

## Chief Rainone Gym renovated

By RORY SCHULER

As boys they bounced basketballs up and down the hardwood court.

As successful adults with careers in the building trades, a group of Johnston men have been working hard to bring the Chief Rainone Gym back to life.

"Over the past few weeks there has been quite a bit of activity there," said Christopher Correia, director of Johnston's Recreational and Community Services. "We'd like to have the Rainone gym refurbished to assist us in our programming, and we'd like to have open gym time for Johnston youth to play there again."

The 71-year-old facility at 45 Mill St. shows its age. Accessibility issues presented challenges both inside and out.

"We'd like the gym to handle overflow from the new indoor recreation center, which gets quite busy," Correia said. "Renovations are long overdue."

Town officials have decided to use a hybrid funding approach to rehabilitate the gym. About half of the nearly \$1 million project will be funded by taxpayers, while the other half has been contributed by local unions and businesses donating workers and materials, Correia explained.

■ GYM - PAGE 15



**HARDWOOD:** The Chief Rainone Gym, a 71-year-old facility at 45 Mill St., is undergoing a full renovation, inside and out. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



**MEMORIAL MOMENT:** Johnston Cub Scouts Andre Slinko, Anthony Brooks and Asher Mouser hold three of the 1,584 American flags they and their fellow scouts placed Saturday at Highland Memorial Park Cemetery in Johnston. (Photo by Pete Fontaine)

## Flags for the fallen

Scouts place more than 1,500 banners on veterans' graves

By PETE FONTAINE

It's a Memorial Day tradition unlike any other in Johnston.

It features more than 1,500 American flags and serves as a lesson for young children and reminder for older folks of just how important it is to remember each and every veteran who helped preserve the nation's freedom.

But this time around, rain blanketed Highland Memorial Park Cemetery and men like Dave Slinko were worried few people, if any, would turn out for the always special ceremony that had to be scaled down because of the inclement weather.

"The more it rained the more I figured we wouldn't have many people," said Slinko, who in recent years has organized the Memorial Day ceremony for Johnston's Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts and serves as Den Leader for Troop 20. "We were all thrilled with the large turnout of families and kids that showed up and helped make Saturday morning extra special."

■ FLAGS - PAGE 16

## Town buys Willow Street Fire Station for \$10

By RORY SCHULER

The town of Johnston will take ownership of the Willow Street Fire Station, which has served as a reliable virus test-site over the past year.

Early in his career, Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisenia worked as a firefighter at the station, formerly owned by the Thornton Volunteer Fire Company.

"I spent several years as a very young firefighter down there," Polisenia said. "The building is in good shape."

The town agreed to pay a nominal \$10 fee to take possession of the building.

Bids will be sought to install a new roof on the station, and as its new owners, the town will pay for utilities and upkeep.

Town Council unanimously approved Resolution 2021-18: A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of the Willow Street Fire Station from the Thornton Volunteer

Fire Company, during a special meeting last week, held on Thursday, May 27.

The resolution stipulates that the town will not sell the fire station.

"The town cannot sell it," Polisenia said. "Pretty soon you won't be able to buy a pack of gum for \$10, so we got a good deal."

Polisenia said the more than 70-year-old building will be used to shelter reserve fire rescue apparatus and serve as a training site, post-pandemic.

"We can surely use it," Polisenia said. "That building has a lot of roots in the community; 60 years ago that's where everybody gathered. It has a lot of meaning. It would be disrespectful to sell it."

Since the start of the pandemic, the town has used the Willow Street Fire Station as a Covid-testing site.

■ FIRE - PAGE 16



**REAL ESTATE DEAL:** Johnston has purchased the Willow Street Fire Station, 1 Willow St., from the Thornton Volunteer Fire Company, for \$10. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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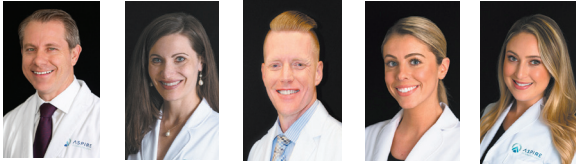


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# First responders treated to lunch at The Bridge

By PETE FONTAINE

Sometime around high noon last Friday, Maryann Grace walked outside The Bridge at Cherry Hill onto the patio and issued her usual friendly greeting asking: "How's everything gentlemen?"

"We've got plenty of food and please enjoy yourselves!"

Grace's warm welcome was also the prelude to an event that has become a trademark and tradition at the award-winning retirement center-assisted living facility: a First Responders Cookout-Luncheon.

The Century Park Associates property, located off Cherry Hill Road in Johnston, hosts similar events several times each year. They issue invitations to members of the Johnston Police Department and Johnston Fire Department to join the staff and resi-



**FIRST FORCE:** Members of the Johnston Police Department were guests of honor at The Bridge at Cherry Hill last Friday during the First Responders Luncheon. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

dents for a smorgasbord-like meal that in previous years has also been an early morning breakfast.

Last Friday's invitation, though, came from Cullen McKain, The Bridge's new Sales Director and also Community Relations Director.

McKain's presentation, which was highlighted by yet another fantastic food feast prepared under the watchful eye of Executive Chef Marvin Carter and his staff, received high marks and praise from a host of people including Johnston Police Chief Joseph P. Razza and many members of the town's Fire Department.

"I can't thank Mr. McKain, Mrs. Grace, the staff and residents enough for the gracious luncheon they provided to our First Responders here today," said Razza. "Chef Marvin truly outdid himself and we are so appreciative of the overwhelming support The Bridge at Cherry Hill has always provided for us; they are a tremendous community partner."

To which McKain added: "Leading into the Memorial Day weekend the residents and staff here at The Bridge at Cherry Hill celebrated our First Responders and showed our appreciation for all they continue to do by hosting a barbecue on the patio for police, fire and rescue personnel; they have always done so much for us."

McKain, who lives in Warren, went on: "A special thank you to Marvin Carter and the dietary staff that provided this delicious feast."

People like Johnston Police Officer Patrolman David Slinko and Johnston Fire Department Lt. Jon concurred as they enjoyed the menu that consisted of cheeseburgers, hamburgers, hot dogs, BBQ spare ribs, Memphis chicken wings, BBQ beef briskets, grilled salmon with Asian sweet chili glaze, clam cakes and Carter's special chowder. The food received rave reviews from all the first responders in attendance.



**SPECIAL STAFF:** Anthony Russo, Cherra Wheeler, Jon Pistacchio and Evan Cooke were among the Johnston Fire Department Rescue personnel at last Friday's First Responders Luncheon.



**HAPPY HOSTS:** Johnston Police Chief Joseph P. Razza enjoys a lighter moment while saying "Thank You" to Executive Chef Marvin Carter and his staff at The Bridge at Cherry Hill for last Friday's First Responders Luncheon. The group includes: Christy Calitri, Meloney Cross, Doug Horning and Steve Frausto.

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**K**ent Hospital can be seen from Interstate 95, which is a welcome sight if you are in need of emergent medical care. This is especially true when you realize that you're headed to the second most utilized emergency department in the state.

Kent Hospital has long been relied upon to offer compassionate care from birth to end of life and the array of medical milestones in between. Located in the geographic center of the state, Kent Hospital conveniently serves as a health care hub for the populations of Kent County and surrounding cities and towns, with a heavy emphasis on the communities of Warwick, West Warwick, and Cranston with an estimated population of 168,000.

Kent Hospital has more than 2,300 employees and roughly 600 medical staff who maintain a long-standing legacy of care with deep ties to the community; including many of whom reside in the communities they serve. Many members of the hospital staff are proud to say they were born and now work at Kent. The hospital staff follows the mantra of the "Kent Way," which is a commitment to providing high-quality, compassionate, and personalized health care delivered in an interdisciplinary model. All members of the health care team work together to find the right answers and the best approaches to maintain health and wellness.

The employees of Kent Hospital care for their patients, not only because of their professional ethic, but because they see themselves in their eyes, and, in many cases, may even know the person standing before them. There is an idea that all people, on average, are six or fewer social connections away from each other. As Rhode Islanders, we're all keenly aware that it's more likely two degrees of separation. This makes the hospital and local community feel connected and

Kent offers a comprehensive surgical suite in the Ambulatory Services Pavilion, where approximately 10,000 surgeries occur each year. The pavilion has a futuristic feel and includes state of the art medical technology to perform procedures such as robotic surgeries, as well as a wound care center equipped with hyperbaric chambers. Kent Hospital's Wound Care Center is the largest in the region and an integral part of proper care for many conditions, including difficult to heal wounds associated with diabetes, vascular disease, and radiation. Additionally, Kent Hospital is the only location in our state that offers emergency hyperbaric oxygen coverage for carbon monoxide toxicity, which is another time-sensitive and extremely important capability available to our community when it is needed.

Kent Hospital performs over 2,000 non-emergent cardiac procedures per year, keeping those neighbors healthier so they don't end up in an emergency. Unfortunately, heart disease is a leading cause of death in the state and cardiac emergencies frequently occur. In addition to cardiac diagnostic testing capabilities, Kent Hospital offers 24/7 emergent cardiac procedures which are estimated to have saved about 200 local lives per year. Success in an emergency here means that Kent Hospital's patients get to the cardiac catheterization lab within 45 minutes, saving the viability of heart muscle and maintaining their quality of life. This procedure is available at Kent Hospital and select hospitals in Providence. While Rhode Island is not a large state, those minutes of drive time can matter in an emergency.

Kent Hospital continues to invest in equipment designed to offer the latest advances in care and to attract physicians to the area. Robotic surgery utilizing DaVinci or Mako robots, for various

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***There is an idea that all people, on average, are six or fewer social connections away from each other. As Rhode Islanders, we're all keenly aware that it's more likely two degrees of separation. This makes the hospital and local community feel connected and creates a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of our fellow Rhode Islanders. These are real people, employed here for generations, taking exceptional care of real people.***

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creates a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of our fellow Rhode Islanders. These are real people, employed here for generations, taking exceptional care of real people.

Since it first opened its doors to the public in 1951, Kent Hospital has grown from a two-bed emergency room to a 47-bed emergency department making it the second-largest in the state. This emergency department ranks among the top 10 percent nationally. Annually, the Kent Hospital emergency department sees an estimated 68,000 patients in need of care for everything from chest pain, to broken bones, to psychiatric needs. During the global pandemic, Kent Hospital partnered with the state to strategically build and manage a COVID-19 field hospital. Kent has also recently been ranked in the top 250 best hospitals nationally and continues to remain dedicated to providing focused, accessible local care while supporting an impressive national presence and recruitment strategy in partnership with The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

Kent Hospital is essential to the training of medical and nursing students in RI; these students are an essential ingredient to an integrated, academic health system. In collaboration with The Warren Alpert Medical School, over 50 family medicine and approximately 30 internal medicine residents are trained each year, right here in Warwick, with our experts in these areas of practice. This is beneficial not only for the medical school, but also for the patients. Medical students get hands-on experience with our dedicated medical experts, and our patients benefit from an additional fresh perspective of someone who has cutting-edge training in recognizing symptoms and executing best medical practices on behalf of the patient. Several local nursing schools, including URI and RIC, utilize Kent Hospital for clinical rotations. Hospitals that are ever-training are also ever-growing, and by their nature keeping on the leading edge of medicine and nursing.

Kent Hospital also successfully partners with health care entities outside of the Care New England hospital system, allowing the staff greater access to innovative tools and empirical knowledge. Our strong affiliation with Brigham and Women's Hospital, for example, brings surgeons and other specialists right here to provide personalized care. This approach supports local access to care throughout each stage of life's journey, including state-of-the-art surgical and diagnostic options, and an on-site infusion center. This not only allows for the convenience that Rhode Islanders seek, but also for patients to get to know the staff caring for them, and oftentimes even each other.

general and orthopedic surgeries, is another approach that Kent Hospital employs to care for the people of this community. Kent Hospital offers access to complex thoracic surgery. Additionally, Care New England and Kent Hospital's board-certified bariatric physicians offer surgical solutions for obesity and robust weight loss and management programs that include convenient and ongoing support essential to successful long-term weight loss. We offer not just a surgeon, but full programs with support.

Kent Hospital also has the most modern radiation therapy machine available today. Cancers are prevalent and the care for cancer patients is delivered in a highly specialized way. Our breast surgeons are all board-certified within the Care New England health system, and they also specialize in oncoplasty, a surgical technique that combines the latest in plastic surgery with breast surgical oncological procedures which leads to the best healthcare and aesthetic outcomes that patients desire and deserve.

Working at Kent Hospital means that not only do we often recognize and care for those patients that we live near, but it also means that we hope to provide reliable work and economic benefits to our communities - Apponaug, Cowesett, Oakland Beach, Warwick Neck - we know these places by name, and we know that working among the communities that we live is very important. With a renewed eye toward diversity, we are continuously seeking a workforce that is proud to be a part of not only these communities, but others across the state.

Kent Hospital offers high-quality care, right here in your neighborhood, in the middle of the Ocean State. Most of all, we care and will always care about each other - our staff and our patients. While change is inevitable, it'll only be for the better. We will remain the Kent Hospital that you know and rely upon - with the long-standing commitment to support our patients and our staff.

