're also trying to raise funds for end of year activities and elementary school graduation festivities.

Their fundraiser involves placing more than a dozen plastic flamingos in someone's front yard, with a sign telling the surprised resident that they've been "flocked."

Attached to one of the flamingos is a letter explaining that the resident was flocked by a friend. The "flamboyance" – the technical name for a group of flamingoes – will stay put for 72 hours until they are removed by the students.

To flock a friend during the fundraiser, a \$10 dollar donation is requested along with the name and address of the resident to be flocked. The students will then do their best to transport the flock to that home discreetly for a surprise.

Attached to one of the flamingos is a letter explaining that the home has been nominated for "flocking." Those that have been flocked can then join in the fun by making a donation of \$10 for someone else to be flocked after the 72-hour period. For \$15, an emergency "de-flock" can be requested and the flamingoes will be moved to another home as soon as

possible.

While these Winsor Wizards hope that their fundraiser will ruffle some feathers all in the name of fun, they will only flock private property. The flamingoes will also only migrate in Johnston and are not allowed to flock on public property or apartment complexes.

The students also ask that participants check with those they intend to flock to be sure there won't be any hard feelings. They also hope that the birds will not be damaged or vandalized. The students also created the clever hashtag #wizardflock, with the hopes that people will post pictures of the flocks in their yards and help to spread word of the fun.

To make arrangements to support the fifth grade fundraiser, contact Justine Dutilly at 401-641-1225. The students' plan is to keep the fundraiser going as long as there is continued interest.



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VP's whirlwind visit to RI

TALKING POLITICS



by
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DONNIS

Although Vice President Kamala Harris had a whirlwind visit to Rhode Island last week, she spent a lot more time with locals than predecessors Mike Pence and Joe Biden when they were here, respectively, in 2017 and 2016.

The way that Harris directed the conversation back to her administration's ambitious spending plans was predictable. When Philip Trevvett of the Urban Greens food co-op talked about filling the void of a food desert, Harris pivoted to the importance of public transit. When women small business owners talked about the challenge of keeping things going during the pandemic, the VP made her case for a more expansive definition of infrastructure: "I define infrastructure – one of my definitions – is the things you just need to get where you need to go," she said during the conversation at District Hall at the Wexford Building. "So let's talk about why child care is part of that. For example, it is our intention to say that no working family should pay more than 7 percent of their income in child care. So you don't have to put it on your credit card."

Of course, the people who Harris and Biden need to win over to shift priorities are in DC, not RI. Yet the VP's visit was noteworthy in other ways, and not just because she's a beacon for women and people of color. In the past, party big wigs/fundraisers demanded home visits by VIPs stopping in RI. This time around, there was no fundraising element and Harris spent the bulk of her time with regular Rhode Islanders.

McKee distances himself from Trump co-chair

Gerald Zarrella, who co-chaired former President Trump's reelection campaign in Rhode Island last year, was set to stage a post-work fundraiser at his Exeter home on Wednesday,

May 12, for Democratic Gov. Dan McKee. ("We are looking forward to a beautiful (and dry) evening outside at the barn on Gerald's Farm," according to an invite. Fellow developer Thomas Santilli was co-hosting.) Those on the invite list included former Cranston Mayor Allan Fung, members of the Tasca family, and a number of state lawmakers. Zarrella, a Democrat-turned-Republican, has a colorful record in Rhode Island. The event was scrapped following a request from McKee, who calls Trump dishonest, divisive and a threat to American democracy.

What the people say

Talking Politics obtained a copy of the results from a respected local pollster in a survey done for organized labor.

Some highlights:

- * Almost 86 percent of respondents support amending the state Constitution to give students the right to an adequate public education.

- * As of March, 38.6 percent of respondents said the state is going in the right direction, compared with 34.9 percent for wrong direction. Back in April 2019, the right track/wrong track was 42.1/44.6.

- * The poll shows strong support for raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour over several years, and for paying a \$15 hourly wage to frontline workers caring for the developmentally disabled and elderly nursing home patients.

- * More than 70 percent favor reducing Rhode Island's reliance on fossil fuels by 2050.

More than 80 percent support using incentives and tax breaks to attract new businesses and help existing businesses expand.

- * Almost 80 percent back banning guns at schools, except for police.

- * On a charter school moratorium until 2024, 36.9 percent strong support that, 23.4 percent are somewhat supportive, 14.3 percent are somewhat opposed, and 16.9 percent strongly oppose.

- * The General Assembly's approval/disapproval is 41/38.

- * Almost 47 percent say they never listen to political talk radio, while about 37 percent listen sometimes, and 16.6 percent a lot.

Fox's speaking appearance

Former Rhode Island House Speaker Gordon Fox has kept a low public profile since getting out of prison a few years ago. (In 2015, Fox was sentenced to three years in prison after being convicted of bribery, wire fraud and tax evasion.) Coming up on May 17, Fox will deliver an invitation-only Zoom presentation, entitled, "Ethical Lapses: Learning From My Mistakes." The program is being presented by the State Legislative Leaders Foundation.

Superman update

Don't read too much into this, since there may not be much there. However, a public records request by The Public's Radio shows that Ganesan "Dr Vish" Visvabharathy of Hawthorne Development

Corp. in Chicago has been communicating with the Commerce Corporation about the Superman Building in Providence. I got about 30 pages of heavily redacted emails between the two parties, all from early to mid-April. Visvabharathy, whose company was denied when it tried doing a project in Woonsocket a few years ago, declined comment when recently contacted. Whether this amounts to anything more than an initial inquiry about the Superman Building remains to be seen.

Taxing matters

As governor, Gina Raimondo largely prioritized holding the line against raising taxes on upper-income Rhode Islanders and businesses. Now, as U.S. Commerce secretary, she's part of an administration that wants corporations and wealthy Americans to pay more for some of the administration's initiatives.

In an interview during her day spent with VP Harris, I asked Raimondo how she reconciled those two things. Her response: "Well, as I always said as governor, as a state, it's different, because I had to be competitive with neighboring states. And I always also said at a federal level I was in favor of higher taxes, and I am now. Especially corporate income taxes. Last year, there were almost 100 very large, multi-multi-billion dollar very profitable American companies that paid no taxes because of certain loopholes. That's an unfair

system that's broken, if you have so many companies not paying anything in taxes."

The persistence of domestic violence

While most major categories of crime have declined significantly since the early 1990s, domestic violence remains a widespread problem. Don't miss my colleague Antonia Ayres-Brown's two-part look at the issue, available at thepublicsradio.org, examining the increased demand for support services during the pandemic and a survivor's story of, as she put it, "becoming whole again."

Got deficits?

The scale of the Biden administration's spending plans has sent "Meet the Press" and other shows running for clips of Ronald Reagan decrying the federal government and its various social and spending initiatives. So it may come as a surprise to some to learn that Reagan presided over an increase in federal spending and debt.

As Daniel Yergen and Joseph Stanislaw wrote for PBS.org in 1998, "David Stockman, Reagan's first director of the Office of Management and Budget, left the administration dejected, disillusioned with supply-side economics, and chastened by the realities of the political process. Failure to achieve fiscal-policy change, he argued, was a clear vindication of the 'triumph of politics' – of entitlements over austerity,

and of the enduring pork-barrel tradition of American legislation over any cold economic logic. 'I joined the Reagan Revolution as a radical ideologue,' he wrote. 'I learned the traumatic lesson that no such revolution is possible.' The triumph of politics and what Stockman called the 'fiscal error' that went with it spawned a new monster, which would come to occupy center stage in policy debate: the deficit and the federal debt. Between the beginning and the end of the Reagan presidency, the annual deficit almost tripled. So did the gross national debt – from \$995 billion to \$2.9 trillion. Or, as Reagan and Bush administration official Richard Darman put it, 'In the Reagan years, more federal debt was added than in the entire prior history of the United States.'"

Welcome, Jeremy!

Jeremy Bernfeld will be starting later this month as the investigative editor at The Public's Radio, deepening the station's capacity for investigative reporting. I was on the search committee, so take it from me: Jeremy is a great guy with an impressive background – including being the lead editor on a multi-state project, Guns and America – and I'm excited about working with him.

Ian Donnis can be reached at idonnis@ripr.org. Follow him on Twitter (@IanDon). For a longer version of this column, see thepublicsradio.org.

Kindergarten Registration is now open!

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Johnston High School announces third quarter honor roll

The following students achieved honors at Johnston High School for the third quarter.

Grade 12

High Honors

Kayla Aquilante, Joyce Armstrong, Gabriella Athaide, Kaylee Atkinson, Ian Michael Cabrera, Isabella Carbone, Nicholas Carlino, Alex Cavanaugh, Grace Centracchio, Patricia China, Trista Clark, Jessica Council, Audry Mahony, Vanessa Melgar, Giuliana Melise, Jessica Mercado Anez, Bailey Morin, Olaitan Olagundoye, Derek Papa, Nicholas Petrillo, Melanie Privitera, Hannah Reedy, Rafael Rivera, Justin Salvatore, Katelyn Simeone, Andrea Solorzano, Skyler Stone, Grace Thomas, Caitlynn Zinni

First Honors

Tori Antunes, Talia Conti, Nicholas Cronan, Maxwell El Hage, Melissa Garofalo, Matthew Hassell, Caleb Lee, Stephanie Lindo, Kaitlyn Little, Isabelle Marciano, Brooke Marcotte, Ashley Mendoza, Gabrielle Nunez, Ava Pastore, Sean Reth, Brynn Roche, Hailey Thomas, Melanie Vessella, James Ward

Second Honors

Lovely Adeko, Ryan Allen, Kevin Almeida, Elias Badway, Sarah Bandoma, Sabastian Brooks, Sophie Cardullo, Orlando Chavez, Abigail Clesias, Stefania Cogan, Jeremy Council, Jazelyn Couture, Diana DeCosta, Scott Ferreira, Cody Giroux, Laila Harrington, Michael Hassell, Hao He, Jennifer Hutchings, Justine Jackson, Shahmeer Jamil, Irissa Jimenez, Adam Klein, Theodore Leomensah, Jacob Mainey, Gregory Manni, Logan Melo, Joel Menezes, Sarah Monahan, Michael Morris, Lilli Mota, Michael Mousseau, Iyman Musa, Valery Nacif, Joyce Nsalambi, Kylie Paliotta, Tara Paliotta, Simeon Paquette, Sofia Paris, Antonio Patrone, Jonathan Pineda, Morgan Pouliot, Nicholas Reagan, Madeline Reyes, Kevin Saker, Zachary Simonelli, Gabriella Thomas, Tori Viau, Landen Vincent, Thomas Zednik

Third Honors

Alisha Biswas,

Evan Buratczuk, Jonas Chuk, Avah DeOliveira, Raffaele Florio, Johnatan Lopez, Givonni Monteiro, Anthony Petronelli, Dillon Stubbs, Olivia Tillson, Jhonny Valdez

Grade 11

High Honors

Mohammed Abaherah, Joseph Acciardo, Benjamin Anicelli, Ashlyn Banno, Janet Clements, Rebecca Clements, Gloriana Crichlow, Kelly Dargy, Courtney Dias, Jullia Droukas, Gezelle Fernandez, Dominique Ferrazzano, Victor Fragoso, Mackenzie Hanna, Charlene Hohlmaier, Emily Iannuccilli, Isabella Johnson-Viola, Savhanna Larivee, Cassie Magnone, Ava Palma, Alyssa Pascale, Emily Patenaude, Allan Pineda, Shannon Pistocco, Candace Raposo, Kasem Sasa, Lily Scuncio, Joseph Thomas, Cameron Tum, Jacqueline Urizar, Hailey Weedon

First Honors

Abigail Andres, Alyson DeLaRoca, Alexia Evangelista, Nicholas Harrington, Rachel Ixcotoyac, Faith Khang, Milana Melvin, Manee Men, Carlos Monteiro, Jenna Poland, Malakai Quinones, Lexianna Santos, Patrick Waldron, Danielle Warren

Second Honors

Amelia Akkaoui, Aliza Almonte, Alana Aucune, Courtni Beaulieu, Victoria Butler, Morgan Carrier, Elyssa Collins, Carprece Daigle, Charley Davis, Rudy Estrada, Jennelle Fernandez, Maya Ferreira, Joseph Forte, Jose Gonzalez, Felix Guilloty, Shannon Hartley, John Lapinski, Christopher LaPlante, Ayesha Laredo, Ayden Martins, Cameron Mattson, Alicia McCoy, Samuel McLellan, Jeremy Melise, Desiree Morales, Jose Noriega, Edgar Pacheco-Ortiz, Iris Perez, Kelsey Phouthakoun, Joshua Ramos Ortiz, Sophia Ribezzo, Raleigh Richard, Denise Robinson, Katie Rodriguez, Giana Ruotolo, Ryan Schino, Julia Sidoti, Joseph Silvia, Jared Trotter, Kaylee Vanstone, Michael Vita, Djocaelle Volcy, Victoria Winsor