Sincerely,

**Robert J. Haffey, MBA, MSN, RN,**  
President and COO, Kent Hospital

**Paari Gopalakrishnan, MD, MBA,**  
Chief Medical Officer, Kent Hospital

**Judith Ann Thorpe, MSN, RN,**  
Chief Nursing Officer, Kent Hospital



# JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

## DRAG RACING

Around 10:59 p.m., April 25, Johnston Police Officer Michael Schiappa arrived on the scene of a motor vehicle stop in Providence, on Farmington Avenue, near the Johnston border. Johnston Police were dispatched to assist in the vehicle stop.

At the scene Patrolwoman Kayleigh Cooper had issued driver Angel L. Baez Jr., of 50 Prairie Ave., Apt. 516, Providence, a summons for a traffic infraction.

After the vehicle stop was completed and Schiappa was walking back to his marked police cruiser, he allegedly heard Baez rev his car's motor, spin the tires and aggressively pull back onto the roadway, traveling eastbound on Farmington Avenue at a high rate of speed and in a reckless manner.

Schiappa got back into his cruiser, turned on the cruiser's overhead lights and sirens, and attempted to follow Baez in the speed-

ing vehicle. Cooper also followed in her cruiser.

Schiappa attempted a second motor vehicle stop, but as Baez allegedly continued driving at a high rate of speed, he maintained a lead, almost losing the two pursuing officers.

Police said Baez turned left onto Dyer Avenue from Farmington Avenue without stopping at a stop sign. Baez continued northbound on Dyer Avenue and drove around one vehicle on the left side of the roadway, traveling into oncoming traffic, Schiappa wrote in the police report.

Baez then turned right onto Union Avenue without stopping at a red light, police said.

At this time, Schiappa caught up to Baez and detained his vehicle at the intersection of Union Avenue and Laurel Hill Avenue in Providence.

Schiappa notified emergency dispatch personnel that he and Cooper had successfully stopped the

car a second time.

Cooper and Schiappa approached the car and removed Baez from the vehicle without incident. Schiappa placed him under arrest for Reckless Driving, and applied handcuffs, double locked and checked for proper fit.

The vehicle was towed from the scene.

Baez was transported to Johnston Police Headquarters, processed and released with a District Court Summons to appear on July 26. Baez was also mailed summons for three other traffic infractions: Care in starting from a stop, Obedience to devices and Overtaking on left.

## CONSPIRACY

On April 26, Johnston Police Detective Thomas Dwyer responded to Home Depot, 100 Stone Hill Drive, to meet with a loss prevention manager regarding fraud and shoplifting complaints.

The loss prevention

manager provided written statements detailing an incident that occurred on April 10 around 12:20 p.m.

The statements alleged that two men entered Home Depot without any items and walked directly to the lumber department. Moments later, both men were recorded on video surveillance pushing a shopping carriage with two ½ Big Combo sump pumps in the carriage. The men allegedly took the items to the service desk, police wrote in their report.

A store clerk working at the service desk completed the transactions, refunding both customers for the pumps they claimed to have purchased.

Police said Moises Peguero and Julian Balbi both received \$415 store credit refunds after they supplied Rhode Island IDs.

The clerk told police she recognized Balbi, who was given \$415 store credit for the item he had claimed to purchase.

The clerk told police that Balbi "is always in the Home Depot returning merchandise and that is how she is familiar with him," according to the police report.

Police showed the clerk a photo of Balbi, and she immediately identified him as a repeat customer.

Police also discovered the Home Depot Providence branch previously employed Balbi and many co-workers identified him in the surveillance video footage.

After completing the returns, Peguero was also observed on video, around 12:37 p.m., pushing a carriage with a Ryobi surf cleaner valued at \$69.97, and a Ryobi power washer valued at \$299, with Balbi by his side.

Video surveillance captured Balbi exit the store with the shopping cart containing the two items, without making any effort to pay for them, police said.

In the parking lot, Balbi pushed the carriage to a white box truck parked in the rear of the lot. Three minutes later, police said, Peguero exited store while on his cell phone, walked to the truck, and met with Balbi who had already loaded the items into the truck.

The two men fled the scene in the truck, with the allegedly stolen items.

Police tracked the box truck to a local business. The business owner confirmed he owned the truck, but that it was at Northeast Auto Body having work done.

The business owner told police that Balbi was employed by his company, and Peguero had previously worked for him about a year ago. The business owner told police that he did not authorize Balbi to use the company box truck on his day off (April 10).

Police found the truck in the Northeast Auto Body parking lot, at 775 Hartford Ave.

Police called Balbi and asked him to come to

police headquarters for questioning. Balbi agreed, and responded to headquarters on April 27. He was escorted into the Detective Division and advised of his Constitutional rights. Police conducted an interview in a room enabled with audio and video recording.

Police said Balbi confessed to fraudulently returning the sump pumps and shoplifting, according to the police report. He also admitted to operating his employer's box truck.

Police showed Balbi photographs from the incident, and he confirmed the images showed himself and Peguero.

A National Crime Information Center (NCIC) check on Balbi turned up previous Federal/US Secret Service Providence agency charges for Fraud-aggravated identity theft, fraud-theft of government property and fraud-conspiracy, from 2014.

Police charged Balbi with obtaining money-false pretense/personation under \$1,500, shoplifting-misdemeanor, larceny under \$1,500 and conspiracy.

Balbi was processed and released with a 3rd District Court summons and a date set to appear on July 26. Balbi was also advised that Home Depot had issued a no-trespass order against him.

Police tried to locate Peguero, but were unsuccessful. They issued an arrest warrant.

Peguero turned himself in at Johnston Police Headquarters on April 28. He was escorted to the Detective Division, notified of his rights, and interviewed. Police said he also confessed to the crime.

Peguero was also charged, processed and released with a district court summons. He also received a no-trespass order from Home Depot.

## POSSIBLE B&E

On May 11, at about 7:45 a.m., Johnston Police officers were dispatched to a home for a report of a possible breaking and entering on the premises.

On the scene, an officer observed a female, later identified as Lily Arredondo, standing at the rear of the home.

Police gave her verbal commands to turn around and put her hands behind her back. She complied and was placed in handcuffs.

Arredondo told police she was with her boyfriend who took off running when police arrived. She was standing near a broken window, with broken pieces of glass on the ground, police said.

At the same time, a second person, later identified as Bryan Boche, ran through the backyard toward Railroad Avenue, according to police reports.

Police watched Boche cross George Waterman Road, where they took him into custody.

Police concluded that Arredondo was the lookout for Boche, who was allegedly attempting to break the rear window of the home, which was unoccupied and for sale.

Police found a double-paned basement window broken at the rear of the home.

Both Boche and Arredondo were taken into custody and transported to police headquarters.

Arredondo, of 3124 Pawtucket Ave., East Providence, was charged with disorderly conduct and released with a District Court summons to appear in court on Aug. 2.

Boche, of 93 Boutwell St., Apt. 1, Pawtucket, was charged with vandalism/malicious injury to property, and held pending an interview with detectives.

Boche was arraigned on the vandalism charge, and bail was set at \$1,000. He was then presented as a 46G bail violator on two open Pawtucket Police cases, and held without bail until a status conference on those cases on May 18.

## VEHICLE FRAUD

On April 16, at 4 p.m., police responded to a rental agency in town for the report of a stolen rental vehicle.

Johnston Police Officer Kevin W. Lyons spoke to an employee at the agency, who told him that on April 8, a customer rented a vehicle but had not returned or paid for the rental.

Payment was due on April 15, and the agency had made several attempts to contact the renter.

The agency told police that they wanted to pursue criminal charges. The report was forwarded to the Johnston Police Detective Bureau for investigation.

The agency provided the name of the renter, and police made several attempts to contact her to locate the vehicle. They traveled to her Woonsocket address, but were unsuccessful.

On April 19, police spoke to management at the rental company, and discovered the vehicle had still not been located.

The next day, police issued an affidavit and arrest warrant for the suspect, Kaitlin A. Kuneluis, 163 Greene St., R-Side, Woonsocket. The vehicle plates were reported as stolen.

On May 4, Woonsocket Police contacted Johnston Police to inform them they had located the vehicle and taken Kuneluis into custody.

Johnston Police traveled to Woonsocket Police Headquarters, took custody of Kuneluis, and transported her to Johnston Police Headquarters.

The vehicle, a 2021 Jeep Cherokee, was towed.

Kuneluis was charged with obtaining vehicles with intent to defraud, processed and fingerprinted.

She was released with a District Court summons to appear on July 26.

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# 'Grassroots' Neighborhood Watch aims to grow

By PETE FONTAINE

Would-be visitors to District 2 in Johnston who are thinking about committing a crime – or just dumping trash – better beware: The town's first-ever Neighborhood Watch Team has its eyes focused on you!

In what's being called a "collaborative effort" between Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena, the nationally-accredited Johnston Police Department and District 2 Councilwoman Lauren Garzone, nine area residents turned out at the Senior Center last Thursday night for a highly-informative presentation.

Many in attendance said they believe the newly formed neighborhood watch group may be the first volunteer resident organization of its kind in Johnston history.

"The men and women of the Johnston Police Department are extremely excited in the launch of this community partnership," Johnston Police Chief Joseph P. Razza told District 2 residents. "We look forward to working one-on-one with the residents in this district and together we will address quality of life issues as they arise."

Razza also explained: "The (Neighborhood) Watch is a grassroots method for the residents in this district to open lines of communication, meet their neighbors and develop relationships that build community resiliency."

Razza was accompanied by Deputy Chief Mark Vieira, Capt. Joseph Salvatore and Capt. Troy Maddocks, who collectively bring nearly 40 years of experience and service to the table.

The town's top cop, already a veteran lawman, is a Johnston native serving his first year as Chief



**NEIGHBORHOOD NICHE:** Johnston's first-ever Neighborhood Watch group, which is backed by the Johnston Police, includes Louis Spremulli, Kevin Falk, Ron Cronin, John Butler, Frederick Graham, Brad Rounds, Rafael Diaz and Heather Langlois. They're joined by Captains Troy Maddocks and Joseph Salvatore, Chief Joseph Razza, Councilwoman Lauren Garzone and Deputy Chief Mark Vieira. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

after working his way through the ranks.

Razza tried to be thorough in covering a myriad of subjects during his presentation that echoed the Johnston Police Department's credo of "Working Together, Making a Difference."

He said he was "pleased with the turnout of this initial meeting and confident in the growth and success of this program."

Razza further explained that the Neighborhood Watch is a program in which a group of residents living in the area want to make their neighborhood safer by working with members of the

police department.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for our residents to volunteer and work towards increasing safety and security in their neighborhood," Razza said. "Volunteers often choose to mobilize and walk the streets and report suspicious activity to the (Johnston) Police, and we will also provide you with printed crime prevention information." Razza distributed three packages at the meeting last Thursday night.

Razza also emphasized "the most important thing to remember is that everyone should be a

good neighbor and take an active role in looking out for one another."

"If you see or observe something of a suspicious nature, bring it immediately to the attention of the police," Razza said.

Meanwhile, Garzone – who was formerly a member Johnston School Committee before being elected to the District 2 Council post -- was ecstatic with the turnout and thanked each and every resident for their interest. She said she is looking forward to the town's first-ever Neighborhood Watch growing in numbers.

"It is often said that safety starts at home," Garzone began. "Many home owners spend lots of money on things like sophisticated security systems and cameras, etc. but one solution is the Neighborhood Watch, a group of citizens coming together to make a commitment to be vigilant and observant and to do what they can to prevent crimes like vandalism burglary, speeding vehicles and even dumping trash."

She also noted "there are also many pluses to formation of a Neighborhood Watch group, one being an effective and least costly way to prevent crime and it can also forge strong bonds among residents to improve relations between police and the community they serve."

Garzone pointed out "there are other countless benefits derived from a Neighborhood Watch group, such as law enforcement officers will learn the needs of their various district neighborhoods, and the attributes and dynamics of their volunteers so they will be able to tailor their activities and responses to meet the ever-changing needs of their citizens."

Now that the group has been formed, it's up to the nine charter members, as well as other residents, to recruit more members, further increasing participation while also enhancing the quality of life in District 2 and eventually other parts of town.

Anyone who would like further information about Neighborhood Watch, or would like to join the group, has been urged to call Capt. Salvatore, Commander of the Traffic/Special Services Bureau, at (401) 787-3127 or email jsalvadore@johnstonpolice.com.



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## Clean Days on the Greenway Community Cleanup on Saturday

Pitch in to pick up at this year's Clean Days on the Greenway Community Cleanup. The Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council will be hosting a community cleanup and tree planting at Cricket Field in Johnston from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 5. The event contributes to the council's efforts in connecting community members along the Woonasquatucket River Greenway from Providence to North Smithfield. Volunteers will be preparing the park for summer by planting shrubs, weeding and completing other projects with guidance from the River Ranger team. The WRWC's New Voices at the Water Table cohort will be in attendance. The New Voices cohort is a new environmental resilience and leadership adult education program for Olneyville residents that meets monthly with virtual cohort meetings and in-person learning experiences. Cricket Field is located at 15 Riverside Ave. in Johnston. (Submitted photo)



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## Council asks state to delay revaluation

By RORY SCHULER

Full reassessments of homes in Johnston may be delayed a year, following a unanimous vote by Johnston Town Council last week.

The state still needs to approve the resolution.

During a special meeting of Town Council on Thursday, May 27, Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena urged members to vote to delay assessments, which require on-site visits and home entrances by property evaluators.

"First of all, people are just getting over Covid," he said this week. "This year would be a full reevaluation, and they'll have to go inside the home and on the property. I don't think people will be very comfortable with that. I thought it was best to put it on hold until next year."

State law requires statistical reassessments of properties in each municipality every three years, and full evaluations every 10 years.

Polisena helped lead an effort to increase the time between evaluations, from three years to seven years for statistical assessments, and 10 years to 15 years for full evaluation

assessments.

"That effort was to no avail," Polisena said. "The legislature never passed it for some reason."

The pandemic, however, has convinced Polisena the process needs to slow down, at least for this year.

"By next year, hopefully, Covid will be in our rearview mirror," he said. "I feel this is in the best interest, of first and foremost the taxpayers, and also those who do the reevaluations."

If reassessments were completed on schedule, Polisena said he doesn't "think we'll get a full and accurate reading of what properties are worth."

The town puts requests for evaluators out to bid. This year, the town has not yet started the bidding process.

"I don't think it will be that much of a loss as far as losing revenue," Polisena said. "Taxes have been stable for four years. I know property values are high, but I don't think they will drop next year."

Polisena expects the town will seek bids for evaluations by January or February of 2022.

"People are still concerned and afraid," Polisena said. "To have

someone come into the home and look around, poke around, they're not ready for that. I think by next year we will be back to normal and stronger than ever. I explained the same thing to council members."

Getting an accurate measurement of property values throughout the town is Polisena's top priority.

"You don't want to overvalue, or undervalue someone's home," Polisena said.

Within four weeks, Polisena, a former state senator, plans to contact the Rhode Island Speaker of the House and Senate president, to discuss the requested delay. The mayor is confident Johnston will not be the only municipality in the state requesting a delay.

"I think this is something we can get done pretty quick," he said.

The short special meeting of Town Council lasted less than 15 minutes.

Resolution 2021-19: A Resolution Requesting that the General Assembly Extend the Town's Revaluation Cycle by One (1) Year for the purposes of Health and Safety, passed unanimously in a 5-0 vote.

## Radiothon raises \$453K for Hasbro

Held on May 13, the annual Hasbro Children's Hospital Radiothon saw the community come together with an outpouring of generosity, raising \$453,151 for the area's only pediatric hospital. The funds will support patient care, research, and programs like the Healing Arts, pet therapy, and Child Life.

"The way Radiothon brings thousands of people together to make an impact in the lives of our patients and their families is absolutely incredible," said Saul N. Weingart, MD, PhD, president of Rhode Island and Hasbro Children's hospitals. "We are fortunate to have not only dedicated partners in Cumulus and its talent, but also an extremely generous community of donors. Thank you to everyone who helped to make Radiothon a special day for Hasbro Children's Hospital."

During the 12-hour event – which was broadcasted simultaneously on Cumulus Providence stations 92 PRO-FM, Lite 105, News Talk 630 & 99.7, and Hot 106 – Hasbro Children's patients, families and staff took to the airwaves to share their inspiring stories of hope and healing.

"We are proud to continue our longstanding commitment to Hasbro Children's Hospital and to the families that depend on its world-class care," said Holly Paras, market manager for Cumulus Providence. "Radiothon always brings out the best in our community and this year was no different. I could not be more grateful to our listeners for their incredible generosity or to the Cumulus team for the way they embrace the day."

As listeners across Rhode Island and nearby Connecticut and Massachusetts were introduced to patients and their journeys with rare blood disorders, aggressive cancers, cerebral palsy, and life-threatening heart conditions, volunteers manned a socially distanced phone bank on the hospital's campus, answering calls to accept donations throughout the day.

Radiothon donations do a world of good for kids, because they support the hospital's ability to provide our region's children and their families the best care possible. Over the years, these funds have helped to purchase medical equipment and support programs that rely heavily on philanthropy. Since its inception, Radiothon has raised more than \$9.2 million for Hasbro Children's Hospital.

Among the sponsors and supporters of this year's Radiothon, many of which matched gifts during special "power hours" and volunteered to answer calls, were Mi-Box Moving & Mobile Storage of RI; Alexander's Uniforms; Jordan's Furniture; Dunkin'; Walmart; Mr. David Schuller; Shaw's; Blue Cross and Blue Shield of RI; DAI Restore; Nathan Clark and Associates; Providence Auto Body; Marshall; and Cox Business.



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**CALL TO ACTION:** Tom Pendergast, who presented a slideshow at the Saves the Lakes forum last week, told attendees the Ocean State's ponds and lakes are over-run with invasive species. (Sun Rise photo)

# Save the Lakes seeks to make waves statewide

By RORY SCHULER

Lake lovers gathered in Johnston to form an action plan aimed at saving the Ocean State's freshwater lakes.

The organization Save the Lakes (STL) held its Lake and Watershed Annual Forum in a pavilion at Johnston's War Memorial Park last Wednesday.

Judy Colaluca, President and Co-founder of Save the Lakes, said the group's "mission is to get some knowledge out there."

She said that STL members receive information on current and critical lake issues through email communications, access to environmental agency personnel at forums and workshops, and opportunities to network with other members at live events.

The organization wants to save "every lake in the state," said Marsha Czubak, a member from Johnston.

"We're trying to make people aware of their water, and how to keep it clean," Czubak said. "People need to know that even fertilizer on their lawns goes into lakes. It all flows down."

Save The Lakes was founded as the only statewide organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of Rhode Island's lakes, ponds and fresh water resources, according to the group's website.

"We provide a forum for education, discussion and action on lake-related issues; we advocate for better fresh water management policies at the local, state and federal levels," according to Save the Lakes.

The organization is managed entirely by volunteers and is a non-profit group.

We are supported almost exclusively through membership dues and donations, which are fully tax deductible," according to Save the Lakes. "Members are encouraged to join one of STL's committees to become actively engaged in critical issues and interesting challenges, while gaining valuable information on lake and watershed issues."

"If you are a permanent or part-time lake area residents, recreational lake user, lake area or lake dependent business, we encourage you to join STL and support our efforts for your lake's sake," according to the STL website.

This year's Save The Lakes Annual Forum was held Wednesday, May 26, in

the Dunn Building Pavilion in Johnston's War Memorial Park. For more information, to join or donate, go to the organization's website, [stlri.org](http://stlri.org).

Colaluca wrote a letter to her members and the public, in an effort to spur awareness and increase membership.

"Save The Lakes, Inc. is a growing organization with the primary purpose of addressing the needs of all fresh water bodies in Rhode Island," she wrote. "While we may be the Ocean State, we all need fresh water to live. It's a natural resource that can't be neglected and can't be replaced once it's gone. Fresh water is critical for all life today and for the future of our children and grandchildren. We must not take it for granted!"

She warned that many of life's daily activities affect local lakes, ponds and streams.

"Polluted runoff from roads, lack of maintenance of dams, movement of invasive plants and unwanted animal species, trash and litter, septic drainage directly or indirectly seeping into groundwater, the use of excess lawn fertilizers and phosphates, compost runoff, filling of shoreline, clearing of shoreline vegetation, and so much more," she wrote. "There is much work to be done to protect and restore these critical local gems!"

Colaluca described her organization as "a diverse group of concerned citizens working together to address the issues impacting our fresh water bodies."

The group plans and presents educational programs across Rhode Island. They are particularly concerned with addressing invasive species in lakes and ponds. The group can also instruct members on how to set up a boat inspection station at the boat ramps to educate boaters about the importance of not transporting invasive species from one lake to another.

Though, according to member Tom Pendergast, who presented a slideshow at the Johnston forum, the "time has passed" for prevention efforts. The Ocean State's ponds and lakes are over-run with invasive species.

Pendergast warned members that there are few options left to fight aquatic invaders.

"We need to fix lakes or the lakes will disappear," he said. "The Rhode Island legislature needs to fund the lakes. The horse is already out of the barn."

**johnstonsunrise.net**





**ON THE STAGE:** Most of the 29 students inducted into the National Honor Society from Johnston High School attended an in-person event in the school's auditorium. It was the first in-person event at the school in more than a year. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

# 29 students join National Honor Society

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston High School held its first in-person event in more than a year.

"It is a great honor to be inducted into the National Honor Society," said Caleb Lee, President of the school's society. "We knew we needed to do everything we could to be here today."

New members of the Honor Society banded together early this year, spending the pandemic performing impressive feats of community service.

They held blood drives and park cleanups and collected toys at Christmastime for families in need.

"The amount of work we were able to accomplish under the circumstances is something to be proud of," Lee said.

New members were called onstage one-by-one. In all, 29 students joined the National Honor Society last week.

Honor Society advisor Emilia Ruggiero told the crowd that it was "so fitting" that the Honor Society induction ceremony was the school's "first in-person event since 2020."

Parents took seats in small groups, while the students filled the center isles, seats spaced between them.

"I'm very proud to say I am principal to these fine young people," Principal Dr. Donna Pennacchia told the small crowd gathered in the school's auditorium. "They all worked very hard under very stressful circumstances."



**INDUCTEES**

- Ifeoluwa Alarapon
- Kayla Aquilante
- Joyce Armstrong
- Gabriella Athaide
- Ian Michael Cabrera
- Grace Centracchio
- Patricia China
- Trista Clark
- Nicholas Cronan
- Maxwell El Hage
- Melissa Garofalo

- Laila Harrington
- Caleb Lee
- Audry Mahony
- A'amani Maxie
- Brooke Marcotte
- Sarah Monahan
- Olaitan Olagundoye
- Derek Papa
- Sofia Paris
- Ava Pastore
- Nicholas Petrillo
- Melanie Privitera

- Brynn Roche
- Justin Salvatore
- Skyler Stone
- Grace Thomas
- Melanie Vessella
- Caitlynn Zinni

**OFFICERS**

- Caleb Lee, President
- Kayla Aquilante, Vice President
- Trista Clark, Historian
- Sarah Monahan, Parliamentarian



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# Where are all the workers?

Can summer happen if there aren't enough workers to serve lobster rolls, staff life-guard stations and fill other jobs? That's a big concern in Rhode Island, where tourism is one of the state's biggest industries.

Matt Weldon, director of the state Department of Labor and Training, believes that the General Assembly's recent passage of a bill meant to get more people back to work, by allowing unemployment claimants to retain UI benefits, will do the trick.

"I've been working in the Assembly in various capacities for 22 sessions – that's one of the quickest bills that I remember passing," Weldon said on Political Roundtable at The Public's Radio last week. "And it passed for a good reason. We think it's going to save the Unemployment Trust Fund money and it's going to help people transition back into the workforce. You know, changing human behavior is hard. Making people know that it's safe and it's okay to go back to work is a difficult message to send, but we're trying to send it every day."

Weldon said DLT is monitoring the situation, and he notes how expanded federal benefits expire in early September – potentially leaving people in the lurch if they don't get back to work. At the same time, he said, Rhode Island's 6.3 percent unemployment rate is in line with the regional and national average. "We're in the game right now – I think we're going to stay on the front end of that curve."

While some conservatives blame expanded unemployment benefits for the reluctance of some Americans to return to work, The New York Times' David Leonhardt of-

## TALKING POLITICS



by  
IAN  
DONNIS

fers this perspective: "That so many are complaining about the situation is not a sign that something is wrong with the American economy. It is a sign that corporate executives have grown so accustomed to a low-wage economy that many believe anything else is unnatural."

### Gorbea's early announcement

Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea dropped the pretense about her gubernatorial ambitions by formally declaring her 2022 run last week. With a video release in English and Spanish, Gorbea became the first major candidate to announce her challenge for the job held by Gov. Dan McKee.

While this reveal came unusually early in the '22 cycle, it signals that Gorbea is ramping up her fundraising and messaging in earnest. Jumping into the gubernatorial pool ahead of Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza could offer some benefits, since both will seek campaign contributions from Latino sources outside Rhode Island. At the same time, McKee now has an intra-party foil with whom to test-drive his campaign messaging.

### How to get Smith Hill's attention

The aggressive legislative ground campaign waged last year by SEIU 1199NE – a significant factor in how former House Speaker Nicholas Mattiello lost his Cranston state rep seat – did not go unnoticed on Smith Hill. That effort helps explain why the legislature moved quickly to approve a nursing home staffing bill and why Gov. Dan McKee signed it last week, over the strenuous objections of the nursing home industry.

### George Floyd's death, one year later

One year after the death of George Floyd, how much has changed in America? The issue of race and justice has a heightened profile, to be sure. In one example of that, news organizations like 60 Minutes and The New York Times have delved into such overlooked parts of American history as the Tulsa massacre of 1921.

At the same time, in Rhode Island, the outlook for making changes to the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights – seen by critics as an obstacle to appropriate discipline for wayward officers – remains uncertain. During a Statehouse event marking the anniversary of Floyd's death, state Sen. Tiara Mack (D-Providence) said she worries about losing momen-

tum: "That's my biggest fear of this moment. Especially as the world starts to open up, and people kind of shake off the last year of being in isolation – that we lose that sense of urgency."

### Taking on gun violence

About 100 people gathered at Billy Taylor Park in Providence's Mount Hope neighborhood last week to talk about next steps after a recent spike in shootings in Providence. The meeting highlighted the work of the Alternatives to Violence Project, which offers programs in a number of states.