Third Honors

Phillip Costantini,

Sarah Gasbarro, Alexander Quesada, Christopher Ragosta, Abigail Salas, Jeremy Urena, Victoria Venditelli, Joseph Vento

Grade 10

High Honors

Allison Benoit, Gianna Brodeur, Hailey Brown, Melanie Carraro, Dariana Carrascoza, Michael Cepeda, Vincent Chan, Charles Curci, Willson El Hage, James Guilmette, Lauren Hill, Emma Homenick, Kyle Iannuccillo, Siera Jeetan, Emily Klein, Talia Laflamme, Elana Marfeo-Bellini, Ariana Medeiros, Ava Melo, Jaylen Molina, Ayomide Olagundoye, Lilian Oliva Garcia, Isabella Ragosta, Steffi Rotella, Derek Salvatore, Makayla Scuncio, Athena Sin, Alejandra Torres Morales, Jackson Troxell, Cameron Vanstone, Kylie Viveiros, Nathen Zalisk, Catrina Zinni

First Honors

Enajiah De La Cruz, Antonio DeFalco, Emily Feinstein, Susana Huezo, Gavin LapanBrayall, Maylin McAteer, Jacob Muller, Natalia Munoz, Preston Penn, Joshua Philbrick, Juliana Pires, Nicholas Rianna, Dylan Robbins, Phoenix Russell, Marlon Soto, Matthew Sou

Second Honors

Ferlandi Aguilar Lopez, Emily Anderson, Hannah Calabro, Samuel Cambranes, Kylie Caroselli, Haley Connors, Juliana Correia, Yohani Cortez, Madison Dacosta, Armando DeCosta, Samantha DiMaio, Briana Dominique, Linda Echeverria, Nicholas Flanagan, John Ford, Ashley Galeas, Stanley Garcia, Valeria Gomez, Brandon Hall, Aliyah Hunt, Jada Irons, Michelina Irons, Sarah Karim, Hendria Konah, Fujiy Kue, Aiden Lariviere, Genesis Luna-Olivo, Mouhamedou Marone, Dylan Martins, Dylan Moore, Elijah Odhiambo, McKayla Osinger, Natalie Packer, Emily Pistocco, Anthony Rini, Justin Rogala, Janzel Roquez, Caitlyn Savard, Shane Simeone, Sheyla Soto, Parker Sylvia, Nicolas Viau, William Vizcaino

Third Honors

Sebastian Aleman, Mark Brouwer,

Stephanie Bruno, Evan Correia, Dianna Droukas, Jake Hicks, Kenneth Privitera

Grade 9

High Honors

Kevin Biscelli, Trinity Blondin, Macenzie Budenhagen, Georgiana Cardullo, Kyomi Chiang Gonzalez, Sofia China, Elise Connors, Alexia DiLorenzo, Cameron Ferrera, Lucio La Terra Bellina, Nina Lautieri, Samantha Marcotte, Peyton McClish, Eliyahna Negron, Sebastian Orozco, Lana Salalmone, Raylin Santos, Jacob Spinella, Carl Taglianetti, Branden Testa, Jayden Testa

First Honors

Lolaoluwa Alarapon, Logan Brennan, Jael Cea, Makaila Fosu, Serenity Gonzalez, Riley Guenette, Jasmin Guerrero, Gianna Halliwell, Syani Jimenez, Karen Lastor Rojas, Chelsea Maranhao, Lexie Palma, Kaylee Poole, Diana Rosales, Lena Torti

Second Honors

Santiago Aguilar, Aubree Allen, Jenna Aucune, Ryan Audino, Isabella Barrett, Jacob Carr, Michael Chavier, Raymond Cimino, Christopher Civetti, Devin DelSanto, Ennelie Diaz, Yasmin Elias, Landon Faucher, Alex Fedorchuk, Dylan Guernon, Jonathan Guilmette, Logan Hemstreet, Ariana Iasimone, Hannah Kelly, Santiago Luna, Isabella Maggiacomo, Jethro Mensah, Gabriela Mercado, Brendon Norris, Davian Nunez, Gregory Panarello, Evin Paquette, Sophia Pereira, Alessandra Pesare, Xavier Pol, Hailee Quinn, Donavin Quinones, Michelle Reinos, Ariana Rivera, Jahaziel Rodriguez, Shanna Scopelliti, Andrew Sia, Christian Sonner, Ariana Torres Morales, NeAri Vasquez, Arianna Velasquez

Third Honors

Willow Andrews, Elias Archila Harrison, Kalina Bonetti, Emily Buddenhagen, Yasleiny Campos, Evan Correia, Landon Costello, Tru Crowl, Gabriel Daya, John DeRensis, Omar Grullon, Gabriella Marandola, Kameron Martins, Briston Morris Wise, James Pastore, Michael Perugino, Yandery Rodriguez, Joshua Sanford, Shylah Soto, Ava Waterman

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Panthers doing their part

The town of Johnston, in conjunction with Johnston High School, held a vaccination clinic for students 16 to 18 years old. Members of the Johnston School Committee, Mayor Polisena and Johnston police officers and firefighters were on hand to either administer vaccinations or observe the day's proceedings. Volunteers from JHS even assisted those who signed up if they had any questions. (Sun Rise photos)



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Banking on a shot

Employees at the Citizens Bank campus in Johnston were able to get their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine during a clinic held by the town on Monday morning. Just next to the cafeteria, workers could have a meal and then stop by for their inoculation. Mayor Joseph Polisenia told the Sun Rise the clinic was running smoothly, and most folks were motivated by trying to keep others safe. Johnston firefighters and police officers, along with Polisenia himself, administered the shots. *(Sun Rise photos)*



The Copacetics to give Askew a jolt of ska

By ROB DUGUAY



The Copacetics

We all could use some positivity these days, and there's really no more positive sounding style of music than ska. Recently on the internet, I saw a meme that described the feeling the genre brings as "when you're in your early teens and you get to order mozzarella sticks as an appetizer."

For anyone who has had that delicious experience, they'll probably agree that it's a good analogy. The premier ska act in Rhode Island is The Copacetics, based out of Providence, and they've been bringing this distinct vibe to numerous stages for over a decade.

On May 15, they'll be performing on the block adjacent to Askew at 150 Chestnut St. in their home city, with the show kicking off at 6 p.m.

I recently has a talk with lead vocalist and trombonist Matt Di Chiara, who is also a Cranston native, about how he's passed the time during the COVID-19 pandemic, a documentary the band got to be a part of, Askew providing a safe environment for live music, and plans for the rest of the year.

ROB DUGUAY: I've asked a lot of musicians this over the past few months, but when COVID-19 shut everything down, what have you been doing to pass the time without the opportunity to play shows?

MATT DI CHIARA: Well, it's been a vast variety of stuff. As a band, we weren't able to get together to perform because of the lockdowns and stuff. We're a seven-piece band and we didn't get back together until this past February as people began to get vaccinated and tested on a regular basis. Even then, we were still not pushing it. One or two of us would get together to work on vocals, horns or what-not, but for the most part for myself I really took the opportunity to get a lot of yard work done at the house I've built.

I also had a bunch of stuff around the house that I needed to organize, so for the first time in probably about 10 years I found myself with no music to do. Instead, I focused on my other hobbies, whether it's painting, drawing, creating writing

and stuff like that. It was nice to not have the constant feeling of a gig coming up and be able to work on new things. I took the opportunity to touch on some stuff that I really hadn't touched on in almost a decade.

RD: That's fantastic. Recently The Copacetics got to be part of a documentary called the "New England Ska Summit" that was mostly shot at ONCE, a music venue that used to be in Somerville, Massachusetts. How would you describe the experience of being a part of the film? There's a big roster of ska bands, such as Bim Skala Bim, The Skatalites, Big D & The Kids Table and many others included in the film.

MD: It was very, very exciting. When we got booked for that gig, we knew the gig itself was going to be a whole lot of fun because of that roster. At first, we just thought it was going to be kind of a film about the shows and the current state of ska in the region, but since that day when they filmed it, it really grew in the storytelling aspect. They had people who'd been part of the ska scene for years contribute rare videos and other interviews. Leading up to that performance, we were just thrilled to be a part of it.

That night was crazy because we're crazy and we booked a four-hour gig during the day for a private party at the Galilee Beach Club in Narragansett. We finished up at 5 p.m., drove up to Boston, changed into full

suits. It was in late July back in 2019 and it was so hot. We did interviews in the sweltering attic of ONCE and then we played a gig. The next day I woke up asking myself, "What did I do yesterday?" And it wasn't from any kind of alcohol or substance, it was from taking a flamethrower to the candle all day long. It was a crazy day and I didn't even get sunstroke.

RD: I can imagine, that's quite the story. Especially since it's July in New England, you're wearing suits, you're in the attic of the venue and before that you're performing in South County for four hours.

MD: It makes it epic though.

RD: Yes it does. ONCE has been one of the many casualties of COVID-19 when it comes to music venues being forced to shut down. With this happening, do you think live music can fully recover from this in the coming years, or will there always be a void left behind because of it?

MD: There's most certainly going to be a void, and I think we'll definitely feel it at first because people are going to be eager to socialize, go out and experience live music again. There's really nothing quite like being at a nightclub and both hearing and feeling the music while being in a crowd of people you might not know, but they're there to see the same bands you're there to see. Everyone has something in common with this live music camaraderie,

and I think there's going to be a lot of people coming out and really trying to experience it again once it's safe to do so. The loss of places like ONCE and other venues all over the world is definitely going to be felt, especially with a lot of the mid-level nightclubs closing. I'm so glad that places like Askew, The Parlour and Dusk in Providence have managed to stay open and it looks like they're going to fully reopen soon.

They each have a certain capacity and while that capacity suits us in The Copacetics, when the bigger acts come through, people are going to travel further to Boston to see bands that would have been booked at a mid-level nightclub around their area. I never go to stadiums or really any of the bigger shows and I haven't been to one of those in some time, but I think it's going to be quite the shock when music starts happening. It's going to stink when national touring bands won't be able to come here because a venue of their size is closed down. They might have to end up at a smaller club if they want to play the cities in New England, which will be some crazy packed shows, but I'm not sure that would even happen.

RD: Hopefully something happens so it doesn't have to be that way. Speaking of Askew, what are your thoughts going into the outdoor show there on May 15?

MD: We are very excited

because we like to play and perform for people, so that's definitely been something that's been lacking in all our lives. We actually played there back in September, which was our last and pretty much only public gig of 2020. It was pretty much the same situation where they closed off that block of Chestnut Street and we played outside. We're really comfortable with it because we saw first hand how Askew took all of the necessary precautions with there being tables, reservations and social distancing. We feel that it's safe and I know that there are some clubs that are starting to do inside shows, and we've avoided those gigs when asked, at least for our own safety.

The band is a mix of younger, carefree bachelor types and members who are married and they have kids. We always are cognizant of ourselves first as well as the fans, we don't want to feel that we're doing anything dangerous. With Askew and it being outside, there are a lot more people who are vaccinated and we're way more at ease.

RD: I totally get why you guys would feel that way. After the show at Askew, what are The Copacetics' plans for the next few months?

MD: We were working on our third album when COVID-19 hit, and it's kind of been a little bit on pause because in this case we weren't able to get the full horn section together to record the next steps, which would be the trombone and the saxophones. Now after this gig, it's no longer an issue, so we'll probably be working on that, but our more immediate concern is that we do have a couple of private gigs that we have to pull together a four hour set for each of them. We're going to be doing two-hour-long sets at Askew, but our next set in July, we've got to play for four hours, so we've got to dust off the extended set to get back into it. For the album, we can expect it to come out in the fall, but I'm not too sure and that's hoping on my part, but you'll never know.

To learn more about The Copacetics, follow the band on Facebook or visit thecopacetics1.bandcamp.com.

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SUN RISE SCOOPS

By **MERI R. KENNEDY**

Welcome to the Soccer Clinic

The town of Johnston welcomes the Boston Bolts soccer club for a Soccer Clinic.

Training began on May 11 and will go through June 1. Coach John Sousa from Johnston High School and Coach Mairo Nasisi from Johnston Middle School have introduced Coach Julius Summerville, who has over 25 years of experience and has trained all over the world. The clinic will be part of the Town of Johnston Soccer Program.

Registration is open for all ages, boys and girls. The cost will be \$50 per child. The clinic will be held on Tuesdays from

6 to 7 p.m. in the back of the Johnston Indoor Recreation Center.

For more information or to register, visit bostonbolts.leagueapps.com/camps/2297986-future-elite-clinic-south-region-ri.