It also made clear the unsettled feeling among many people in Providence. Ward 3 Councilwoman Nirva LaFortune said that as the mother of two Black children, "I fear every day. I fear the violence that's within our communities. I fear my kid being stopped because of the color of his skin. I fear the systemic racism that exists within our communities. I live in a constant fear for my children's life. It is unfair. It is unfair."

Later in the week came news that the Nonviolence Institute was receiving a \$500,000 donation from Brown University, the Rhode Island Foundation, and the Partnership for Rhode Island.

Related: Pawtucket and Central Falls announced new nonviolence programs meant to help keep young people safe, and the Nonviolence Institute is boosting its profile in CF.

### Got transparency?

My colleague Lynn Arditi was denied access to a Zoom meeting of the state Equity Council on April 7. Shortly before that meeting, RI Health and Human Services Secretary Womazetta Jones sent an email notice to 39 council members in which she was listed as the meeting's organizer. According to an email sent by Lynn to Attorney General Peter Neronha, she attempted to log in to the meeting, but the host of the meeting would not let her in. Lynn's email continued: "I contacted several state communications officials for help and received a response from Governor McKee's communications director Andrea R. Palagi. She denied my request to listen to the State Equity Council meeting, saying in an email that 'these meetings have not been open to the public.' I replied to Ms. Palagi, asking why the meeting would not be open to the public and stated that preventing a reporter from listening to the meeting appears to violate the state Open Meetings Act." Lynn is pursuing the complaint.

### Whitehouse & 'dark money'

Joe Biden's ascent to the White House led U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse to end his long-running series of speeches on climate change. But now Whitehouse has a new bag – and it won't come as a surprise.

In a statement, the senator's office said his new series

of speeches will expose "the scheme by right-wing donor interests to capture the U.S. Supreme Court and achieve through the Court's power what they cannot through other branches of government. Whitehouse will trace the decades-long roots of the scheme, its development and funding, and its coming to fruition under Donald Trump with the installation of a six-justice right-wing majority on the Court."

Of course, Whitehouse also benefits as an incumbent from his ability to raise millions of dollars. When I reported on the issue in 2019, the senator cited dark money and the threat from his conservative opponents as the reason why he needed to collect so much campaign cash.

### Keeping local news alive

My former Phoenix colleague, Dan Kennedy, a super-smart media critic, offers this tease for his forthcoming book, with Ellen Clegg, on the future of local news: Despite the crisis facing newspapers and other media institutions, "innovative, independent local news organizations are serving their communities and providing them with the news and information citizens need to govern themselves in a democracy. Examples include nonprofit startups, news co-ops and even old-fashioned newspapers that are reinventing themselves under local leaders who bought them back from chain owners. We plan to report on these and other projects in a book tentatively titled 'What Works: The Future of Local News,' to be published by Beacon Press in the second half of 2023. We hope to show that there are alternatives to the decline of local news, and that entrepreneurial journalists are charting a path that others may follow."

### What's in a name?

The name change for T.F. Green is a done deal on Smith Hill and awaiting Gov. McKee's signature. The measure was sharply opposed by Deputy Speaker Charlene Lima (D-Cranston), who argued that changing the name to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport will sow confusion and make the Ocean State a laughingstock in the aviation community. Supporters say the bill will bolster efforts to market Rhode Island.

Many travelers probably favor the superior ease of coming and going from T.F. Green compared to Boston's Logan. Nonetheless, the Rhode Island Airport Corp., said in a news release, "Of the 376 primary mainland airports in the country as defined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) – airports servicing more than 10,000 passengers annually – only 32, including T. F. Green Airport, do not have the city, region or state in its name."

Ian Donniss can be reached at [idonnis@ripr.org](mailto:idonnis@ripr.org). You can follow him on Twitter @IanDon. For a longer version of this column, visit [thepublicsradio.org](http://thepublicsradio.org).

**Watch Your MOUTH**  
 by Rochelle Rhodes, D.M.D. and David McFarland, D.D.S.  
**IS THE AIR AFFECTING YOUR MOUTH?**  
 We can do a lot to maintain healthy, strong teeth and gums, such as keeping them clean by brushing and flossing twice a day and keeping our dental check-up appointments every six months. Once we step out of the house, however, we are vulnerable to the effects of our environment, and so are our mouths. A recent study has shown that people who are exposed to poor air quality are more likely to develop mouth cancer in spite of good dental hygiene. This is because higher levels of particulate matter are breathed in through the mouth. Particulate matter can contain heavy metals (especially in areas with petrochemical plants), which are known to cause cancer. Our many years of experience have taught us that prevention is a key factor in maintaining good oral health as well as overall health. If you are new to the Johnston area and are looking for a family dentist, DENTAL ARTS GROUP would like to extend a welcome and an invitation to visit our office. We know how difficult it can be to find qualified professionals without reliable references. However, we feel that with our approach and our commitment to excellence, we have something unique to offer at 1136 Hartford Ave., Johnston. Call us at 401-521-3661 for an appointment.  
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**Johnston Sun Rise**



**HISTORIC HAPPENING:** Among those people who took part in the official ribbon cutting at the Preserve in Johnston last week are from left: Emanuel Barros, Senior Vice President and Business Banking Team Leader of Bank RI, Nisha Talwar, Briarcliffe Finance Director/Preserve Executive Director, Mayor Joseph Polisena, Gov. Daniel J. McKee, CEO/President Akshay Talwar and Briarcliffe Marketing Director Stefany Reed. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

# The Preserve at Briarcliffe now open to new residents

By PETE FONTAINE

Akshay Talwar had just finished welcoming upwards of three dozen guests to not one but two ribbon-cutting ceremonies at The Preserve, a luxurious 66-unit independent supportive and assisted living facility on the 30-acre Briarcliffe Campus in Johnston.

Talwar sat in a beautiful blue easy chair and announced with a smile: "NOW, we are open!"

Amid a delegation of noted officials, including Rhode Island Gov. Daniel J. McKee, Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena, former Warwick Mayor Joseph W. Walsh and William Murphy, Esq., former speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, Talwar unveiled his latest addition to the 30-acre campus that visitors emphasized "is impressive in appearance and in design and looking unlike any other assisted living and independent living community in the state."

"When it came to the design, we wanted our residents to feel like they were at a high-end condominium resort," Talwar told his guests. "We thought of so many different details, floor to ceiling windows at the end of every corridor to bring light in, cozy and inviting spaces on every floor to enjoy a book or conversation and the color scheme we chose was designed to make people feel serene and safe."

For Talwar, the 50,000 square foot project that broke ground in the fall of 2019 and is now open for new senior citizen residents, The Preserve at Briarcliffe is a dream come true that actually began back in the 1980s.

The project has grown into a multi-building center that provides residents the ability to age-in-place with a five-star award-winning skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility and two memory care assisted living residences.

McKee, who toured the entire facility located deep in the picturesque woods of Johnston off Old Pocasset Road, said he was im-



**SUPER STAFF:** Jen Burns, Sales Director at The Preserve in Johnston is joined by members of the staff that provides everything from loving care to nursing needs and transportation and includes: Shannon Izzi, Deb Petronella, RN, Michelle Ocampo, Jonna Matos, RN/DDS, Helen Calouri, RN, Beth Comella and Jennifer Rossi.

pressed with The Preserve prior to helping Talwar cut the official opening red ribbon.

"I am happy for the entire Briarcliffe team – staff and residents alike – on their new facility," McKee said to start his remarks. "It is clear that significant thought and effort went into this project. This great development comes at a time when we are emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. The team here has gone above and beyond over the past year to keep residents safe and support Rhode Island's efforts to beat this virus. I am thrilled to see that the culture and passion that has always existed at Briarcliffe still remains, thanks to the dedicated staff and friendly residents."

As Talwar later told McKee, Polisena and other guests: "Many talented hands and minds came together to complete this stunning and state of the art facility, including D.F. Pray, DiPrete Engineering, NEMD Architects and Bank RI just to name a few."

Likewise, the famous "Team NiRope" – now just brothers Ron and Pete Cardi, since the passing of Nick Cardi – has also played an important role in furnishing the Briarcliffe Campus over the years. New resi-

dents have the option to include styled furniture, carefully selected by the design team, upon move-in.

The Preserve apartments are available for occupancy in various styles including studio and one-bedroom apartments with private patios and balconies. Sizes vary but all units have kitchenettes with stunning quartz countertops, beautifully designed drapes, closets outfitted from The Container Store and accessible bathrooms.

Perhaps Polisena, who after being part of the official ribbon cutting ceremony and presented Talwar with an Official Commendation from his beloved Town of Johnston, said it best: "The Preserve is beautiful! I am very impressed with the quality of the project and very happy that Akshay Talwar has once again invested in our town."

The Briarcliffe Campus boasts a 60-year presence in Rhode Island providing quality care to seniors. Now the community presents The Preserve, bringing a new level of care and comfort to those looking for an upscale and opulent senior community featuring endless activities, high quality food and the assurance of safety for those in need.

# ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local ♡ Adoptable ♡ Loveable



Sheena

Photo credit: LM Productions

Are you looking for an athletic girl, someone to run with you or to go hiking? Then Sheena might just be the girl for you? This stunning one and half year old black Lab mix loves to run, play fetch and once she feels comfortable with you will be your best friend. Sheena is a bit shy when meeting new people so it may take a few visits with her to see her true personality. She is available for adoption at EGAPL The Heart of RI Animal Rescue League 44 Worthington Road in Cranston. They are now open so please visit the shelter or [www.heartofri.org](http://www.heartofri.org) to fill out an application. You may also call 401-467-3670. Sheena can't wait to meet you and show off her beauty and athleticism!

If you have been looking to adopt or know of an animal in need, please contact Karen directly at [animaltalk1920@gmail.com](mailto:animaltalk1920@gmail.com)



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# SUN RISE SCOOPS

By MERI R. KENNEDY

## Time to get back to networking

As COVID-19 restrictions relax, longtime networking organizer Pat Paolino Cruz is ready to get back to business. The Rhode Island Networking "Getting Back To Business" event, with limited tickets, will be held on June 16 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Chapel Grille in Cranston. To preregister, find the event on eventbrite.com. Online registration ends at 3 p.m. the day of the event and tickets are \$10 in advance and \$20 at the door.

Bring plenty of business cards. This is a great way for others to get to know you face-to-face and learn what you do. No speakers or sales pitches – just a few valuable hours of connecting, communicating and collaborating with real people in a relaxed atmosphere. There will be light appetizers and a cash bar provided by Chapel Grille. Parking is free.

If you would like to showcase your services or products with a vendor table at the event, there are five tables available. Vendor tables cost \$75 and must be reserved in advance through Eventbrite only. Table registration comes with one entrance ticket.

If you would like to do-

nate a basket, product or gift certificate for event raffles, contact Paolino Cruz at (401) 261-3300. Businesses that donate will be included in a spotlight email following event to all guests.

Masks are encouraged if you have not yet been vaccinated, and all COVID-related state enforced guidelines will be followed.

## Garden City SWEAT

Every Saturday, Garden City Center will present its new fitness series, Garden City SWEAT. Each week, they will be bringing you outdoor group workout classes led by instructors from local fitness community, including CORE Studios and Haven Fitness. They mix it up with different styles and intensities, so there's something for yogis, HIIT-lovers and everything in between.

Plus, a lucky participant in each class will win a \$50 gift card to either lululemon or Athleta. Spots are limited. Register and learn more at [gardencitycenter.com/sweat](http://gardencitycenter.com/sweat).

## Tender Love & Healing Day

Have you been hurt by past trauma? Have you been in a domestic violence situation or relationship? You're not alone!

The RI Dream Center

and Delicately Loved Women proudly present Tender Love & Healing Day, free of charge, on Saturday, June 12, at Praise Tabernacle Church on Park Avenue in Cranston.

Attendees will have the opportunity to pamper themselves at one of the free beauty stations, enjoy a few minutes of relaxation in the stretching station, listen to music, and enjoy food and refreshments. Child care will be provided and lots of fun planned for children as well. Each woman and child will receive a gift to bring home and there are lots of giveaways planned.

For more information, visit [ridreamcenter.com](http://ridreamcenter.com).

## Spring Craft & Vendor Show

The St. Mary's Feast Society Ladies' Auxiliary will hold a Spring Craft & Vendor Show on Saturday, June 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Mary's Feast Society building on Phenix Avenue in Cranston.

Vendors are asked to contact the St. Mary's Feast Ladies Auxiliary or Maria Manzi for more information. Find the organization on Facebook.

## Friends of the Mohr Public Library

Friends of the Mohr Public Library is a non-

profit corporation dedicated to Mohr Library.

Members of the Friends plan and run book sales and carry out other fundraising activities to allow Mohr Library to increase services and programs.

The Friends welcome new members who are willing to provide support through donations, membership dues, or volunteering their time.

To find out more, contact the library director at 231-4980 (press 7).

## Mental health education

Anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, post traumatic stress, suicide – all are topics many people prefer not to discuss, so the heartbreak and stigma continue.

If you have a loved family member or a friend who is struggling with a mental health issue, then the Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness can help. NAMI-RI ([namirhodeisland.org](http://namirhodeisland.org)) provides free and virtual education, support and resources. It is currently accepting registrations for its upcoming Family-to-Family course.

For more information, call (401) 331-3060 or mail [beth@namirhodeisland.org](mailto:beth@namirhodeisland.org).

## 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 Beliveau at (401) 562-8353 or [lbeliveau@comcap.org](mailto: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.

## 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 Rhode Island through text alerts to coordinate food deliveries from grocery stores and food pantries. To sign up, go to [BeKindRI.org](http://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 childcare, 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 Arian J. Mohr Memorial Library. Stop by the library to pick up one, or e-mail [meri@mohrlibrary.org](mailto: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 offer 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](mailto:info@mohrlibrary.org) or call 401-231-4980, ext. 7.

## Teen virtual programming

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](mailto: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.

## Did you know?

Flag Day is a celebration of the American flag that occurs each year on the anniversary of the flag's official adoption, June 14.

What we know fondly as the "Stars and Stripes" was adopted by the Continental Congress as the official American flag on June 14, 1777, in the midst of the Revolutionary War. Colonial troops fought under many different flags with various symbols – rattlesnakes, pine trees and eagles – and slogans, such as "Don't Tread on Me," "Liberty or Death," and "Conquer or Die," to name a few.

The Declaration of Independence made the adoption of an American flag necessary. Previously, each colony or special interest had its own flag. (Source: June Fun Facts)

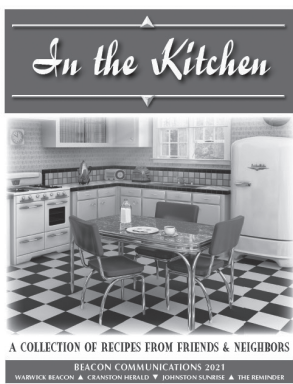
[SunriseScoops@aol.com](mailto:SunriseScoops@aol.com). Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit events as well as virtual events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone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

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# It's Time for Votes on Gun Safety Bills

**PLEASE CALL STATE HOUSE LEADERS AND ASK FOR VOTES ON:**

- ✓ **Limiting Magazine Capacity** House Bill 5554 ~ Senate Bill 414
- ✓ **Regulating Assault Weapons** House Bill 5556 ~ Senate Bill 415
- ✓ **Keeping Guns Out of Schools** House Bill 5555 ~ Senate Bill 73
- ✓ **Cracking Down on Straw Buyers** House Bill 5386 ~ Senate Bill 416
- ✓ **Requiring Safe Firearm Storage** House Bill 5553 ~ Senate Bill 406

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 Guns to Plowshares\*  
 Thoughts Prayers Action\*  
 The Womxn Project  
 RI Democratic Women's Caucus  
 Cranston Forward  
 Pawtucket Advocates for Social Justice

RI State Council of Churches  
 Bishops Against Gun Violence  
 National Council of Jewish Women  
 Providence Presbyterian Church  
 United Church of Christ - Southern New England Conf.  
 Stop Handgun Violence  
 #300 Women  
 Essence T. Christal Memorial Foundation  
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 States United to Prevent Gun Violence  
 RI Antiwar Committee  
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# spotlight ON BUSINESS

## Dreamland Learning Center

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6 Weeks - 12 Years Old

By JENNIFER COATES

Dreamland Learning Center, a creative and cheerful childcare center in Johnston, is a bright and welcoming place where learning is fun and where every space is designed to enrich the growing minds of the many children who come here. This learning center was opened in 2015 and has been evolving and expanding ever since to meet the needs of today's modern family. Dreamland provides a safe, joyful, stimulating and nurturing environment where children can thrive and parents can feel completely confident that their child is getting the best care possible.

Every space in this center is thoughtfully planned and designed to be developmentally appropriate and purposeful. Child-size furniture makes each room look comfortable and adapted to the needs of pint-sized early learners, while shelves are filled with toys, and walls are strewn with art projects. Centers are set up for imaginary play, arts & crafts, building, science, music and story time. The outside playgrounds provide the perfect place for youngsters to run off all that childhood energy. The playgrounds are even divided for children of different age groups. The after-school room is replete with long tables for summer study time.

The curriculum and staff-to-child ratio requirements here meet the strict standards of the state while all staff are licensed and CPR certified. The staff here work as a team with one goal in mind and that is to enrich the lives of the children over whom they have been given this special stewardship. In fact, the whole facility is Bright Star® rated for excellence.

The team at Dreamland continue to be vigilant in their efforts to stave off all sicknesses, but most especially Covid infections. All measures are in place, including the wearing of masks by the staff and constant sanitization. Access to the



Summer camps, beginning on June 28th, are filling up now so call Dreamland Learning Center today and get your child's name on the list for fun and learning all summer!

classrooms in limited to staff and children only and, while in-person tours have been temporarily suspended, virtual tours are offered by appointment. You can be assured that your child is in a secure, and happy place!

If you are looking for childcare this summer or are just interested in giving your child a fun place to spend time with friends, check out the Summer Camps starting soon at Dreamland Learning Center. Beginning on June 28th, your child can enjoy hours of play (including lots of wet water play), outdoor games and of course, lots of learning and socialization. Enrollment is ongoing and sessions are filling

up so plan ahead for your summer and call today. Call or visit their website to learn more!

Dreamland Learning Center is now accepting enrollment for children ages 6 weeks through age 12 years of age. The Center is located at 1253 Hartford Avenue. For more information, to discuss your questions or concerns, call 401-280-1400 or visit their website at [www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com](http://www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com). Normal hours have now resumed to 7:00am to 5:30pm.

Be sure to check out the other Dreamland Learning Centers in West Warwick (401-828-8200) and Pawtucket (401-655-1000).

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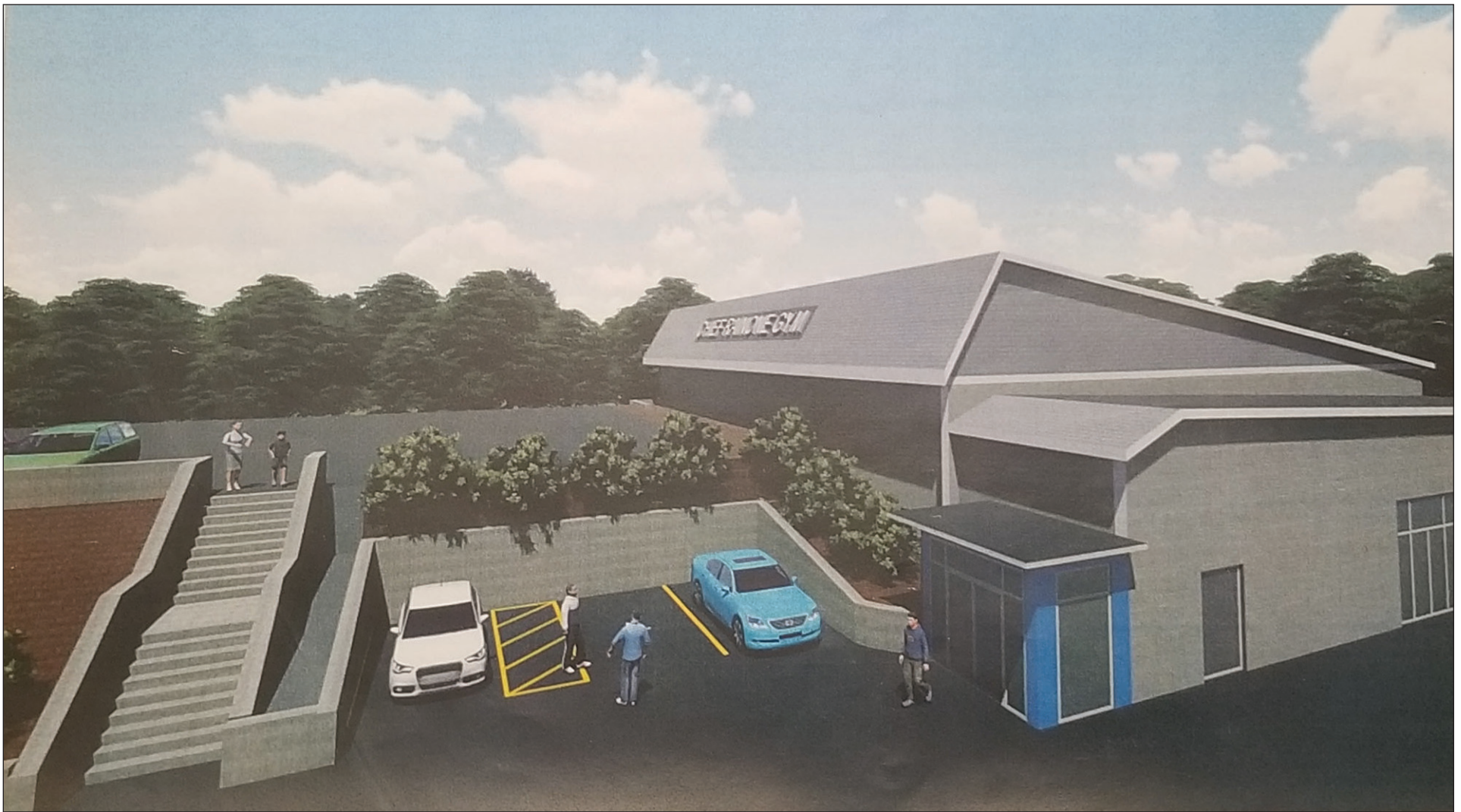
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**WHAT'S IN STORE:** An architectural rendering shows what the gym should look like once work at the site is finished. (Image courtesy of town of Johnston)

## ■ Gym

(Continued from page 1)

"We're working with donations and donated work when possible," he said. "It's sort of a hybrid approach."

The facility was built in 1950 and dedicated to former Police Chief Anthony Rainone in June, 1962.

The gym's builder and first owner was the Acorn Corp., which sold the property to Rainone, who eventually donated it to the town.

Michael F. Sabitoni, 53, a life-long Johnston resident and business manager for the Rhode Island Laborer's District Council and also president of the Rhode Island Building Trades Union, has been playing ball in the gym for the past five decades.

"I played there as a kid, and I still play there as an old man," Sabitoni said. "I grew up playing there in that neighborhood. It's just a special place, not only for me, but for hundreds if not thousands of kids who grew up playing there."

Sabitoni still tries to get onto the Rainone Gym court once a week, even through construction at the site. He started playing there as a neighborhood kid, around the age of 6 or 7 years old.

"It's just like something from your childhood," he said.

Sabitoni now has three sons, who have also formed a relationship with the vintage court.

"It's just a special place for

people like me, and even a couple of generations before me," Sabitoni said. "Things are coming together. I think people, when it's complete, the facelift we're giving it, will provide fond memories for a new generation."

Sabitoni used his contacts in the building trades to find workers and construction firms with a shared interest in saving the facility.

Salvaging the court was a top priority.

"Gym space is really at a premium these days," Sabitoni said. "I can't wait to see it complete. Giving back to the town that I still live in, that I love, my hometown, that makes me happy."

Correia hopes the project will be finished by the start of next school year.

"And if not, we at least want to get it done by winter," he said. "Hard to tell if there will be delays. Construction material costs are getting higher and higher. We're hopeful we can finish by fall."

The site has been plagued by graffiti in recent years. The town has added LED security lights and has asked neighbors to report any suspicious activity they may witness.

"Please if you see potential criminal problems there, contact the Johnston Police Department," Correia said.

For now, ongoing construction will focus on repairing the gym roof. Work has primarily moved outside, restructuring

the parking areas into an upper and lower lot.

New bathrooms will be installed. A new foyer will be built.

"We can't do much inside until the roof is fixed," Correia said. "Our last priority will be the court itself."

The town plans to salvage the hardwood basketball court, which will be stripped and sanded.

"We plan to sand down to bare wood, and replace any boards or planks, re-stripe it and refinish it," Correia said. "There's a lot of history and nostalgia in that old court."

Former Rainone gym kids, like Enrico DiGregorio, of DiGregorio Construction, and Joseph Caparco, Regional Northeast Apprentice Coordinator for Operators Union Local 57, have played integral roles in the project.

Correia said Johnston residents and local firms have really pulled together. He credited James White and Steve Rogers, of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 57, Chris and Anthony Corsinetti, of Hartford Paving, JR Vinagro Corp., Joe Casali Engineering, architect Richard Cardarelli, and Steve Rainone, of the Laborers' Union, among others, who all contributed "pro bono" work and "sweat equity" in an effort to save the gym.

"It's been a steady evolution," Correia said. "We're all working together, all these entities and the town."

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisenia credits his son, Town Council Vice-President Joseph Polisenia Jr., with the initial idea to renovate the gym, and request \$600,000 in town funds for the project.

"Obviously the gym has been around for a long time, and we have a lot of men who used it as kids, who have become successful businessmen, who are now donating in-kind services," Polisenia said. "I think it will ensure that the youth in that district, as well as the adults, can recreate."

Polisenia said the project is vital for the residents of the town's Thornton neighborhood.

"At least people down there will still have a gym," he said. "The Rainone Gym has been there for a while. I think fixing it up was a great idea from my son, and it was a smart move."

The project would have been very difficult without contributions from local construction firms.

"We're very grateful to those people in the construction industry who have basically donated their time and their resources," Polisenia said. "They've helped us get to our goal quicker, and made it less of a burden on our taxpayers."

Nearby facilities are vital for the town's youth, according to both the mayor and his son.

"I played there when I was young," Polisenia Jr. said. "That gym has been in rough shape for a while. It needed to be updated."