Yappy Hour coming to Garden City

Garden City Center will hold a Yappy Hour in the Gazebo area on Sunday, May 16, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Join in for the very first Yappy Hour with treats for humans and pups, a Fido-friendly photo opportunity and a chance to enter your pooch to be Garden City's first mascot. Proceeds from this event will benefit Heart of RI Animal Rescue.

In accordance with state guidelines, capacity is limited and pre-registration is required. To register and for more information, visit gardencitycenter.com/event/yappy-hour. Tickets are \$10 and include admission for you and your pup.

Participants can also stroll through Garden City's dog-friendly stores (stores your pups can enter will have a "dog-friendly shop" balloon out front) and meet adoptable pups from Heart of RI Animal Rescue.

Plenty of treasures at yard sale

The Caroline Caprio Scholarship & Giving Fund will be holding a large Yard Sale to help raise funds to assist Rhode Island families struggling with a brain tumor diagnosis. All of the proceeds will be used to provide financial assistance and emotional support to brain tumor patients and caregivers.

The event will be held at 3284 West Shore Road in Warwick on Saturday, May 22, from 8 a.m. through 2 p.m.

Come browse and purchase all kinds of household and personal items, such as furniture, collectibles, jewelry, handbags, adult and children's clothing, sports equipment, tools, pet supplies and toys, rugs, lamps, decorative pillows, comforters and sheet sets, kitchen decor and utensils, toys, nautical décor, Christmas decor and decorations, and much more.

Mask wearing and social distancing guidelines will be in place. The rain date is the following week on May 29. If you cannot make the yard sale, consider donating at ccsgf.org.

Ways you can help the Johnston Historical Society

The Find on 6, located at 2953 Hartford Ave., is now accepting consignment items on behalf of the Johnston Historical Society. That means you can donate some gently used white elephant items and, if they sell, the society gets 60 percent of the proceeds. Each person may bring two boxes of goods at a time, Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Appropriate items include antiques, collectibles, vintage clothing or handbags (in good condition), jewelry, kitchenware, furniture, etc. Nothing broken or soiled is accepted.

RI Housing offers loans

RI Housing's Hardest Hit Fund Rhode Island (HHFRI) program is offering zero interest, forgivable loans to eligible Rhode Island homeowners who became unemployed or underemployed due to the COVID-19 pan-

demic and are struggling to make their mortgage payments.

Loan proceeds may provide eligible homeowners with up to six months of mortgage payment assistance. Learn more about the loan program and eligibility at rihousing.com/hhfri.

FEMA funeral assistance

People can apply for FEMA funeral assistance now by calling 1-844-684-6333. Families who have lost a loved one to COVID-19 will be eligible for up to \$9,000 in reimbursement. There is no income cap, so nearly all families are eligible.

Interested applicants should start collecting their documents now. For more details on what you'll need, please visit fema.gov.

Playgrounds open in the Park

The playgrounds are now open at the Johnston Memorial Park. Please remember that masks are required to be worn at all times. Please be advised that the restrooms remain closed at this time.

Be Kind RI

Be Kind RI is a new program that connects volunteers to their neighbors across RI through text alerts to coordinate food deliveries from grocery stores and food pantries. To sign up go to BeKindRI.org. Volunteers must be 18 or older and undergo our background check. Be Kind RI is open to those in Rhode Island experiencing COVID-19 risk factors, including seniors 65 and older, anyone with underlying health conditions, those in quarantine or isolation, anyone experiencing a lack of child care, and those who would otherwise experience difficulty in obtaining food. For assistance signing up, call 877-958-8785.

Craft and activity kits

Free craft and activity kits for children are available at the Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library. Stop by the library to pick one up, or email Ms. Meri meri@mohrlibrary.org or call 231-4980 to make a reservation.

Johnston Senior Center offers services

If you need any help with heating, housing, etc., during this cold winter or any other time, contact the Johnston Senior Center Social Services Department by calling 944-3343. Madeline or Amy will be happy to help you.

News from the Mohr Memorial Library

Mohr Library is currently accessible to the public during reduced hours but continues to of-

fer curbside pickup and other services during its regular schedule. Services include curbside delivery; reference help by phone, email or in person; recommendation lists and one-on-one help to explore interests in reading, viewing and listening; printing from home or your device; use of computers and copier; and a free notary public, evenings and Saturdays by appointment.

Johnston Community Library Book Club

Kids ages 8 to 10 can meet online, by invitation, Thursdays at 3 p.m. to hear readings and discuss books with library trustee and volunteer Denese Carpenter.

Interested in other times or want to suggest a book for discussion? Let them know.

Parents can learn more about sign-up procedures by contacting Library Director Jon Anderson. Email info@mohrlibrary.org or call 401-231-4980, ext. 7.

Teen virtual programming during COVID-19

The Mohr Library is currently offering virtual versions of some of its teen programs as well as drop-in chats. They are all invite-only programs, so please contact the teen librarian at marissa@mohrlibrary.org to register or if you have any questions.

Art Club meets every Tuesday at 3 p.m. History Club meets monthly on the first Wednesday at 3 p.m. Drop-in chat days differ weekly, so please ask when registering.

Help make a house a home

The Furniture Bank of RI, a nonprofit corporation, needs bureaus, complete twin or double beds, kitchen sets, mattresses, and other household furniture that you no longer need. To help a less fortunate family through your charitable donation of good used furniture, call 831-5511 to arrange for pick up. All donated articles must be in good condition.

CCAP Chip for Charity golf tournament

Save the date – CCAP has announced plans to hold its 2021 Chip for Charity golf tournament on Wednesday, Sept. 15, at Harbor Light Golf Club in Warwick. Sponsorships and foursomes are available. For more details, contact CCAP's Lee Bellevue at (401) 562-8353 or lbeliveau@comcap.org.

As a nonprofit community action program, CCAP needs to raise funds to assist families it serves. A large number of families CCAP serves have lost their jobs, suffered an illness, or experienced a different type

of crisis, usually through no fault of their own. Last year, CCAP touched the lives of more than 40,000 people and provided over \$1.2 million in uncompensated services.

Chip for Charity, presented by Neighborhood Health and Mutual of America, is CCAP's largest fundraiser during the year to benefit its programs and services.

'Greatest Sitcoms' author

Cranston Public Library is excited to welcome award-winning author and pop culture historian Martin Gitlin as he hosts a fun and enlightening presentation based on his book "The Greatest Sitcoms of All Time." Join the fun on Crowdcast on Saturday, May 15, at 3 p.m.

Gitlin will show funny clips from many favorite shows, challenge patrons with sitcom trivia, discuss the criteria he used to rank the best of the best, and talk about how sitcoms have evolved over the decades in humor, presentation and content.

This program is free and open to the public. Register by visiting www.crowdcast.io/e/funny-program/register and clicking the "Save My Spot" button.

Gitlin has won more than 45 awards as a sports journalist, including first place for general excellence from Associated Press. His books have been featured in the New York Times, Time Magazine, Reader's Digest, Wall Street Journal, and other national periodicals, and his title "The Great American Cereal Book" reached No. 1 on Amazon.com in both the "Americana" and "Breakfast Book" categories.

This program is presented as part of Cranston Public Library's Visiting Author Series thanks to generous funding from the Cranston Public Library Association. To learn more, visit www.cranstonlibrary.org.

Did you know?

Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. (Source: Memorial Day Fun Facts)

SunriseScoops@aol.com. Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit events as well as virtual events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.

Obituary

Lisa A. Caputo-McDonald

Lisa A. Caputo-McDonald, of Hopkins Avenue, Johnston, RI, passed on to eternal peace on May 7th, 2021 with her husband by her side following a courageous battle from complications after suffering a stroke. Born in Providence, Lisa was a lifelong resident of Johnston. She was the daughter of the late Philip R. Caputo and Anita T. (Depari) Rowlett.



Lisa attended Johnston Public Schools and was a graduate of Johnston Senior High School and had attended Providence College. She served as an Insurance Executive for Aiposo Insurance Company for over 20 years and as the Operations Director for McDonald Adjustment Company for over 10 years. Lisa was a wonderful and caring person who enjoyed spending time with her family and friends and having cookouts especially at her Narragansett residence. Lisa was an animal lover and throughout her life her most joy came from the love of her dogs.

She is survived by her husband, Thomas F. McDonald, her brother and sister, Philip and Lori Caputo, her brother-in-law, Timothy R. McDonald, her sister-in-law, Gina Caputo, her cherished nieces, Jackie, Amanda and Kaisey, as well as her grandnieces and grandnephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Wednesday May 12th at 10am in St. Robert Bellamine Church, 1804 Atwood Avenue, Johnston. Burial followed in St. Ann's Cemetery, Cranston. Visitation was Wednesday morning 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in the Anderson-Winfield Home, Greenville Common, Greenville, RI.

The McDonald Family give a very special "Thank you" to the dedicated nurses and doctors at RI Hospital for their caring efforts and compassion. In lieu of flowers donations in her memory may be made to RISPAC or St. Jude's Children's Hospital. St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

For messages of condolence, please visit www.andersonwinfield.net.

Obituaries

In your time of need, the *Johnston Sun Rise* will print your loved one's full obituary for a small charge. The paper also places the obituary on our website, johnstonsunrise.net.

Should you desire our services, kindly inform your funeral director, or call Sue Howarth at (401) 732-3100 or email sueh@rhodybeat.com for additional information. Obituary prices start at \$60. You may include the obituary in any of our other newspapers for half price. Thank you.

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Room for compromise

If you were to go back in time even just five years ago and say that, in 2021, Rhode Island would be unable to pass recreational marijuana legislation into law because there were too many different ideas in favor of the concept (and how to do it properly), you'd probably get some interesting responses from your peers.

And yet, here we are. Both Governor Dan McKee and the Rhode Island Senate (through a bill co-sponsored by Warwick's Michael McCaffrey and Cranston's Joshua Miller) have put forth proposals outlining how they believe the drug should be legalized, controlled and monetized, resulting in a stalemate as advocates pick apart the pros and cons of each approach. We believe there is middle ground to be found here that will result in the best possible outcome for Rhode Island.

Quite a lot has changed in Little Rhody since Massachusetts took the plunge into recreational marijuana legalization in 2016 – though its industry has only been truly operational since 2018. Political appetite for legal weed has only grown more voracious as the matter has become overwhelmingly popular with the general public and our northern neighbor has reaped millions in tax revenue. Quite simply, it has become more politically damaging in Rhode Island to outright oppose marijuana legalization than to be in favor of it.

This is not to say that the legalization of marijuana is an issue that should be taken lightly. However, according to a recent comprehensive study of all states with legal recreational marijuana from the National Institutes of Health, many of the fears that anti-legalization advocates have warned about since Colorado first legalized in 2012 have appeared to be largely overstated and unrealized.

It has been observed (predictably) that all states with legalized recreational marijuana have seen significant increases in the number of adult residents reporting marijuana use. However, despite this increased access, recorded admittances to behavioral health clinics for marijuana abuse in these states has been largely flat. Similarly, the rate of use among minors has not been observed as being significantly higher than pre-legalization levels (in fact, use has dropped in some states due to more enforcement efforts to prevent them from obtaining it). The study also found that, while vehicular crashes may have increased slightly in some legal marijuana states, there is no reasonable link to legal marijuana access being responsible.

All of these facts in mind – combined with the anecdotal observation that Massachusetts has not descended into a dystopian, drug-addled hellscape ala "Reefer Madness" – leads us to levy our continued support for the legalization of recreational marijuana in Rhode Island. The few emotional arguments heard against it can hardly be taken seriously when data does not support those concerns, and much deadlier alcohol continues to be available on every other street corner.

As for the two proposals now before the Rhode Island legislature in the form of Governor McKee's budget and the separate Senate bill, there is ample room for compromise here – possibly coming in the form of a House bill that takes the best practices of each into consideration.

Governor McKee's proposal would establish a lottery to grant licenses to 75 total dispensaries over the next three years, whereas the Senate bill would establish a Cannabis Control Commission mirroring Massachusetts that would oversee licensing and enforcement of up to 150 new recreational businesses. We see no reason why the establishment of a Cannabis Control Commission and a lottery process are mutually exclusive. Perhaps a limited number of initial recreational licenses are thoroughly vetted and chosen by the commission to establish best practices for the process, and then a lottery can be utilized to assign all subsequent licenses to eligible businesses in a fair and transparent way.

The ultimate winning approach should incorporate pieces of each proposal when it comes to social equity issues. All other details of the two proposals are largely negotiable. Cities and towns should retain the right to deny access to retail marijuana in their communities if their elected officials find that is the will of the community. However, it should not require a special election in each community to do so (as McKee's proposal suggests), as this would unnecessarily burden cities and towns.