While a new recreational facility and courts at Johnston War Memorial Park provide play opportunities for some regions of Johnston, the Rainone Gym caters to residents living near the town's southern border with Cranston.

"It's really important because we have the rec center open and Johnston Memorial Park, but those are both toward the northern and central sides of town," Polisenia Jr. said. "(Rainone Gym) is important for kids, who should be able to hop on their bikes and get to a gym or the southern side of the town."

The facility will feature a newly paved outdoor basketball court, in addition to the indoor amenities.

"We're not just renovating the inside, but there will also be a court and some hoops outside of the gym," Polisenia Jr. said. "It's important for kids on that side of town to have an option to play as well."

The project would have been difficult, if not impossible, without help from generous patrons who all trace their formative years back to the squeaky old court inside Rainone Gym.

"We wouldn't be able to do this without them," Polisenia Jr. said. "It's as much for them as it is for the town. A lot of them played there when they were children. Now it comes full circle. They played there when they were younger and now they've dedicated time and materials so kids can play there again."

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**PUT INTO PLACE:** Workers from JR Vinagro Corp., a Johnston construction company, used a crane to lower a prefabricated footbridge in place along Johnston War Memorial Park's walking path. The bridge work may be completed as early as Friday. (Photo courtesy Mayor Joseph M. Polisena)

# Footbridge lowered into place along walking path

By RORY SCHULER

On Wednesday morning, a crew from Johnston based JR Vinagro Corp. lowered a new footbridge into place at Johnston War Memorial Park.

Polisena said he expects the work will take about two days to complete, pending weather.

Work may be done at the site as early as Friday.

Polisena said the company has saved Johnston taxpayers around \$100,000.

JR Vinagro Corp., a Johnston construction company, volunteered to help rebuild the small, but key footbridge, along the Fitness Walk path around the pond at Memorial Park, near Hartford Av-

enue (Route 6).

The bridge is about 26-feet long and just 6-feet wide, but bids on the project came in much higher than expected.

Polisena said family owned and operated JR Vinagro Corp. stepped up to help the town out, offering workers and materials, covering the entire project, and constructing the bridge out of recycled materials.

Metal support beams will be painted with a special paint to protect them from the elements in the future.

JR Vinagro is one of the largest independently owned and operated demolition, recycling and crushing companies in New England, according to its website.

Polisena asked the park's many walkers to please be patient with the path closure. He said the new bridge will be worth the wait.

## Flags

(Continued from page 1)

Members of Troop 20 – Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts and their leaders – wore their traditional uniforms while their parents were decked out in a variety of colorful foul weather garb and protected their respective super scouts with, as several moms noted: “extra wide umbrellas.”

But perhaps Joseph Swift, President of Highland Memorial Park Cemetery, as well as Johnston's ageless Lions Club, perfectly described the annual Rite of May, which was held last Saturday morning.

“If we all had the same compassion and pride as these young people, what a wonderful country we could have,” Swift began, while shielding the morning rain and cold. “Think about this please; on a rainy, windy and cold day the Johnston Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts placed 1,584 flags on the graves of veterans here at Highland Memorial Park Cemetery. I am sure those veterans are now saying: ‘Scouts – THANK YOU for you service.’”

Slinko and Marc DaPonte, who serves as Cub Master for Troop 20, echoed similar statements, as did Boy Scout Master Robert Simmons and Cub Scout Chairman Sue Deaths.

“We’re all proud of our scouts,” said DaPonte, who shared the brief speaking program with Slinko, held at the flag-flying entry circle at the spacious cemetery and featured two groups of scouts reciting their oaths, scout’s law and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

The moving ceremony, as Slinko said later, “was highlighted by the playing of TAPS by Tucker Condon of Boy Scout Troop 20.”

After which, with the rain refusing to let up, small groups of scouts and their proud parents made their way around the cemetery and placed small American flags at the



**OFFICIAL OATH:** Members of Johnston Boy Scout Troop 20 stand at attention in the rain while reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag during Saturday's ceremony in Johnston. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



**SUPER SCOUTS:** Neither Saturday's rain or cold could dampen the spirits of Troop 20 Cub and Boy Scouts who continue their storied Memorial Day tradition by placing 1,584 American flags on the graves of veterans who are buried at Highland Memorial Park Cemetery in Johnston.

gravesites of all veterans – and in some cases their late wives – whose final resting place is Highland Memorial Park.

But placing the American flags at graves like that of U.S. Marine Ernest Mongony and his wife Myra is just

half of what the Troop 20 Cub and Boy Scouts have on their schedules.

“We’ll be right back there later this week,” said Slinko. “We’ll bring rakes, shovels ... other equipment and we’re going to begin cleaning up the graves of veterans.”



**MEMORY LIVES ON:** Flags placed by scouts flutter in the wind at each veterans' grave in Highland Memorial Park Cemetery. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

## Fire

(Continued from page 1)

Many firefighters in town sought additional schooling, and took training classes, earning certifications qualifying them to conduct virus screening.

“My firefighters went to school or took classes to become Covid testers,” Polisena said. “We tested not only employees, but any public member who needed a test, we sent

them down there.”

Polisena promised the acquisition “will be advantageous to the taxpayer.”

Though he hopes the building's time as a Covid-testing site has passed.

“Quite frankly, Covid was very devastating to this community,” Polisena said. “I hope we never need to use it again for Covid testing, but at least we have it.”

The resolution passed on a 5-0 vote.

# LEGAL NOTICES

### Public Auction Legal Notice

Form of notice under RI General Laws 39-12.1 to 12.1-15

To: **T and R Landscaping LLC, 33 Stowe Rd Millbury, MA 01527.** A public auction will be held at 775 Hartfoed Ave Johnston, RI on June 12, 2021 at 9:00 AM. The vehicle a 2020 Cove 53FBE1623LF059652 belonging to the above. The auction being held to satisfy towing and storage fees.

6/4/21

### PLANNING BOARD MEETING Tuesday June 8th, 2021; 6:00 P.M. VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Via Computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84085499574>

Passcode: 039278

### iPhone one-tap: +13017158592, 84085499574#,,,,\* 039278#

Via Telephone: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free) or 888 788 0099 (Toll Free)

Meeting ID: 840 8549 9574

Passcode: 039278

**NOTE: Please check out the "ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS for meetings held via Zoom" on the Town's web page under Meetings & Events. <https://www.townofjohnstonri.com/>**

**Item 1 - Scheduled for 6:00 PM** PB 21-20 - Watson/PWSB Subdivision - 38 Pine Hill Road - Preliminary Plan of a 2-lot Minor Subdivision - AP 45 Lot 515 - Zoned R-40 - Applicant: Ernest Watson and Fernanda M Goncalves - Engineer: Garofalo & Associates A public meeting on the proposed 2 lot Minor Subdivision. The applicant

is seeking the merger of the Preliminary and Final Plan stages.

**Item 2 - Scheduled for 6:30 PM** PB 21-13 - Altus Power America Solar Relocation - Preliminary Plan and Public Hearing for the relocation of an existing solar field - Located easterly of Reservoir Avenue - AP 43 Lot 256 and AP 54 Lot 59, 60 and 75 - Zoned R-40 and B-3 - Applicant: Hartford Solar Holdings, LLC - Engineer: DiPrete Engineering A public hearing on a Preliminary Plan application by Altus Power America to relocate an existing solar field approximately 1000 feet south-westerly of its existing location.

**Item 3 - Scheduled for 7:00 PM** PB 21-03 - Proposed Retail Distribution Facility - Preliminary Plan and Public Hearing of a Major Land Development with Unified Development Review - Located at 2120 Hartford Avenue AP 54 Lots 39, 40, 42, 54, 61, 75, 89, 90 and 93 - Zoned B-3 - Applicant: Blue-

### water Property Group - Engineer: DiPrete Engineering.

A public hearing on the Major Land Development and Unified Development Review application to develop a six-story retail distribution facility with a ground floor area of approximately 823,522 square feet, and a total area of approximately 3,864,972 square feet. The applicant is seeking approval of the major land development Preliminary Plan and the granting of and reaffirmation of dimensional variances from certain provisions of the Zoning Ordinance pursuant to Unified Development Review. The applicant is also requesting waivers from certain requirements of the Land Development & Subdivision Review Regulations and is requesting that the Final Review be delegated to staff.

**NOTE - The Full Plan set is available for review in the Planning Office 100 Irons Avenue Monday through Friday, 8AM to noon and 1PM to 3PM.**

5/21, 5/27, 6/4/21

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# Opinion

## EDITORIAL

### Making good on the Promise

By officially signing into law the permanent continuation of the Rhode Island Promise scholarship program that former Gov. Gina Raimondo began back in 2017, lawmakers and current Gov. Dan McKee have done right by the young students of Rhode Island in helping to ensure the opportunity to begin their higher education careers at the Community College of Rhode Island if they so choose – which is a benefit to the state as a whole.

We are happy that the reactionary unease from the public that accompanied this program back when it was first announced did not ultimately spell its demise. It is only appropriate that a program offering itself as a “promise” would not have a three-year shelf life of eligibility.

Invoking the word “promise” for this program is especially appropriate. At a budgetary cost of around \$7 million, the Promise scholarship is a sound investment in the future workforce of Rhode Island – an investment in the

WHERE TO WRITE:  
1944 Warwick Avenue  
Warwick, RI 02889  
RoryS@RhodyBeat.com

“promise” that these bright individuals show, which will ultimately lead to exponentially

realized economic benefits down the road due to having a more educated, more highly trained and more readily prepared generation of young adults living and working in Rhode Island.

According to CCRI, 70 percent of jobs created in Rhode Island by 2025 will require at least some version of a college degree. It has long been established by empirical studies and media research pieces from outlets much larger than this newspaper that the times of being able to easily obtain a high-paying job directly out of high school are over – at least for the vast majority of people. More and more, younger generations face a higher bar of entry into the kinds of careers that enable home ownership, the starting of a family and the kind of meaningful participation in the market that fuels our capitalist economy.

So, in our view, granting the opportunity for high school graduates to hit the ground running at CCRI – earning an associates degree or certificate in a field that they are passionate about, without racking up any debt – not only sets them up well for success in their burgeoning professional lives, it enables them to transition seamlessly into finishing their final two years at another of our state universities if they so choose. And although it is true there is no requirement to stay in-state following graduation from CCRI, many students have already done so, and we believe many more will – as it is easily the most cost-efficient and practical means for them to achieve a bachelor’s degree.

Most importantly, data from CCRI shows that the Promise program is working. They have seen the number of straight out of high school enrollees double in three years – and a more than 2.5 times jump for students of color coming out of high school. The requirement that Promise students maintain a 2.5 GPA and stay on track to graduate has certainly been a factor in the university tripling its two-year graduation rate (from 6 percent to 18 percent) and doubling its three-year graduation rate (15 percent to 30 percent). Again, those numbers are reflected at similar or even higher rates for students of color.

Ensuring that Rhode Island has a stable, sizable and highly educated workforce is essential to competing with regional neighbors for the kinds of economically essential industries that have reshaped the landscapes of places like Boston – such as biotechnical research, computer networking and security companies and more traditional white-collar investing, banking and marketing firms.

With all of this considered, we believe the argument could be made – as Raimondo originally intended – for the scope of the promise to be larger, so as to enable more students to access higher education at Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island. We lament that she got such a lukewarm response to her efforts to expand the Promise program to RIC in 2019. Hopefully that discussion can begin again.

Investing in the education of your younger generations is a wise investment, whereas failing to do so can have perilous consequences for many generations to come.

### FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD!

Judge Caprio picks up a Daytime Emmy Nomination for his TV show CAUGHT IN PROVIDENCE



## LETTER

### New GOP committee has much work ahead

#### To the Editor:

Good news for Johnston taxpayers, we now have a new Republican Town Committee. As a true Conservative Republican I will encourage the committee to reach out to every resident to inform them how our taxes are being squandered/wasted/misspent.

How can it be new businesses continue to come to town, including new housing developments, but our taxes never come down? How can it be in 2013 the budget was \$90.7 million and last year it was \$113.7 million, a \$23 million increase in just 7 years?

The truth is the revenues are going to meet the unsustainable inflationary pension obligations and endless inflationary benefits of our town workers that never should have been. When residents realize the endless provisions in the contracts they will only have to blame the democratic machine that has been in charge for decades as the party and the unions are one in the same. Yes, we all have family, friends and neighbors in civil service but the truth is the more cost effectively we provide our services the better off “all the people” will be.

Some alternatives that would reduce our taxes substantially would be regionalizing our services, especially regarding fire and police, in which the combined overtime for minimum staffing is in the hundreds of thousands annually. We could also develop a voluntary paid certified standby system that would produce additional savings. We should also consider privatization where applicable. As for wages, it’s the outrageous benefits and pension obligations that need to be reduced substantially perhaps via filing bankruptcy.

If we were to only provide benefits that reflect 90 per-

cent of the non-union workforce the savings would be in the millions annually.

Here are just some of the provisions across the contracts that need to be reduced substantially or eliminated: longevity bonuses, anniversary bonuses and police receiving \$500 for every firearm issued to them if they score an 80 percent at the firing range. Some Longevity Bonuses are over \$9,000.

Severance Packages include up to 64 unused vacation days, 180 unused sick days and up to 6 unused personal days. As for the 20 sick days and 3 personal days, they should be combined to one week in which employees should contribute to temporary disability Insurance. Of the 20 sick days, if an employee uses less than 10 they receive a one day bonus, and if they use less than 6 they get a 3 day bonus. We also provide up to 15 holidays that include paid birthdays.