And, perhaps most importantly, both sides agree that local, state and additional excise taxes should be applied to all recreational sales. This revenue should be more specifically earmarked for use in ways that promote good public health outcomes – such as educational outreach to prevent marijuana abuse, underaged use, and train additional drug recognition expert (DREs) to identify those driving while high.

There is no reason that marijuana legalization should have to wait another year. There is finally a political will to accomplish what the public consensus has requested for some time. Work out the differences and get this industry rolling.

With the state offering \$50K to paint Gina's official portrait, a famed TV artist decides to come back from the dead



OP-ED

Why broadband matters to you and your family

By DEBORAH RUGGIERO

COVID-19 has been the most convincing argument for Rhode Island to invest in high-speed internet, or dedicated broadband. Whether for remote working from home, distance learning or telehealth, broadband access must be reliable, fast and affordable. You wouldn't buy a house or relocate your business without access to water or electricity. High-speed internet in a 21st economy is a necessary utility (although Rhode Island state law preempts any regulation of internet or telecoms – a story for later).

Rhode Island citizens and small businesses need high-speed, low-cost and reliable broadband service and not coaxial cable that's shared with several hundred other homes or businesses, causing buffering and spotty coverage. Fiber-optic broadband is amazingly fast because it's laser and doesn't use electrical signals; so you don't lose internet connectivity during an electrical outage.

Ten years ago, Rhode Island received \$20 million in federal dollars and the state added \$10 million to build out an amazing 48 strands of fiber-optic, high-speed broadband – 8,000 miles of broadband fiber running throughout this little state. Yet, only 10 strands of fiber-optic are being used for our hospitals, colleges, universities, libraries, and schools. We have a technology highway without any on/off ramps for residents, businesses, and municipalities to access.

Internet providers say, "RI has access to more broadband than any other state in the country; 98% of homes have fiber-optic broadband running outside their front door." Yes, we do; it's the middle mile of 48 strands of fiber. If only we could access it without paying exorbitant rates.

Lots and lots of federal funds will be flowing into every state across America for broadband infrastructure. But the federal dollars will only go to states that have a dedicated broadband coordinator or state entity that can access, administer, and oversee the federal broadband funds.

As of this writing, Rhode Island still does not have a broadband coordinator, which means it is losing out on federal broadband dollars and has been for the past seven years. That's why I've sponsored H5138, a broadband bill that needs to pass this legislative session to get our state off the bench into the technology broadband game. Rhode Island is one of only two states in the country without a broadband coordinator (Mississippi is the other).

A dedicated broadband coordinator in Commerce RI tells municipalities and the private sector that Rhode Island is serious about broadband. This broadband coordinator in my bill H5148 could access and administer federal dollars to help community-led projects like the one we're working on for Aquidneck Island. It's a pilot program that could be a municipal model for other local governments, business and nonprofits.

New Hampshire and Massachusetts are making a push to get people to live in those states and work remotely because they have invested in dedicated fiber-optic broadband. Here in Rhode Island, we're losing businesses in Newport County because of the low internet speeds and high-costs of coaxial cable internet.

Community-led broadband projects (Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Utah, Hawaii, etc.) are backed by revenue bonds, which are paid off by subscribers' fees and dues – taxpayers pay nothing. A group of municipalities in Utah formed a nonprofit government entity (UTOPIA) that leases the broadband to ISPs (Cox, Verizon, Comcast, Opencape, etc.) that can offer services

to end users. Benefits include a GIG of service (not megabits!), creates competition from several different ISPs on the UTOPIA network making pricing affordable, and Utopia is developing in rural areas where many big profit-driven telecoms can forget about.

It's time Rhode Island creates the on/off ramps to access the 8,000 miles of fiber-optic that's running throughout this state. Market competition will do more for the economy than any government regulation could ever do!

Rep. Deb Ruggiero (D-Dist. 74, Jamestown, Middletown) is chairwoman of the House Committee on Innovation, Internet, Technology. She also serves on House Finance Committee.



<p>Publisher John I. Howell Jr. - JohnH@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>General Manager Richard G. Fleischer - RichardF@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Advertising Director Donna Zarrella - Donna Z@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Editor Jacob Marrocco - JacobM@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Sports Editor Alex Sponseller - AlexS@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Journalists Pete Fontaine, Pam Schiff</p> <p>Classified Advertising Sue Howarth-SueH@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Circulation Leslie Paz</p>	<p>Credit Manager Lynne Taylor</p> <p>Bookkeeping Leslie Paz</p> <p>Production Manager Lisa Bourque Yuetner - LisaB@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Production Staff Monique Rice - MoR@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Advertising Representative Natalie Payette - NatalieP@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Spotlight Profile Writer Jennifer Coates - JenniferC@rhodybeat.com</p> <p>Tel: 401-732-3100 Fax: 401-732-3110</p>
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Last week at the General Assembly

Here are the highlights from news and events that took place in the General Assembly last week. For more information on any of these items, visit rilegislature.gov/pressrelease.

House passes minimum wage bill

The House approved legislation (2021-H 5130A) introduced by Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) to increase Rhode Island's minimum wage from \$11.50 to \$15 over a four-year period. The bill now goes to the Senate, which has approved companion legislation (2021-S 0001aa) sponsored by Sen. Ana B. Quezada (D-Dist. 2, Providence). The House also passed a separate measure (2021-H 5851) sponsored by House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) to repeal a law that allows employers to pay workers with disabilities below the minimum wage.

Senate passes bills to reduce plastic waste in Rhode Island

The Senate passed legislation to curtail plastic waste, including the Plastic Waste Reduction Act (2021-S 0037) introduced by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence), which would reduce the use of plastic bags by retail establishments. Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, Narragansett, South Kingstown) introduced companion legislation (2021-H 5358) in the House.

The Senate also passed legislation (2021-S 0155) introduced by Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) that would prohibit a food service establishment from providing a consumer with a single-use plastic straw, unless the consumer requests such a straw. Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) has the companion bill (2021-H 5131) in the House.

House passes legislation setting minimum nursing home staffing standards

The House of Representatives passed legislation (2021-H 5012Aaa) introduced by Rep. Scott A. Slater (D-Dist. 10, Providence) that sets minimum staffing standards for nursing home care. The bill is meant to address an ongoing crisis in nursing home staffing that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Senate has passed a companion bill (2021-S 0002) introduced by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence).

House approves legislation making R.I. Promise program permanent

The House passed legislation (2021-H 5224) sponsored by House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) to permanently enact the Rhode Island Promise program, which provides up to two years of free tuition for eligible Rhode Islanders at the Community

College of Rhode Island. The measure now moves to the Senate, which has approved companion legislation (2021-S 0079) introduced by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence).

Senate OKs bill requiring insurance, Medicaid coverage of doula services

The Senate passed legislation (2021-S 0484) introduced by Sen. Ana B. Quezada (D-Dist. 2, Providence) that would make doula services eligible for reimbursement through private insurance and Medicaid programs. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation (2021-H 5929) has been introduced by Rep. Marcia Ranglin-Vassell (D-Dist. 5, Providence).

Senate approves Archambault legislation to protect vulnerable road users

The Senate passed legislation (2021-S 0318A) introduced by Sen. Stephen R. Archambault (D-Dist. 22, Smithfield, North Providence, Johnston) that would provide for specific fines and sanctions to operators of motor vehicles who fail to exercise due care to avoid colliding with a vulnerable road user, such as pedestrians and cyclists, causing injury, serious injury, or death to the vulnerable road user. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, which has passed similar legislation (2021-H 5093) introduced by Rep. Joseph M.

McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston).

Senate OKs bill to redefine felonies, misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors

The Senate passed legislation introduced by Senate Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) that revises the state's definitions of felonies, misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors. The bill (2021-S 0518aa) is part of ongoing efforts to overhaul the state's criminal justice system using a "justice reinvestment" approach, designed to identify new ways to relieve pressures on the correctional system, promote diversion and rehabilitation, and increase public safety. The measure now moves to the House for consideration, where similar legislation (2021-H 5312) has been introduced by Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, Narragansett, South Kingstown).

House OKs bill that would ban gender discrimination in health insurance

The House of Representatives passed legislation (2021-H 5763) introduced by Majority Whip Katherine S. Kazarian (D-Dist. 63, East Providence) that would ban health insurers from utilizing the discriminatory practice known as gender rating, or routinely charging women and men different premiums for individual insurance. The Senate has passed similar legislation (2021-

S 0003) introduced by Sen. V. Susan Sosnowski (D-Dist. 37, South Kingstown, New Shoreham).

House OKs Donovan bill to ban intentional release of balloons

The House passed legislation (2021-H 5376A) sponsored by Rep. Susan R. Donovan (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) to protect the environment and wildlife by prohibiting the intentional, simultaneous release of 10 or more balloons into the air. The bill will now be sent to the Senate, where Sen. V. Susan Sosnowski (D-Dist. 37, South Kingstown, New Shoreham) is sponsoring companion legislation (2021-S 0038).

House Finance Committee approves bill strengthening IGT/Bally's agreement

The House Finance Committee approved amended legislation (2021-H 5223A) sponsored by House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) to strengthen the agreement between the State of Rhode Island and IGT and Twin River, now Bally's Corporation. The bill is an economic development investment of more than \$250 million to preserve and enhance Rhode Island's third largest source of revenue. The Senate bill (2021-S 0040), sponsored by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) is also expected to be amended to match.

Colonial Pipeline shutdown prompts spike in gas prices

Rhode Island's average gas price is up five cents from last week, averaging \$2.88 per gallon. Monday's price is 11 cents higher than a month ago and 95 cents higher than May 10, 2020. Rhode Island's average gas price is 8 cents lower than the national average.

AAA forecasts gas prices to climb this week in reaction to the shutdown of the Colonial Pipeline, which delivers approxi-

mately 45 percent of all fuel to the East Coast. Over the weekend, the Colonial Pipeline announced they were the victim of a cybersecurity attack and, as a precaution, shut down the pipeline, which runs from Texas to New York Harbor. At this time, some lateral lines have reopened, but there is no word of when the mainline, including the gasoline line, will be operational.

"This shutdown will have implications

on both gasoline supply and prices, but the impact will vary regionally. Areas including Mississippi, Tennessee and the east coast from Georgia into Delaware are most likely to experience limited fuel availability and price increases, as early as this week," said Lloyd Albert, Senior Vice President of Public and Government Affairs for AAA Northeast. "These states may see prices increase three to seven cents this week."

The longer the pipeline is offline, the larger the impact on the east coast. However, foreign gasoline imports and other pipelines can supplement Northeastern supply. Other areas of the country will see little impact.

AAA Northeast's May 10 survey of fuel prices found the current national average to be 6 cents higher than last week, averaging \$2.96 a gallon.

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Naked and afraid

Life Matters



with LINDA PETERSEN

It is no secret in my house that one of my favorite television shows is "Naked and Afraid." As a child who grew up traveling and roughing it in the deserts of the southwest, the Badlands of South Dakota, and the Bayou of the south, it is fascinating to watch two people try to survive in these areas with just a large knife and a fire starter. The "naked" part is superfluous as all the private parts are blurred. I must

be careful not to watch the show when my granddaughter, Rosy, is here. She would surely go home and squeal to her mom that we were watching a show with undressed people.

Following Hubby's example from last month, last week I had the pleasure of having knee replacement surgery at South County Hospital with my favorite robo-doc, Dr. Marchand. He is so handsome that one would think he was a movie star, but so down to earth and welcoming that he feels like a friend.

Hubby dropped me off at the front door of the hospital, as is the protocol these days with COVID-19. A sea of cheerful volunteers smiled at me and one claimed me as his own. His pleasant conversation got me up to the

surgery floor with nary a worry.

Ushered to a private cubicle, I sat down on the stretcher as another new person claimed me. She gave me a lovely hospital nightgown to put on, along with some bright yellow non-slip socks. She chit-chatted as she closed the curtain, leaving me alone. Taking my clothes off and putting them in a bag, my nakedness struck me. Naked and afraid. I quickly threw on the outfit that was a lovely shade of green with a variety of green foliage. The curtains around the cubicle matched the johnny in a clever ploy to relax the occupant, but it was not working on me! Too naked and afraid.

It did not take long for the nursing staff to make me feel more relaxed. They were

lovely women, pleasant and reassuring. At one point, three of them were working on me at the same time ... one woman was washing my knee with an antibiotic, another one was taking my vital signs with a blood pressure cuff that felt like a tourniquet, and a third woman poked and prodded to find a good place to put in the intravenous needle. (Hint: There IS no good place to put an intravenous needle.) They were having a lovely time and joining in their banter was relaxing for me.

A spinal block was to be used for anesthesia. Clearly anxious when presented with this option, the anesthesiologist explained the

benefits of this method versus general anesthesia to me. I knew the benefits but feared the pain from the needle. It was then explained that medication would be used so I would FORGET the pain from that shot, as well as another shot going straight into my knee. (I wonder if that medication could be taken prior to a dental visit...)