Pensions that we contribute up to 12 percent are calculated based on what was averaged over their three highest earning years. As for fire and police, the average pension is \$5,200 a month after only 20 years, in which we now have more retirees than present employees.

We also provide a \$250,000 accidental death policy in addition to life insurance policies that range from \$35,000 to \$75,000 that they keep upon retirement. Another provision is if they work 15 minutes overtime we must pay them a full hour at time and one half.

As for education, the cost per Johnston pupil is approximately \$20,000, in which private education and especially religious education are thousands less and more effective. Realizing the incredible liberal nonsense going on in public education, via sex educa-

tion, outrageous social engineering and the continued dumming down of academics, school choice/vouchers could save additional millions annually.

If our town was to develop a database that would breakdown the budgets for each department highlighting the cost of the endless provisions in which residents could type in any questions, like what’s the cost to provide healthcare for retirees, how much are the healthcare plans, how many sick days were paid out and view the severance packages and pensions etc., taxpayers would be outraged as we don’t even televise the committee meetings.

The provisions I outlined are just a sampling of where millions are going annually. Our municipalities must demand autonomy in how they provide their services including school choice. Conservative leadership, which you will not find in

the Democratic Party, would be a blessing to all Rhode Islanders.

In closing, the new Republican Town Committee has their work cut out for them. Going directly door to door and emphasizing the benefits of the above will we hopefully wake up the sleeping giant of voter apathy, which is approximately 40 percent in our state.

The wheels of ever increasing taxation were put in place decades ago via the Democratic Party that now enslaves every taxpayer, especially those on limited incomes, as our children and future generations will be nothing more than cash cows. Life-long well intentioned Democrats need to realize the party has been taken over by extremists that seek to undermine people of faith, moral absolutes, commonsense, free enterprise including free speech, etc.

Peter A. Filippi III  
Johnston

## JOHNSTON Sun Rise

**Publisher**  
John I. Howell Jr. - JohnH@rhodybeat.com

**General Manager**  
Richard G. Fleischer - RichardF@rhodybeat.com

**Advertising Director**  
Donna Zarrella - DonnaZ@rhodybeat.com

**Editor**  
Rory Schuler - RoryR@rhodybeat.com

**Sports Editor**  
Alex Sponseller - AlexS@rhodybeat.com

**Journalists**  
Pete Fontaine

**Classified Advertising**  
Sue Howarth - SueH@rhodybeat.com

**Circulation**  
Leslie Paz

**Credit Manager**  
Lynne Taylor

**Bookkeeping**  
Leslie Paz

**Production Manager**  
Lisa Bourque Yuetner - LisaB@rhodybeat.com

**Production Staff**  
Monique Rice - MoR@rhodybeat.com

**Advertising Representative**  
Natalie Payette - NatalieP@rhodybeat.com

**Spotlight Profile Writer**  
Jennifer Coates - JenniferC@rhodybeat.com

Tel. 401-732-3100  
Fax: 401-732-3110

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# Sports

## Cranston Stadium to host CES boxing event

By ALEX SPONSELLER

After putting boxing on hold for over a year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Rhode Islanders will finally have a chance to attend a live event on Saturday, June 19 at Cranston Stadium when Classic Sports and Entertainment hosts the state's first outdoor match in 60 years.

The news broke on Friday afternoon when CES hosted a press conference at the stadium which included President and CEO Jimmy Burchfield, as well

as a few of the featured fighters and other local boxing figures.

The card will be headlined by Worcester's Irwin Gonzalez Jr., who most recently competed on the Mike Tyson-Roy Jones Jr. card back in November.

The event will also mark the return of four-time champion Jaime "Hurricane" Clampitt, who will be stepping back in the ring after an eight-year retirement. Cranston fighter Gary Balletto III, the son of legend Gary "Tiger" Bal-

CES- PAGE 21



**BIG NEWS:** CES President Jimmy Burchfield (center) addresses the crowd. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)



## Panthers seeking first win

The Johnston girls lacrosse team is back in action. The Panthers sit at 0-8 and will have three more chances to secure a win this season. Pictured is Johnston's Brooke Marcotte looking to pass against Rocky Hill in a game last week. For more photos, check out page 20. (Photos by Mike Zawistoski)

## Returning to the squared circle

Last Friday, Classic Entertainment & Sports Fights announced an upcoming professional and amateur boxing event that will be taking place at Cranston Stadium on Saturday, June 19th. It will be the first outdoor boxing event in Rhode Island in 60 years and features a card filled with local talent.

As one might expect, the primary reason why this event was scheduled outdoors was due to the ongoing pandemic. CES could have hosted an indoor card, but the state is still urging sports organizations to remain outdoors if possible.

After a few months of kicking some ideas around and figuring out the logistics, CES President Jimmy Burchfield, along with Cranston Mayor Ken Hopkins and a few other notable figures in RI boxing, were able to put it together.

What an exciting concept.

First off, the spectacle will be something to see. Outdoor boxing cards are always a blast to watch, but to see one in our own backyard at a stadium so beloved in the city? Should be a sight to see.

I don't understand why there isn't a greater push to have more outdoor boxing events. The only thing I can come up with is the obvious one in the weather. However, is it really that difficult to put a canopy of some sort over the ring if the worst case plays out?

That is far from ideal, but my point is that outdoor boxing should definitely be embraced more than it already has. The weather is a risk for sure, but isn't that the case with pretty much

### My pitch



by ALEX SPONSELLER  
SPORTS EDITOR  
ALEXS@RHODYBEAT.COM

any other outdoor sport? Even the NFL will call delays if there is lightning or extreme weather.

Also, this is a special event because it feels almost like a kick off for summer. It is projecting to hold anywhere from 4,000-5,000 spectators, so it will be a fun way of bringing the state together to have some fun while also taking one step closer to normalcy. We're in the home stretch of the pandemic, so this will be a great way to celebrate the progress we have made.

In terms of the card itself, there are a couple of storylines to watch out for.

Perhaps the biggest is the return of Jaime "Hurricane" Clampitt, who is coming off of an eight-year retirement at 44 years old. We all know what promoters' jobs are, but if the buzz around her is indeed true, we may be seeing a great local comeback story.

After enjoying a career as one of the country's top female boxers, Clampitt hung up the gloves, focused on her family, and began to work at On the Ropes Boxing in Warwick as a trainer and business partner.

PITCH- PAGE 19

# Fish stock reports, climate impacts and need for more NOAA funding

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released their Annual Report to Congress on the status of U.S. Fisheries and their 2019 Fisheries of the United States Report. You might say its NOAA's annual report card.

More than 40 years of managing our nation's fisheries under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) has positioned our nation (and NOAA Fisheries) as a global leader in sustainable fisheries management.

Success of our fisheries is due to the strong conservation measures in our Federal fishing law (the MSA) such as harvest quotas, size limits, rebuilding time lines, fishery accountability measures, and other management measures.

Today, climate change impacts such as warming water and the fish stock movement it has created, ocean acidification, and habitat degradation are adding a big layer of complexity to the mix. More frequent fish surveys, stock assessments and new and better research methods are needed to identify what is happening to fish stocks. Have fish stock moved? Are they depleted, overfished or is overfishing occurring?

Enhanced funding of NOAA is needed because of climate impacts to help determine the changing status of fish stocks.

In a press advisory NOAA said, "More than 90 percent of stocks are not subject to overfishing and 80 percent not overfished; the number of stocks on the overfishing list and the overfished list increased slightly, with 26 stocks on the overfishing list and 49 stocks on the overfished list; and the status of six previously unknown stocks was determined through new first-time stock assessments."

For links to the 2020 Status of Stocks Report and the 2019 Fisheries of the US Report visit [www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-fisheries-releases-key-reports-status-stocks-2020-and-fisheries-united-states](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-fisheries-releases-key-reports-status-stocks-2020-and-fisheries-united-states).

## DEM to host youth, adult and family programs

Department of Environmental Management's (DEM) Division of Fish and Wildlife will host a variety of programs this summer from fishing days, quahogging and archery lessons to hunter education and virtual wildlife conservation programs.

DEM's Fish and Wildlife outreach team has crafted a menu of summer programs for both aspiring and avid outdoor enthusiasts and their families. Most of the programs offered this summer are free of charge and family friendly.

For a complete list of up to date programs visit <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/>.

## Catch & release tips

90 percent of striped bass are caught and released by anglers and 65 percent of bluefish. It's important to employ good catch and release practices to reduce the mortality rate of fish released. To release striped bass and bluefish unharmed (as well as other species) consider the below catch & release techniques.

- Use circle hooks, they successfully hook striped bass in the mouth (not the gut) 95 percent of the time without hurting the fish, circle hooks are required in Rhode Island and Massachusetts when fishing with bait for striped bass.
- Land fish quickly to minimize stress.
- Avoid putting fish on deck, rocks or beach and letting it flop around, keep it in the water as much as possible when removing hook.
- Wet your hand before handling the fish, dry hands remove the fish's protective slime layer and leave it open to infection.
- Handle fish carefully. Do not use excessive force when grasping the fish. Do not put fingers into gill cavities or eye sockets.
- Gently remove the hook to minimize damage.
- Use lures with single hook, barbless hooks (snap them off treble hooks), or circle hooks (as noted above).
- Return fish to water quickly. Place

fish gently in water in upright horizontal position. Move it back and forth in the water to force water across its gills. Once the fish revives, allow it to swim away.

## Where's the bite?

**Striped bass/bluefish.** Elisa Cahill of Snug Harbor Marina, South Kingstown said, "The striped bass bite at the Block Island North Rip and the South side of the Island has been good. Both jigging and trolling tube & worm seem to be working for anglers. And, in the coves and estuaries we have worm hatches occurring all over the place with some keepers being caught there too." "We had about 30 boats fishing the upper Providence River Saturday morning. Most were snagging poggies and putting them back down. Shore anglers were using clams and worms with success. One customer caught a 42-inch striped bass from shore at Kettle Point this weekend. And, we now have some good size bluefish being caught in the River too," said John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, Riverside. Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence, said, "Billy Silvia, a commercial fisherman from Bristol, RI caught a 56-pound striped bass last Thursday when fishing the East Passage with chucks. Keeper size fish in the 28 to less than 35 inches slot and larger fish are being caught from Bristol all the way up the Providence River."

## Pitch

(Continued from page 18)

She's ready to step back in the squared circle and put on a show. Let's see if age really is just a number.

The next story to watch is Gary "Batman" Balletto III.

Balletto III, the son of local boxing legend Gary "Tiger" Balletto, will be making his second pro appearance after winning by knockout back in 2019. Balletto III has spent the majority of his career practicing mixed martial arts but is set to represent his hometown at a stadium that he

is very familiar with.

Long bloodlines are common in boxing and combat sports. Balletto III, 26, has shown some talent and skill in both MMA and boxing and will look to continue the momentum that he has built.

There is nothing like a father-son team in sports, it's always such an easy story to root for. A big win here could mean big stakes for the future for Balletto III.

The third storyline that intrigues me is the main event which features Worcester's Irwin Gonzalez Jr.

Gonzalez Jr. was the WBC Youth World Featherweight

champion and most recently fought on the same card as Mike Tyson and Roy Jones Jr. back in November. As a Worcester native, I have heard a little about him, especially since he fought under Tyson, so it will be interesting to see his next bout.

Gonzalez lost back in November but is still considered a bright young prospect in his division. This event could be a make or break fight for him moving forward.

What I love most about this card is how committed it was to shining a light on this region's talent. New England has some great boxing that tends to be

overlooked ... it always seems like fighters from around here don't start to get their shine until they have logged significant competition time.

This card will be a great showcase of what the region has to offer and the outdoor element will certainly catch some eyes. It will also be aired on UFC Fight Pass, which is just another great platform to promote it.

It doesn't matter if you are from RI or not, there is enough talent and curiosity with this event to deliver. My hope is that weather is not an issue, the fighters stay healthy to compete, and we see a great show and have a

fun night.

This event's impact on the local sports community is far greater than the norm.

It will be led by locals, star locals, and bring the community together. It has been over a year since the state has seen any live boxing, what a way for it to return.

Considering the limited seating, I would urge fans to purchase tickets as soon as possible. Once again, we all know what a promoters' job is, but Burchfield claimed to have been receiving calls for tickets prior to the show even being finalized.

Let's get ready to rumble.

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**TEAMWORK:** Rachel Ixcotoyac and Kylie Viveiros work to track down a ball.

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**IN GOAL:** Johnston goalie Riley Guenette gets set to make a play.

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**UP THE FIELD:** Johnston's Hannah Lavergne works her way into Rocky Hill territory.



**RETURNING CHAMP:** Four-time champion Jaime "Hurricane" Clampitt, who will be coming out of retirement to compete as the card's co-headliner.



**BATMAN:** Gary "Batman" Balletto III, who will be fighting on the CES card.

■ **CES**  
(Continued from page 18)

letto, will also be making his second professional appearance after competing primarily in mixed martial arts.

"I have been doing this for a long time, and I have never been more excited for an event than this one here," said Burchfield. "The new word in corporate America is 'reimagining.' That's what we're doing. (The fans) are drooling. People are waiting for ticket orders all over, people that we have never even heard of. For the state of Rhode Island, all of New England, the Northeast, it's beautiful. I'm getting chills just talking about it."