I woke up from the surgery with no memory of any shots. My knee was draped in a vertical bandage at least a foot long, which covered an incision at least a foot long. As soon as my hunger was satisfied with crackers and ginger ale, I was whisked up to my own hospital room. I retrieved my cell

phone on which games would soon occupy my fingers. Alas, relaxation was not meant to be, as a cheerful, spunky physical therapist was soon by my bedside, sporting a walker, open and inviting. Within a few hours of insertion, my new titanium knee was put to the test as I joined other patients in the corridor of the hospital, shuffling back and forth. As soon as I could demonstrate the ability to go up steps, it was determined that I was well enough to go home.

It was a pleasant hospital stay. I survived my own "Naked and Afraid" challenge, and I "killed it," thanks to the help of some wonderful staff!

Briggs

(Continued from page 1)

Now, Briggs is set to be the only Air Force graduate from Rhode Island in his class, after which he will head home on a 60-day leave before getting stationed in Pittsburgh for a year.

Zolkos said she and about a dozen other family members will head out to Colorado Springs for Briggs's commencement the week of May 23. While the graduation is the main event, Zolkos noted there is another ceremony about which the family is particularly excited.

"Jimmy's going to be an officer when he graduates from there, he'll be a second lieutenant, and the first salute that he'll ever get - it's a big deal, it's called the first salute when he gets commissioned at the commissioning - will come from my dad," Zolkos said. "That's a big deal, to have that first salute come from his grandfather. I think we're looking forward to it as much as we're looking forward to graduation."

While families are usually offered upwards of 20 tickets for

graduation, this year there are only eight spots because of the ongoing pandemic. Only three people are able to attend the commissioning, but there's plenty of time before and after for Briggs to see his loved ones.

"A lot of my family is heading out there, but due to COVID, at first they weren't even sure if he was going to have a graduation, so we got lucky enough where normally they'd give like 20-plus tickets, there's only eight tickets to graduation so he had to kind of pick and choose who was going to go," Zolkos said. "He's super excited. He just finished his exams. He doesn't like a lot of attention drawn to himself, but I feel like this is such a great accomplishment."

Zolkos said the last year has been difficult for Briggs, between getting sent home last March when the pandemic began and having to switch between virtual learning and going to campus when they were allowed back.

She added that Briggs has been rooming at a Great Wolf Lodge off-campus since returning to Colorado, heading back and forth to cam-

pus when classes are held in person.

"I think part of the whole experience of being at the academy is your friends and all the friends that you make, the connections that you make," Zolkos said. "Being in classes, living on the campus, so it was hard for him to adjust to being back home because he had to do virtual learning and that was really hard because the courses that he's taking, sometimes he's taking almost 30 credits. Very, very demanding courses, it was a hard adjustment for him. As soon as he was able to, he went back to the academy."

Now, after years of having to take the hard road to his dream, Briggs will enjoy his graduation and return to the town he has called home all his life for a brief reprieve. He will come back as the only Ocean Stater this year who gets to call themselves an Air Force graduate, too.

"I've never had a problem with the schools, we were always happy with the schools," Zolkos said of Johnston. "Very dedicated teachers. I like Johnston. I like the [memorial] park, and the people are nice."

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Large, flightless birds
- 5. Lifts and moves heavy objects
- 10. Hyundai sedan
- 12. Wear away by erosion
- 14. Arranged alphabetically
- 16. Top prosecutor
- 18. ___-de-sac: Short dead-end street
- 19. Digital audiotape
- 20. Linguistics pioneer
- 22. Singer DiFranco
- 23. Arms of the sea
- 25. Near-reach weapon (abbr.)
- 26. Ballplayer's accessory
- 27. You get one at the beach
- 28. U.S. founding father
- 30. W. Australia indigenous people
- 31. Amounts of time
- 33. Put on the shelf
- 35. Russian dynasty member
- 37. City along the Elbe River
- 38. A peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf
- 40. Actor Damon
- 41. ___ King Cole, musician
- 42. Company that rings receipts
- 44. Scatter
- 45. Basics
- 48. Part of a door
- 50. Indicates silence
- 52. Moved quickly on foot
- 53. Monetary units
- 55. A place to crash
- 56. Many subconsciouses
- 57. Group of countries
- 58. About line of latitude
- 63. Female follower of Bacchus
- 65. A dentist can treat it
- 66. Dull brown fabrics
- 67. Int'l nonprofit

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Midway between northeast and east
- 2. Partner to cheese
- 3. One from Utah
- 4. A way to move
- 5. Playing cards
- 6. Baseball stat
- 7. Long river in western Asia
- 8. Grandmothers
- 9. Entertainment legend Sullivan
- 10. Steam bath room
- 11. One who kills
- 13. Food
- 15. Swiss river
- 17. Fleet
- 18. Taxi
- 21. Working class
- 23. More (Spanish)
- 24. High schoolers' test
- 27. Large heavily built goat antelope
- 29. Murdered in his bathtub
- 32. Tease good-naturedly
- 34. Morsel
- 35. Cause persistent resentment
- 36. A radioactive element
- 39. Perform in a play
- 40. Witty remark: Bon ___
- 43. A great place to kayak
- 44. Conclude by reasoning
- 46. In an unfavorable way
- 47. Complex of nerve tissues (abbr.)
- 49. Machine for making paper
- 51. Feline
- 54. Yugo's hatchback
- 59. Check
- 60. Press against lightly
- 61. Wind-pollinated plants
- 62. ___compoop
- 64. Commercial

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When the dam gave way

Back in the Day



by KELLY SULLIVAN

Caleb Battey Jordan, a carpenter, was on his way home to Johnston during the late afternoon of Aug. 25, 1889, when he stopped his horse at the Spring Brook Reservoir.

The reservoir, which belonged to the Pawtuxet Valley Water Company, had a brook running from it where Jordan led his horse to drink. The 54-year-old man's attention was suddenly caught by a concerning sight. From the stonework at the bottom of the dam, a stream of water about 3 feet wide was bursting through. Jordan barely had time to consider the danger before about 20 feet of

the dam gave way. Jumping on his horse, Jordan raced to the nearest house, shouting out an alarm as he went. When he arrived at the home of 51-year-old stablekeeper John Battey, he enlisted Battey's help in spreading the news.

Jordan and Battey rushed to the house of 65-year-old meat market clerk Russell Mathewson, who wasn't home. A horse was in the barn and the two men set it free as a surge of water was already making its way down the hill. Mathewson's house and barn sustained damage, his wagons, sleds, vegetables and corn fodder were washed away and his property strewn with debris.

The flood then pushed toward the property of Daniel Steele, washing away his fencing before carrying off the hens of William Saunderson. Fifty-eight-year-old farmer George Yeaw saw his potato field washed away and debris scat-

tered over his yard.

The water then divided itself in three directions, one of the powerful streams taking out the two dams, ice house and sash and blind shop of 52-year-old farmer Charles Fiske. It rushed into homes, washed out roads and carried away buildings. While two of the streams resulted in thousands of dollars worth of property damage, the third brought much greater loss.

A peaceful summer walk had been planned that day. Recently widowed 67-year-old Mary Tew wanted to go into the woods and gather spearmint. She brought her two grandchildren with her - 4-year-old Stella Tew and 7-year-old Ruffloyd Tew. She was also joined by 90-year-old Mary Hawkins, 9-year-old Edward Dodge and 6-year-old Pearl Dodge.

As the party passed the home of Grace Jenkins, Mary Tew saw her and raised her cane, mo-

tioning for Grace to join them. Grace explained that she was nearly done reading a Bible chapter and wanted to finish it but would catch up with them.

As they reached the road leading to the Thayer cemetery, Pearl and Stella announced they had tired of walking and were going to turn around. The two elderly ladies and the two little boys continued on, passing the cemetery and crossing the brook until they arrived at the path leading to Arkwright. There, they decided to rest.

The four of them sat down atop a stone wall. A noise quickly caught Edward's attention. "I hear a noise that sounds like the dam gave way," he announced. Mary Tew laughed. "That's just the water going over the rocks in the brook," she said. But she was wrong. "There comes the water," Edward said.

Seeing the flood coming through the woods,

Mary ordered the two boys to climb a tree. She then gripped onto the wall and attempted to shield Mrs. Hawkins but the water carried the women away.

It rushed through the woods, reducing the property of 67-year-old blacksmith Joseph Briggs to nothing but dirt and rocks. It washed out the garden and the orchard and removed his carriage shed and buggy. On the land of 64-year-old widow Susan Bowler, it left hundreds of pounds of rocks and sand.

The tree the boys had climbed was beginning to sway. Ruffloyd jumped into the water and was swept away. Terrified, Edward began to scream for help. He held on until the water rose high enough to grasp him. He reached out for branches as the force of the water continually pulled him under.

Covered in bruises and blood, Edward finally washed up in George Yeaw's cornfield. He ran

into the house yelling that he had gotten out of the flood but that the two women had been carried away. A search party went out which included Mary Tew's son Elisha.

Before long, Elisha returned carrying the dead body of his son Ruffloyd. He then went back to the scene with his wagon to retrieve the body of his mother. Mary Tew had been washed a quarter of a mile away. She'd suffered two broken arms and a skull fracture. Her body bloodied and battered, nearly all of her clothing had been torn off. After Mrs. Hawkins' was located, friends arrived to transport her body home.

It was estimated the cost to repair the 45-foot wide break in the dam could reach \$10,000. Lawsuits were soon filed.

Kelly Sullivan is a Rhode Island columnist, lecturer and author.

Grant

(Continued from page 1)

- said will go a long way in helping purchase top-flight equipment and instruments for the talented troupe of JHS musicians and vocalists.

"Matt [Gingras], Oliver [Reid] and I were just talking and we came across an email from a teacher in another district that is fighting to keep their music program afloat," Lamoureux related. "To that regard, Rep. Fellela has been a consistent advocate for us here at JHS. In challenging times like we are currently facing, her support is greatly appreciated and we hope she'll be representing the town of Johnston for many, many years to come."

Lamoureux, who has built the JHS Music Department into one of the top-ranking public school groups of its kind in New England, also wanted it known: "Over the past several years Rep. Fellela has helped us acquire dozens of instruments and we have built a world percussion collection that is really impressive thanks to her extraordinary efforts."

Dr. Bernard DiLullo, superintendent of schools in Johnston -who Lamoureux said "has helped us create a dynamic music program and we are confident that he is going to help us rebuild after COVID-19 that has really hurt schools and in particular the visual and performing arts" - was also on hand for the presentation, along with JHS' principal Dr. Donna M. Pennacchia. The two leaders also thanked Fellela for her "valuable and ongoing efforts in support of the music department."

See it at the Movies

with Joyce & Don Fowler



At the Warwick Showcase

HERE TODAY

**1/2

Feel good/feel sad movie

Billy Crystal stars as Charlie Burnz, a comedy writer who discovers that he has dementia and keeps the diagnosis to himself.

He meets Emma Page (Tiffany Haddish), a young singer, in a funny, bizarre scene and they become fast friends.

The first half of the movie has some funny scenes, as Charlie writes comedy with his team and SNL-like skits are performed on live TV.

Charlie and Emma become close friends in spite of their different backgrounds.

That's the good news.

Then the movie gets bogged down with Charlie's relationship with his grown son and daughter and his guilt over the death of his wife.

Director/writer Crystal uses a clever flashback technique as Charlie deals from scenes from his past. We see his wife as

they meet, date, marry and have problems through Charlie's eyes.

Unfortunately, the story turns very schmaltzy as Charlie reconnects with his family, especially his cold-as-ice daughter.

Crystal and Haddish have some good scenes together, with Emma being wise beyond her years and Charlie throwing out some funny one-liners.

With so many movies coming out about dementia and problems of aging, at least Crystal tries to put a humorous spin on this one. The comedy works; the drama doesn't.

Rated PG-13 with some profanity and sexual references.

WRATH OF MAN

**1/2

Revenge/heist movie

Jason Statham plays H, an armored truck driver with a mysterious past who works his way in and up in a company that hauls big amounts of cash.

In a flashback, we learn that his son has been killed by a gang that has robbed the company and injured him.

That's the revenge angle.

The rest of the movie is a drawn-out planning and executing of the big heist, with H right in the middle of the action.

There's an unknown mole inside the company that is feeding information to the bad guys. See if you can guess who it is.

It all comes down to the heist, where only a few live to tell about it.

Rated R with lots of violence and profanity.

At the Avon

THE MAURITANIAN

**1/2

Most movies based on real events say, "based on a true story." This one boldly states, "this is a true story." It is based on the New York Times bestseller "Guantanamo Diary" by Mohamedou Ould Slahi, who was detained and imprisoned there for over seven years shortly after 9/11.

Jodie Foster plays the defense attorney and Benedict Cumberbatch the U.S. government prosecutor, who both struggle their feelings and loyalties as they learn of the mistreatment and torturing of the prisoner.

The movie is very intense and controversial as truths are covered up that put the army and the government in a bad light.

It is a bit long at over two hours. Not rated, but contains some disturbing scenes.

Foster was nominated for an Academy Award for her performance.

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Cranston officer convicted of assault

By DANIEL KITTREDGE

A Cranston Police officer has been convicted of simple assault in connection with a March 5, 2020, incident involving a man in police custody.

Andrew Leonard, 46, was found guilty of the misdemeanor by District Court Magistrate J. Patrick O'Neill immediately after closing arguments in the three-day trial, which was held at the Noel Judicial Complex in Warwick.

Prosecutors initially asked for Leonard's one-year sentence to include 90 days to serve at the Adult Correctional Institutions, with the remainder suspended with probation.

O'Neill instead imposed a one-year suspended sentence with probation – the same terms the state had offered, and the defense had rejected, before the proceedings began.

Leonard, a 12-year veteran of the Cranston Police Department who previously worked as a corrections officer, has been on paid suspension since his May 2020 arrest. With the conviction, he will no longer be paid. His attorney, Joseph Monahan, told O'Neill after the verdict that his client intends to appeal.

Addressing the parties after closing statements concluded, O'Neill called it a "sad case all around."

He also said his close review of cell block video from the altercation at the heart of the case – in which Leonard is seen punching, kicking and taking the victim in the case, 27-year-old Gian Mattiello, to the ground – played a central role in his finding. Leonard, he said, was "taunting" Mattiello during the incident and "wanted to be in the face of Mr. Mattiello."

"Sometimes you gain control of a situation by removing yourself from the situation," he said. It was Mattiello and not Leonard, he said, who was clearly "more in control of the situation."

The judge expressed skepticism over many aspects of Mattiello's earlier accounting of events earlier in the proceedings, and acknowledged that the victim – who has a lengthy criminal record – had been "disrespectful, disruptive, rude most of the time" on the day in question.

From the time of the traffic stop that led to Mattiello's arrest, he said, the victim had decided to "ruin everybody's day who has to deal with this." He also said a "cocky, arrogant" Mattiello clearly egged the officer on.

"[Mattiello] was under the skin of Mr. Leonard," he said. "You can see it." He spoke of a particular moment on the video, when Mattiello is without handcuffs during processing, as "go time."

"Who's going to speak first? Who's going to light the fire again?" he said. "Andrew Leonard is the first one to reengage."

O'Neill said the video shows Mattiello "catching a beating" and "covering up" as he seeks to disengage from the altercation.

There were "so many opportunities," he added, "to have this not happen."

O'Neill also said the testimony of two other officers who were present during the altercation was "at times gutwrenching." While Leonard and the defense suggested the officers had failed to properly assist their colleague during the incident, the judge said their lack of participation highlighted the true nature of the assault.

"They're not going to put their careers on the line to engage in this beat-down of a career criminal," he said.

Monahan, in his closing statement, said Leonard had "found himself in a very difficult position." The case, he said, focuses on "two people from opposite ends of the spectrum of society" – a long-time law enforcement officer with an unblemished record of service, and a career criminal whose struggles with substance abuse fuel his unlawful behavior.

"This is not a beat down. This is a struggle ... My client was in a fight for his life," he said.

Of the cell block video, Monahan added: "That's the real life out there in the street. That can be ugly."

Assistant Attorney General Daniel Guglielmo, meanwhile, used the state's closing argument to characterize Leonard's conduct as "completely out of line" and "illegal."

"On this particular day ... in that cell block, one of those two people acted better than the other," he said. "One of those two people acted legally. And it was the convicted felon who acted legally."

He added: "It's a tough time to be a police officer, and we all appreciate that ... However, public institutions should welcome that oversight."

Guglielmo also said the other officers present at the time of the incident "wanted no part of it." Leonard, he said, was "relishing this opportunity to give that punk what he's asking for" and "picking the fight."

"He's slapping his hands together like he's going to sit down to Thanksgiving day dinner," he said.

The prosecutor additionally highlighted the "extremely rich" irony that the video of the cell block incident was reviewed – and then brought to the attention of Col. Michael Winquist, who it turn referred it Rhode Island State Police and the attorney general – because Leonard had

pressed an assault case against Mattiello.

"The public," he said, "demands a high standard of the police."

Leonard, during his testimony, had defended his actions. He said he knew of Mattiello prior to March 5, 2020, but had not dealt with him one-on-one. Nor, he said, did he harbor any animosity toward Mattiello.

In the cell block at Cranston Police headquarters, Leonard said, Mattiello began to exhibit signs of an imminent assault – sometimes subtle clues he had learned through his years in law enforcement. Mattiello, he said, tensed up and flared his nostrils.

"In that moment, a lot of flags went off in my head that there was an imminent assault coming," he said.

Leonard also asserted that Mattiello had grabbed hold of his duty belt, which included a flashlight, OC spray and other items but not his firearm.

Additionally, Leonard defended his expressions and manner as seen on the video while suggesting the other officers present during the incident had failed to provide needed assistance.

"If I was laughing, it was I couldn't believe how ridiculous this was ... wrestling somebody and nobody helping me," he said.

He added: "In this instance, nobody helped me."

Those officers, as well as Capt. Sean Parker, were called to testify during the prosecution's presentation earlier in the trial.

Parker said he first viewed the cell block video roughly three weeks after the incident.

"I was immediately struck by the severity of it ... The unreasonableness of the use of force, and the excessiveness," he said. He testified that he immediately notified Winquist.

After the state's case concluded, the defense made a motion for a dismissal of the charge against Leonard. O'Neill denied the motion, saying the testimony to that point warranted the continuation of the proceedings.

In a press release regarding the verdict, Attorney General Peter Neronha said: "I am grateful for the Court's guilty verdict today, which was plainly warranted based on the evidence presented at trial. Police may use force in exercising their duty to protect the public, but that use of force must be reasonable and necessary under the circumstances. As the Court found, there was no need to use force here. The defendant invited conflict, apparently believing that his position as a police officer would shield him from the consequences of his actions. He was mistaken."

He added: "Police officers have a difficult and often thankless job. They work hard to protect the public, and the vast majority serve honorably and well. However, when an officer fails to uphold his oath and uses excessive force against a member of the public, it is imperative that we take strong action to hold them appropriately accountable for such misconduct. I am grateful to the prosecution team, including the Rhode Island State Police, for their diligence in ensuring a successful prosecution in this important case. I am also grateful to Cranston Police Chief Michael Winquist for immediately recognizing the defendant's misconduct at the time it occurred and bringing that misconduct to the attention of this Office and the State Police."

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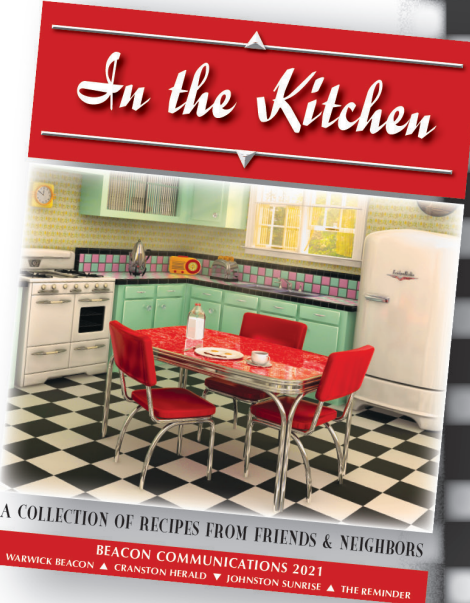


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Sports



SUPER BOWL MATCHUP: Johnston's Deremy Stubbs. (Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)

Hawks-Rams rivalry renewed

The Bishop Hendricken football team won its 10th state championship in 11 years with a 43-22 victory over rival La Salle last weekend at Cranston Stadium.

Sure, the Hawks are always the favorite and their win was nothing surprising. It has gotten to the point where it is expected. There is the obvious talk about Hendricken and La Salle being private schools and the advantage that gives them. It's an old topic ... relevant, but old.

Usually I like to stick to the big picture when it comes to championships. Games are games, but the big picture is where I usually find myself focusing on in the ensuing days.

But for this, I am going to shift gears and stick to the game itself.

These two teams were pretty much evenly matched heading into the final. Points for, points against, overall performance, this was looking like it could be neck and neck.

Through the first half, that is exactly how it played out. The Hawks built a lead and some momentum in the second quarter, looking ready to head into the halftime break with the game in hand. The Rams answered and made a few big plays to take the 16-14 halftime lead.

Hendricken cruised in the second half, starting with a score right out of the gate on the first drive of the third quarter. The Rams hung in there and were within a score midway through the fourth quarter, but once again,

My pitch



by
ALEX SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR
ALEXS@RHODYBEAT.COM

the Hawks just came up with play after play and were up 21 points in seemingly the blink of an eye. It was a wild one.

The state championship is about the two best teams in the state laying it on the line and doing battle, and we got exactly that on Sunday.

Although the game slipped through their fingers, the Rams proved to be more than a worthy foe for the Hawks. Not only did the Rams win the first half, but they were on their way to tying things up in the fourth before the carpet was pulled out from under them.

The Hawks proved that they are still the best team in the state. North Kingstown and La Salle gave them all they could handle, but even still, Hendricken just pulled it off.

What I enjoyed with this matchup more so than other games of theirs in the past was the mental aspect. When these two teams meet, it's usually 22 athletes letting the ball fly, running all over the field, and whoever has more points at the final whistle is the one who wins. Saturday's game

PITCH- PAGE 16

Panthers fall in Super Bowl

JHS football completes bounce back season

By **ALEX SPONSELLER**

The Johnston football team came up short against Coventry in the Division III Super Bowl last weekend, falling to the Oakers, 43-8.

Coventry got on the board early

and often to put the pressure on the Panthers. Johnston had multiple turnovers in the first quarter which proved to be costly and saw the game fall out of reach by the halftime break.

The Panthers' lone score came

from Tom Zednik, who hauled in a 16-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Hunter Remington late in regulation.

PANTHERS- PAGE 17

Northeast golf: Par excellence

By **PETE FONTAINE**

There was a flurry of action Saturday on the Northeast Auto Body-sponsored putting green at historic Triggs Municipal Golf Course in Providence.

There was an aroma of hot dogs and hamburgers being cooked on the charcoal grille when golfers made the turn and that scene was later repeated by feature chefs tending to special cut sirloins steaks that were served during the post-golf awards dinner.

There were also mega prizes from a 5,000 dollar prize for any golfer that sunk a hole-in-one on the 12th hole of the well-maintained and spacious 18-hole layout, but unfortunately the purse went unclaimed.

Likewise, there were prizes, as well as raffles, for closest the pin on numbers 4, 7 and 14 as well as an award for the day's longest drive and closest the pin on the



SUPER SUPPORTERS: The brothers Gelsomino, who all hail from Johnston, teamed with Joe Casili in Saturday's Reds Baseball Association Golf Tourney. The group includes from left: Eric, Sal and Mark Gelsomino. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

NORTHEAST- PAGE 16

Kayak fishing basics and more

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

I have always felt privileged to interview Rhode Island's best fishermen and charter captains and then write about the expert fishing strategies and tactics they relate. Todd Corayer, a great fisherman and award winning fishing writer, is one of those Rhode Island fishing experts.

This month Corayer will share his kayak fishing expertise at a Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA) online seminar. He has fished with his kayak throughout the region and his fishing writing appears in newspapers in Rhode Island, On-the-Water magazine, as well as radio, TV and podcast fishing reports.

On Monday, May 24, 7 p.m. Todd will speak about "Four seasons of Kayak Fishing." Visit www.risaa.org if you are interested in attending. He will share how to properly rig a kayak for fishing, water safety as well as rods, flies, lures and electronics you might want to consider.

RISAA members attend free. Non-members are welcome with a \$10 donation to the RISAA Scholarship Fund. For information contact Steve Medeiros, president, at 401.826.2121 or steve@risaa.org.

Quahogging in lower Providence River one step closer

The Providence River has been too polluted to dig quahogs in areas north of Conimicut Point, however, a portion of the lower river may soon open as a "conditional" shellfishing area.

Monday night the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council (RIMFC) recommend that the lower portion of the Providence River from Conimicut

Point to Gaspé Point, Warwick change from a "prohibited" to a "conditional" area. The lower portion of the River is now clean enough to be open on a conditional basis.

The challenge writing about this topic is that the some members of the public will take this news too enthusiastically and fish there whenever they want to shellfish which is illegal. The truth is that if the RIMFC recommendation is approved by Janet Coit, Director of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), the new conditional area will be open just a total of 27 days in spring and summer.

Conditional areas are subject to closures after heavy rain events. If closure occurs the next approved day on the calendar will be open until all 27 days of fishing are allowed to occur. Recreational anglers will have to check daily if the new conditional area is open as it will be illegal to fish there on most days.

Congratulations to DEM, the RI Shellfisherman's Association, Save the Bay, the Narragansett Bay Commission and all who worked hard for many years to make the lower Providence River clean enough to quahog. It is a great day for clean water, a clean Bay, and those fishing for quahogs.

Quahog Week May 17-23

Quahog Week, May 17 to 23, 2021 is the perfect way to celebrate the quahog. The weeklong celebration highlights restaurants, markets, fisherman and food based businesses committed to growing Rhode Island's local food economy with a special focus on quahogs.

Throughout Rhode Island participating restaurants and markets will feature quahog-based dishes and specials

during Quahog Week.

Visit www.dem.ri.gov/riseafood/news.php for a sample of the mouth-watering menu items and specials being offered during Quahog Week.

Learn how to fly fish

Join Rhode Island DEM on Saturday, May 22 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to learn about the equipment you will need to fly fish, how to tie a fly, and how to properly cast a fly line and then how to fish a pond stocked with trout. Equipment, materials and a box lunch provided. Families with children 10 and older are invited to participate. Space limited, registration required, fee is \$15/person. Contact Kimberly Sullivan to register at kimberly.sullivan@dem.ri.gov.

Where's the bite?

Striped bass. Mike Hallowell of the Tackle Box, Warwick, said, "We had a customer catch a 40-inch striped bass off Godard Park using an SP Minnow floating lure. And, the school bass bite has intensified too." Sam Toland of Sam's Bait & Tackle, Middletown, said, "We had two fish caught off 2nd Beach, Middletown in the 32-inch range but for now most of the fish are school size." "Bass fishing is just starting to pick up with some keepers being caught but fish are still small," said Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle.

Tautog. "Some customers are catching very large fish ready to spawn with many of them being releases by customers. The bite is on at Fort Adams and other places along the Bay coast," said Sam Toland of Sam's Bait. Other anglers are reporting a number of fish to 19 inches being caught with a lot of shorts mixed in. Expert catch & re-

lease tautog angler David Garzoli said, "Launched out Wickford Sunday and bounced around between Prudence, Newport and Jamestown. Picked up 19 tog in 15-40 feet of water. 25 feet being the most productive. Nine keepers to 19 inches. All tagged and released. Fish bit Asian and green crabs. Jigs and rigs." Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle said, "The tautog bite is just starting to pick up out in front of Newport, but the bite in the Bay remains strong." Ken Ferrara of Ray's Bait & Tackle, Warwick said, "Tautog are all over the Bay both Asian and green crabs are working for anglers."

Squid. Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle said, "The boat bite for squid subsided this weekend but the shore bite continues with small squid instead of the larger squid caught for the past couple of weeks. This is a good sign as the fluke usually follow the smaller squid runs." Sam Toland of Sam's said, "Squid fishing this weekend was hit or miss at the bridges and off the Goat Island Causeway, Newport."

Freshwater largemouth bass bite remains strong with minnows and artificial worms. Henault of Ocean State said, "Stump Pond in Smithfield, Turner Reservoir in East Providence and even Only Pond at Lincoln Woods continue to yield some nice largemouth bass for customers."

Dave Monti holds a captain's master license and charter fishing license. He serves on a variety of boards and commissions and has a consulting business focusing on clean oceans, habitat preservation, conservation, renewable energy, and fisheries related issues and clients. Forward fishing news and photos to dmontifish@verison.net or visit www.noflufishing.com.

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■ Northeast

(Cont. from page 14)

Cannon Hole, a.k.a. No. 8.

If you're thinking that doesn't sound like a first-time tournament, you are indeed correct.

In short, the Northeast Reds Youth Baseball Association's first crack at hosting a benefit golf tournament was as many of the 140-member playing field concurred: Par excellence.

"We are very happy - ecstatic in fact - with today's results," exclaimed Raymond Douglas, a collision executive at North-east Auto Body in Johnston who serves as coach for the Reds 11u traveling team. "Today was a huge success and our committee sincerely thanks all our 22 sponsors, 140 golfers and everyone whose generosity will go a long way in helping our association fund each and every team."

To which several golfers, who praised the highly-active Reds Baseball Association for providing youngsters the opportunity to compete against squads from other towns in friendly, non-pressure baseball, the day's word was: "This is not your average first-time (golf) tourney. It's no wonder the Reds have a successful program and the players are well-dressed; it's obvious a lot of work went into this event."

Four golfers - Gabe Francis, Roy Wood, Greg Locke and Travis Bird - whose names will soon be affixed to the annual team championship trophy had nothing less than high praise for Douglas committee as well as Jerry Coro and Gary Salzillo, co-founders of the Reds Youth Baseball Association.

Moreover, a number of supporters praised Coro and Salzillo for their ongoing efforts and emphasized "we need more programs like this especially since numbers in youth baseball are dwindling all around the state."

Added Tom Ouellette, a Seekonk resident who coaches a Reds team and manned the mega-prize raffle table during the 18-hole event: "Today was extra special; just like the Reds Association that continues to provide a fun-filled youth baseball program for each and every player and their families!"



BASEBALL BOOSTERS: The foursome of Steve Hanson, Anthony Mariotti, Mike Marotti and Brian York was among the many golf groups that played in Saturday's 140-player Reds Youth Baseball Golf Tournament.



COACH'S CORNER: Reds Baseball Association coaches Yoldiel Ventura, Ray Douglas and Tom Ouellette are joined by player Jose Blanco under the canopy that covered many of the day's raffle prizes during Saturday's Reds Baseball Golf Tournament in Providence.

■ Pitch

(Continued from page 14)

was chaotic, but there was still a chess match being played that we don't usually see between these two clubs.

La Salle was up 3-0 after one quarter of play. Each team has an incredible offense, so they had to overcome early struggles. Hendricken took the 14-3 lead midway through the second, and the Rams had to respond fast to keep the game alive and they did. The Hawks had to make a statement heading into the third quarter and they did. The Rams once again had to make some plays to stay in it, and they did.

Then, in the final few minutes, it was the Hawks who came up with the final few plays.

Hendricken continues to be an unstoppable force on the gridiron. They will always be positioned favorably considering the circumstances, but I for one, enjoy the chase.

I said this last season and have actually had a few people call me out for it, but I stand by my feeling that public schools are not that far behind.

North Kingstown had chances to win each matchup against the Hawks, Central just went undefeated (but didn't have a chance to play a Power 4 program), both East Greenwich and Portsmouth held their own against other top teams. I just feel like at some point a public school is going to break through.

Our other team in championship action this weekend was Johnston in the Division III Super Bowl. The Panthers were the underdog against Coventry, who rolled throughout the regular season and capped off its unbeaten season by taking home the 43-8 win.

It seemed in the past two weeks that Coventry had this division in the bag. Sure, anything can happen and they did have one or two close games, but the Oakers were just so dominant in some other wins that it just seemed like it was their year, which sure enough it was.

The Panthers fell behind early and just never got back into it. That is the sign of a great team in Coventry though ... take an early lead, make a statement, and don't look back.

Now, would I have expected a 35-point blowout? No, the Johnston offense was electric all season long so I thought we would probably see a high-scoring shootout that went to the fourth quarter. Coventry's defense made plays, Johnston's didn't, at least not enough of them.

Although this was certainly not how Johnston envisioned the game going, the Panthers have plenty to feel good about. They had not been to the postseason in multiple years and made it the championship game.

The culture is back to being a winning one, and a few key pieces will be back including junior quarterback Hunter Remington, who developed into one of the state's better signal callers this season.

For the rest of the returning players, they now know what it takes to make it there, and maybe this will be one of those losses that will pay dividends moving forward.

At the end of the day, I am so happy for the state and these teams being able to squeeze this season in. It was not always easy, definitely not always pretty, but these seniors got one last ride.

We'll see the rippled effect of cramming two seasons in a six-month window ... I have some worries. But hey, if things play out as we're hoping, we are going to luck out and see another season of football right around the corner.

Season 3 is officially in the books. Here comes Season 4.

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BIG TACKLE: Johnston's Joe Forte brings down a rusher.



AT THE LINE: Johnston's Dylan Martins checks in with an official.

■ Panthers

(Continued from page 14)

"At the end of the day, (Coventry was) the better team. No excuses, that's what led to the end result. They are a big team and probably could have won in any division they played in. There are a lot of things that we could talk about scheme-wise, but they were the better team," said Johnston coach Joe Acciardo.

Despite the tough loss, the Panthers had a nice bounce back season after failing to reach the playoffs in multiple seasons. Between the down years and the pandemic, Acciardo was happy to see his team finish the season strong.

"At the beginning, there were questions about whether or not we would even have a season. There was a see-saw of emotions, especially for the seniors, and as coaches, we weren't sure how it would work. So to think, that's how we started and the last game of the season was the Super Bowl, that's a pretty good flow of emotions," said Acciardo.

Acciardo was also proud of his seniors, who set the tone early this season and has helped reinvigorate the culture of Johnston football.

"The seniors get a lot of credit for put-

ting that spark back in the program. The younger kids started coming around, they saw the talent that was here. It was thanks to them, the seniors. What was most impressive about this team was they believed that it takes the whole team to be successful and they started to gel. Our best game that showcased that was (against Classical). We had so many people contribute so well in so many plays," said Acciardo.

This season's run has also garnered more attention from the community, according to Acciardo.

"As much as you want to say that it is all about having fun ... people don't come unless you're winning, fans want to see you win. The crowd showed up, people in the town came. For our kids to be able to play in front of a home crowd for playoffs, it was electrifying. We haven't had this lately, but it was loud to the point where you struggled to hear the plays. That's pretty cool," said Acciardo.

Acciardo added: "From now on, the question is going to be: Why did this team have so much success? We've had talented teams in the past, but why was this the team where everything gelled. And it was because everyone contributed."



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Now that you have received your third round of stimulus payments, perhaps you aren't spending as much on going out for dinner, travel, and entertainment, and given that bank savings rates are minuscule – the question becomes what should you do with your extra money?

If you're considering paying extra on your mortgage, there are two options: making extra payments monthly or paying off the mortgage in a lump sum. Firstly, we will discuss paying extra monthly. Then we will cover the lump sum payoff option.

Some clients have asked "should I use the "extra" money to pay down the principal on my home mortgage?" Well, the answer is... it depends! It depends on your particular situation and the answer that you come up with when you do the math.

First some basics: Most mortgages today allow you to pay extra on your principal each month or as a one-time extra

principal payment, without a "prepayment" penalty. Of course, it is always best to check first to confirm that your mortgage doesn't have a prepayment penalty.

There are two main parts of a mortgage payment: principal and interest. Principal is the actual amount you borrowed, or your outstanding balance and interest is the amount you pay to the financial institution that lent you the money. At the start of the loan, the amount of interest you pay is much larger than the amount of principal that is paid down. By the time you reach your final payments, most of your payment is going toward principal and only a small portion is going toward interest. The process of balancing out the principal and interest each month to keep your monthly payments the same is called amortization.

If you make extra principal payments early in your loan, this will potentially save you thousands of dollars over the life of the loan. However, if you are in the later stages of your loan, there may not be enough interest savings to make it worthwhile by paying down the principal.

This may sound like a great idea, but for some people it may not be the best option. That's because there's an opportunity cost involved: if you pay ex-

tra toward your principal balance, then you can't use that money for anything else nor can you invest that money elsewhere for growth.

Let's look at a few areas that may represent better uses of your money:

Payoff your higher interest rate debt. It may not make sense to pay off a 3% mortgage if you have credit cards or other loans with higher interest rates.

Funding your 401(k). If your employer offers a match to your 401(k) contribution, then ensuring that you're getting the full match amount is an absolute must. If you're not maximizing your contributions to get every possible match dollar, then you're leaving money for your retirement on the table. You may potentially earn more from your 401(k) over the long term than you may save by paying extra on your mortgage principal.

Funding your emergency account. Making sure you have sufficient reserves in the bank to meet unexpected emergencies should they arise. Financial planning guidelines suggest 6-12 months of household or budgeted expenses. However, we recommend having more "pillow money" which may help you sleep better at night knowing you have more than adequate reserves in the bank.

If your monthly budget is too tight, then paying down extra principal may not make the most sense. Pay your monthly bills first and make sure your budget isn't too tight. Next, you may want to protect yourself making sure you have adequate, life, health, disability, and property insurance, especially if you have financial dependents.

Under the right circumstances, making extra principal payments on your mortgage can result in significant savings and can help you to pay off your

mortgage ahead of schedule.

Paying off your mortgage in a lump sum is a question that we hear often. "Let's do the math" is our typical response. Let's say that you have \$100,000 in the bank with a \$50,000 mortgage balance. How much are you earning in the bank versus how much are you paying in interest on the mortgage? If you are paying 3% on the mortgage and could invest at a modest 5% or 6% rate, the math seems to indicate that paying off the mortgage makes mathematical sense.

As always, if you'd like to discuss your particular situation, call our office and one of our advisors can give you more details.

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How to create a realistic budget

FAMILY FEATURES

A budget is one of the most important financial tools in your arsenal, but budgeting isn't one size fits all. In order to be successful, your budget should reflect your income and spending, but also your desires and need to live a balanced life.

Learn to build a realistic budget with these tips from the financial experts at First Boulevard, a Black-owned digital bank with a mission to close wealth gaps and build generational wealth:

Know Your Numbers

Start by gathering all income you receive on a monthly basis. This should include regular income like paychecks, as well as variable income like money from babysitting or driving for a ride-share company.

Next, outline your expenses, or the things you spend your money on each month. To get a more accurate idea, look at your bank or credit card statements. This includes recurring expenses like your rent or mortgage, utilities, car payments and subscriptions, as well as variable expenses that may change from month to month like entertainment and dining out.



Photos courtesy of Getty Images



Look for trends in your variable expenses. Be sure to include everything in your outline, including trips to the hair salon, shopping and other treats.

Determine Essential vs. Non-Essential

Break down your expenses by categorizing them as essential or non-essential. Here, you're differentiating your needs from your wants.

Essentials include things you need to survive, like your mortgage or rent, utilities, groceries and medical needs. Non-essentials include the things you don't necessarily need to survive, but provide you with comforts like cable, gym memberships, dry cleaning or trips to the spa. Non-essentials also include savings and any debts you may have.

Create your budget by listing your essential expenses first. Your debts, like student loans or car loan payments, may not be essential for you to survive, but they are high-priority expenses that need to be paid. Put these at the top of your non-essential expenses list.

Then list other non-essential expenses based on their level of importance to you. For example, if health and wellness are important to you, your gym membership may be higher on your list of non-essential expenses than buying new clothes.

Keep listing your expenses until the total equals all of your income for the month. Using all of your income is called zero-based budgeting, and helps make sure every dollar of your income is accounted for in your budget.

If you get to a point where you don't have enough income to cover all your expenses, review your list of essential and non-essential expenses to look for ways to reduce or eliminate costs.

Be Realistic

When creating a monthly budget, it may be tempting to try and restructure everything to meet your financial goals faster. While this can fast-track your way toward a goal, it can cause you to lose sight of the person who has to do the work to stick with the budget.

Instead of creating a bare bones budget where you limit yourself, plan to allow yourself at least a couple of times per week to indulge in small treats.

Choose a Budgeting Tool

Once you've gathered all of your financial information, it's time to choose a way to manage and track your budget. If you're old school, you may want to use the pencil and paper approach. Or you can start with pen and paper then transfer that information to a budgeting app. By writing it out first, you're more likely to catch mistakes or omissions.

If you're a little more tech savvy, there are some convenient and affordable apps and websites available to help.

The key to creating a realistic budget is balancing the needs of your finances with your personal needs. Find more practical advice and tools for managing your money at bankblvd.com.

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By JENNIFER COATES

Well-known in the hospitality industry is the notion of a “sense of arrival!” Broadly defined, a “sense of arrival” is that special feeling a customer experiences during the first few seconds one arrives at a destination. That desired “sense of arrival” is critical to newcomers as it creates that ever-important first impression.

This same sense of awe and wonder is exactly what prospective residents of The Preserve, the newest addition to the Briarcliffe family, feel when they first walk through the doors of this brand new, state-of-the-art residence in Johnston. A true “sense of arrival” awaits you here.

Every detail draws an eye to each corner of The Preserve’s welcoming lobby, from the furnishings bathed in sunlight to the room’s dramatic lighted wall feature. Everything is sparkling clean and new, with finishing touches being applied before The Preserve’s upcoming Grand Opening. Immediately, potential residents can imagine life here with its comfortable gathering spaces and energizing colors, textures, and patterns. The Preserve is quite literally, alive!

The Preserve at Briarcliffe is the longtime vision of President/CEO Akshay Talwar come to fruition. As with the other residences on this sprawling campus, this latest installment is the result of years of thoughtful planning. Each of this residence’s 66 apartments is designed to meet the specific needs of those who are either completely independent or those who require assistance with such basic needs as medication management or help with simple activities of daily living. It is the ultimate senior living; Briarcliffe is now a Continuing Cared Retirement Community (CCRC).

For the residents who will soon fill this newly opened destination in town, every amenity and lifestyle choice has been carefully calculated and implemented. Restaurant-



A “sense of arrival” awaits you at The Preserve at Briarcliffe, a Continuing Cared Retirement Community in a peaceful, shady corner of Johnston. Call 401-944-2450 to schedule your personal tour.

style dining, housekeeping, landscaped grounds to explore, sunny patios and balconies, a full-service salon and fitness center, laundry service and cozy lounges where scheduled activities and entertainment are held. The Preserve has the feeling of luxury living where people like Samantha Bennett, the resident’s Engagement Director, plan activities that invite socialization, friendships, and ongoing enrichment ~ with all the amenities of comfort and convenience that make this place so memorable.

The Preserve’s apartments come in six different floor plans from studio-size units to one bedrooms. Each apartment has a kitchenette (complete with quartz countertops, smaller-scale refrigerators, and a microwave), “European-

style” bathrooms for safe and easy barrier-free access, wheelchair-width doors for those with mobility challenges, and large windows that let in all that natural light. The two-story building has two elevators, wide hallways bookended by plate-glass windows and lined with sturdy handrails. No detail is left undone.

Now is the time to schedule your in-person tour of this new and exciting residence (masks required!) at 49 Old Pocasset Road in a wooded corner of Johnston. The Preserve is set amid tall, graceful trees that provide privacy, shade, and natural beauty. To arrange for your tour, call 401.944.2450 or visit their new website, www.briarclifferi.com.

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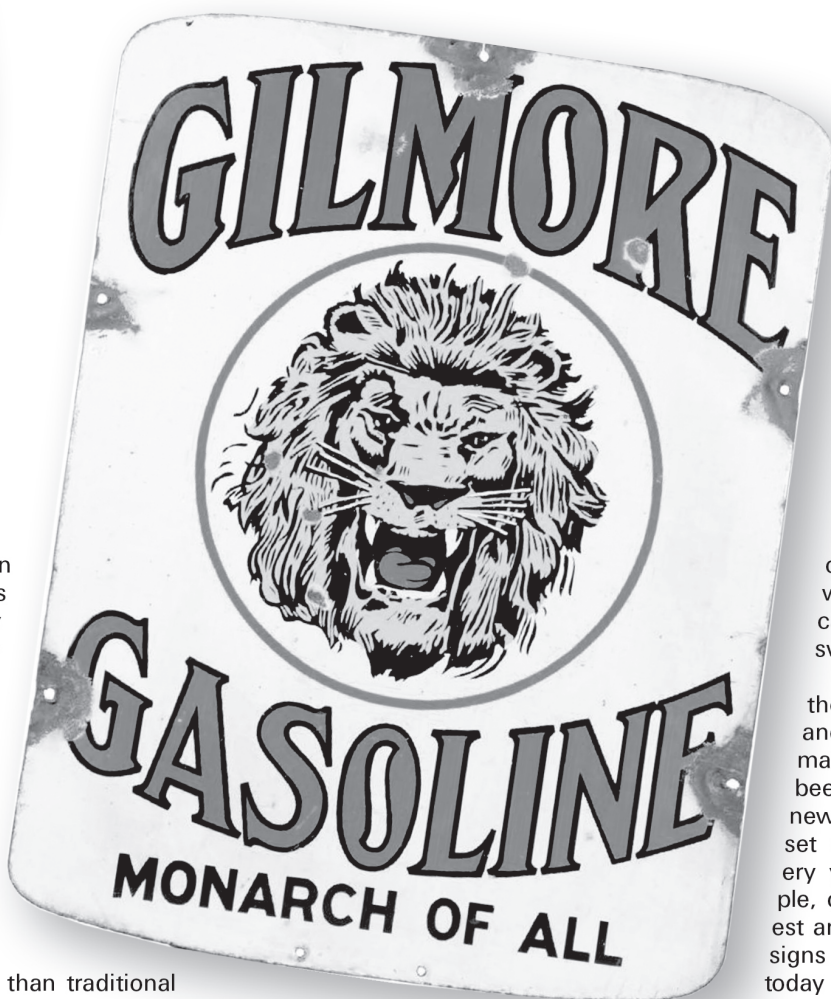


(10-week commitment)

COLLECTIBLES

“PETROLIANA”

goes hand in hand with
automobilia.



By Travis Landry
Auctioneer & Specialist
Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers
Cranston, RI

As we learned before in the antiques and auction world one of the hottest collectibles that has been and always will be is automobilia. Everybody loves their car, and when you have the perfect car you want the perfect garage to keep it in. So you might wonder, what does someone decorate their garage with? “Petroliana”, which goes hand in hand with automobilia is the field of collectibles which relates to everything of the petroleum industry. You can’t drive your 1970 Corvette without gas, so why wouldn’t you want a sign of the iconic Sinclair brontosaurus or Mobil Pegasus.

Within the field of petroliana everything from store displays, gas pumps, oil cans, and even old complimentary road maps can be collectible. But of all the internal categories of petroliana the one that drives collectors crazy is signage. Now like anything else there are signs worth \$75.00 with other’s easily worth \$15,000 or more.

The question is what makes the difference. Age is key, and it is very easy to identify once you get to handle a sign or two. Prior to World War II but after 1900, the majority of petrol and oil advertising signs were made

of porcelain enamel on rolled iron. These signs were dense and sturdy compared to the original American way of utilizing tinpainted and sand painted wood signage. Originally invented in Europe, the porcelain enamel process allowed manufacturers to create vibrant high gloss polychrome decorations which had far more longevity than traditional paint. A porcelain sign made in

1900 can look as if it were made yesterday if preserved correctly, but the process was very labor intensive and cost prohibitive. During World War II the porcelain sign industry became nearly extinct never returning to favor due to the need of metal for the war effort. Outside of time passing by, the scrap drives of World War II are the largest contributing factor as to why porcelain signage is so rare today. Post World War II the signage industry transitioned predominately to silk screen printing or paint on tin, as enamel required a sturdier metal making the process obsolete. Today only a handful of porcelain sign manufacturers remain, but make limited and commissioned signage for municipal and private parties. Just like animals which formed oil, porcelain petrol advertising is extinct today. So if you’re sitting at home and have the vestiges of your Grandfather’s Gilmore

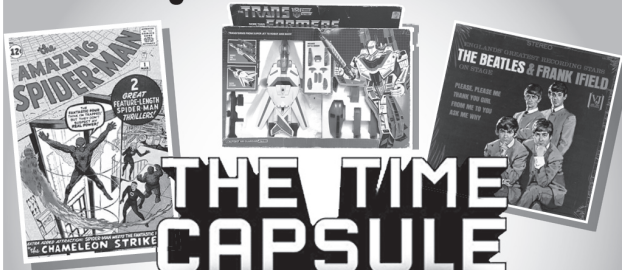
ore gas station wanting to cash in, the answer is auction. Present day the petroliana and advertising market has never been hotter, with new records being set at auction every year. In example, one of the rarest and most iconic signs sought after today is a 42” diameter Kelly Tires sign. near mint condition

On average in the sign sells between \$40,000 and \$50,000 with the next one always selling higher than the last. So before you put Grandpa’s sign out on the lawn during your next yard sale, make sure to contact a specialist because the sign can be more valuable than the liquid gold it represents.



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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

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This young boy has a sad story but we are hoping to find him a happy home! DJ was found outside fending for himself so he is a little shy but you can tell he wants to be loved. He will take some time, love and understanding in his new home so he is



Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

best suited for a cat savvy person who will let him blossom on his own time. DJ is a handsome young Tuxedo with a lovely black and white coat and light golden, green eyes. Like many cats who are found outside DJ has feline leukemia virus or FeLV which the folks at the rescue can tell you more about. Please think about giving this young boy the chance he so deserves! DJ is available for adoption at Pawswatch at the Community Cat Care Center in Johnston. You can email the for more information at communitycatcarecenter@gmail.com or call 401-603-0368. If you've been wanting to help an animal in need, DJ is that boy!

If you have been looking to adopt or know of an animal in need, please contact Karen directly at **animaltalk1920@gmail.com**

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Photo credit: Hillary Gillinder Photography

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