Although discussions regarding boxing's return and a potential event in Cranston have been in the works for a few months, things came together at the last minute. The card was not finalized until late Thursday evening as CES was awaiting to receive the required permits from the city. Cranston Mayor Ken Hopkins was also in attendance and was key in overcoming the last few hurdles in the process.

"This all happened so fast. We're doing everything to get this event to happen. I just can't believe that this is happening here in Cranston," said "Tiger" Balletto, who worked alongside Burchfield in vouching for Cranston as a host city.

Balletto III is excited to compete at Cranston Stadium, a place he is quite familiar with thanks to years of participating in organized sports in the city.

"It's going to be awesome, I played on this field many times. Just to have

something like this in our hometown is pretty spectacular. How could I not (take part)," said Balletto III.

Clampitt was one of the top fighters in women's boxing during her career, finishing with a record of 22-5-1 with victories over Mia St. John and Jane Couch. Upon retiring eight years ago, Clampitt took time to focus on her family and has been working at On the Ropes in Warwick, where she also serves as a trainer.

Clampitt is looking forward to returning and looks to make a statement as a 44 year old.

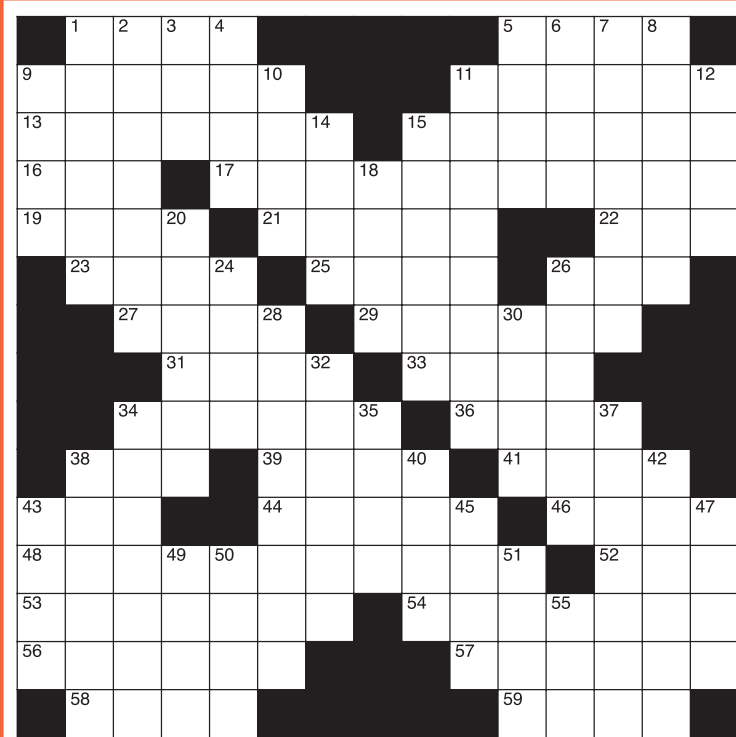
"I'm excited, I think I'm just at a different stage in my life. I'm obviously training differently, but I feel that age is just a number. I've been in the gym consistently for a long time so I am ready to get back in there. Female boxing has changed and I really want to be part of the sport again," said Clampitt. "I'm excited to be here, this is a beautiful venue. I just think that it is good for the state. It's good for the fighters, they've been sitting and waiting for this for a really long time."

Gonzalez Jr. will be serving the main event and is the WBC Youth World Featherweight champion. Clampitt will be the co-headliner.

Filling out the rest of the card will be Balletto III, as well as Providence natives Michael Valentin, Victor Reynoso and Pawtucket's Ricky Delossantos. There will also be an amateur card taking place prior to the main lineup. The event will be streamed on UFC Fight Pass.

For more information, visit CES-Fights.com or follow CES on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Partner to "flows"
- 5. French industrial city
- 9. Diagrams
- 11. Diplomat
- 13. Hires
- 15. Hawaiian island
- 16. Set aflame
- 17. Very happy
- 19. Blue dye
- 21. Small terrier with short legs
- 22. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
- 23. Northern pike genus
- 25. Expression of annoyance
- 26. Female deer
- 27. Casella and Kellerman are two
- 29. Actor's lines to audience
- 31. Days (Spanish)
- 33. Close a person's eyes
- 34. Cloaked
- 36. Comedic actor Rogen
- 38. It's all around us
- 39. Neutralizes alkalis
- 41. Native people of New Mexico

- 43. No seats available
- 44. Famed "Air Music" composer
- 46. Fit of irritation
- 48. Psychic phenomena
- 52. Knicks' first-rounder Toppin
- 53. Seed used in cooking
- 54. "WandaVision" actress Hahn
- 56. Samples food
- 57. In a lucid way
- 58. Stair part
- 59. Adieu

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Type of moth
- 2. A Christian sacrament
- 3. It lends books to Bostonians (abbr.)
- 4. Turn away
- 5. Impersonal
- 6. Shortly
- 7. Indigenous Alaskans
- 8. Subtle difference of meaning
- 9. Sicilian city
- 10. Put in harmony
- 11. Administrative divisions
- 12. As happily
- 14. Horse mackerel
- 15. Muddy or boggy ground
- 18. Monetary unit of Italy
- 20. Construction site machine
- 24. 22
- 26. Tracts at the mouths of rivers
- 28. Earnings
- 30. Insect repellent
- 32. Runner-up
- 34. Musician
- 35. Serious or urgent
- 37. Esteemed one
- 38. Where rockers play
- 40. Work furniture
- 42. Greek prophetesses
- 43. Quantitative fact
- 45. Missing soldiers
- 47. Minute
- 49. This (Spanish)
- 50. Maintain possession of
- 51. Assault with a knife
- 55. Holiday text message greeting

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**QUESTION OF THE WEEK:**

*Which town is home to the oldest schoolhouse in Rhode Island?*



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# Moments in the sun

## As RI reopens, summer schedule boasts wide range of events, activities

By DANIEL KITTREDGE

Rhode Islanders have never been so ready for summer. More than a year after the pandemic shutdown, a return to “normal” life has largely, finally, arrived. Most COVID-related business and social restrictions have been lifted, and roughly two-thirds of Ocean State residents were at least partially vaccinated against the coronavirus heading into the Memorial Day weekend. The brightening picture is a major boon to Rhode Island’s hard-hit tourism and hospitality industries, which can now more fully welcome back patrons. And perhaps most eagerly anticipated, after a year of social distancing and virtual interactions, will be the return of large-scale events and gatherings. Here’s a quick roundup of just a handful of the events, activities and attractions – some ongoing, others on specific dates – that will highlight our state’s summer schedule in the weeks ahead.

### Gaspee Days

Various dates, June and September  
Pawtuxet Village, Warwick and Cranston

It’s a celebration of the nation’s “first blow for freedom” – and next year, it will mark its 250th anniversary. Gaspee Days, a decades-long tradition in Pawtuxet Village, commemorates the 1772 burning of a British schooner at the hands of colonists. Traditionally held in May and June, its major events include an Arts & Crafts Festival, a 5K road race and, most of all, the Gaspee Days Parade. In 2020, the onset of the pandemic just weeks ahead of Gaspee Days forced the cancellation of all the scheduled events. This year, the Gaspee Days Committee planned for a scaled-back parade, but the success of a fundraising campaign to support the effort has led to bigger plans. A fireworks display is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, while the parade, 5K and ceremonial burning of the Gaspee will be held the next week, June 12. The Arts & Crafts Festival, typically held on Memorial Day weekend, is instead planned for September, as is the Gaspee Days Block Party. For a full schedule of events and more information, visit [gaspee.com](http://gaspee.com).



**CELEBRATING HISTORY:** The Gaspee Days Arts & Crafts Festival, typically held Memorial Day weekend, will instead take place in September this year. In 2022, Gaspee Days marks its 250th anniversary. (Beacon Communications file photos)

### The Guild PVD Beer Garden

PVD Innovation District Park, Providence  
Various dates, May through October

The new pedestrian bridge in Providence offers spectacular views of Rhode Island’s capital city. And this summer, visitors will have a chance to enjoy local brews, too. Guild Brewing Co. will offer its beers as part of The Guild PVD Beer Garden, which will be held weekly through October along Dyer Street and the Providence River. The event will also include food trucks. For a full schedule, visit The Guild PVD’s Facebook page or check out [visitrhodeisland.com](http://visitrhodeisland.com).



### Asian Lantern Spectacular

Roger Williams Park Zoo, Providence  
Through July 4

There’s still time to catch the Asian Lantern Spectacular at Roger Williams Park Zoo, which features more than 50 lantern displays along with Asian-inspired food and beverages. To learn more, visit [rwpzoo.org](http://rwpzoo.org).

**CULTURAL ATTRACTION:** The Asian Lantern Spectacular at Roger Williams Park Zoo continues through July 4. (Courtesy of Roger Williams Park Zoo)



### Warwick Food Truck Night

Crowne Plaza, 801 Greenwich Ave., Warwick  
Various dates, June through September

Held on the third Thursday of each month, Warwick Food Truck Night will feature a range of mobile culinary options thanks to PVD Food Truck Events. Visitors will also enjoy live music and drinks from Trinity Brewhouse. Admission is free. To learn more, visit [foodtrucksin.com/food-truck-events](http://foodtrucksin.com/food-truck-events) or follow PVD Food Truck Events on Facebook.



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# Rhody Health

## Motility Important to Overall Health and Wellness



Motility is something that affects us all, and has an impact on our overall health and well-being, which is why Dr. Christy L. Dibble, who is the Director of the Women & Infants Hospital's Center for Women's Gastrointestinal Health, says people need to be aware of what it is, and explains the impact it can have on one's physical condition.

Dr. Dibble, among other things, specializes in the digestive system and its disorders, also known as motility.

While many may not be aware of what motility, or gastrointestinal motility, refers to, she explains, it's the movement through the gastrointestinal tract, which includes movement within the esophagus, in the stomach, the small intestine, as well as the colon.

She adds that some of the more common motility disorders include esophageal motility disorders, including GERD or gastroesophageal reflux disease.

She encourages people to pay attention to symptoms, even ones that may seem common, such as difficulty swallowing, as there may be an underlying

health issue causing it.

"It's important to have good motility throughout the gastrointestinal tract because we don't want things to remain stagnant within the gut. And when things remain stagnant, they can cause inflammation. And subsequently, inflammation can actually lead to other problems like blockages or even cancers down the road. So we like for everything to be moving perfectly smoothly through the GI tract. One of the more common things that I see patients for include patients who have swallowing disorders. One of the most common ones is called Achalasia," Dr. Dibble says.

She adds, "the reason it's important to diagnose Achalasia, is because food, if it's not moving properly through the esophagus, it can actually become stuck at the bottom of the esophagus, which we call the lower esophageal sphincter. And then food will continue to get stuck there and the patient can actually develop what's called a food impaction. So it's really important to make a diagnosis with technology called esophageal manometry.

### Staying Healthy



by  
CHRISTY L.  
DIBBLE, DO

And then with that diagnosis, we can then do different techniques to open up the bottom of the esophagus so that patients can swallow again and food can move through smoothly."

"Another very common reason to see me is if you have atypical or what we call refractory reflux symptoms. So that means maybe you have gone to your primary care physician or even your gastroenterologist with chronic heartburn, regurgitation, maybe some pain in your upper abdomen. You've been on a long term acid blocking medication such as Prilosec, but you're not seeing any

noticeable difference in symptoms. So those are the types of patients who come to see me. And then we do a variety of different types of reflux testing."

To assist her, Dr. Dibble uses state-of-the-art technology, to capture information going on inside the body.

"One of the more traditional ways to do reflux testing involves a long catheter that we use to insert into a patient's nose, and it has a small sensor on the bottom and all of the acid that comes up from the stomach into the esophagus over a 24 hour period, that sensor would pick it up. Then the patient would return. We'd remove the catheter and we would upload the study, and read it," Dr. Dibble continues.

She also uses the BRAVO study, which, she says, many patients prefer.

"It's a little multivitamin-sized wireless capsule. We insert it endoscopically into the esophagus, just a couple of centimeters above where the esophagus meets the stomach. We call that the GE junction, it just will sit there for a couple of days. You can't feel it, but

it will be measuring all of the acid that comes up during a two day period. Let's say a patient has a symptom of heartburn. They'll press the button on this little receiver that communicates with the capsule. When the study's read, we can actually see if that episode of Heartburn correlates to an acid reflux episode."

Taking care of her patients, and keeping them healthy, has proudly been Dr. Dibble's life's work.

"I believe that care should be really personalized to the patient and of course delivered with compassion. I honor and I also recognize that really a key component to the physician patient relationship is making sure that our patient's needs are always met. I also believe very much that delivering the best practice and care for our patients is often with a team multidisciplinary approach."

*Christy L. Dibble, DO, is Director of the Women & Infants Hospital's Center for Women's Gastrointestinal Health*



### Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry

The Rhode Island Department of Health maintains a registry for Rhode Islanders of all ages—infants to seniors—who have speech, cognitive, developmental, mental health, sensory and mobility disabilities, chronic conditions, and/or other special healthcare needs. The Registry allows first responders and emergency management officials to plan, prepare for, and respond to the needs of the community in an emergency.



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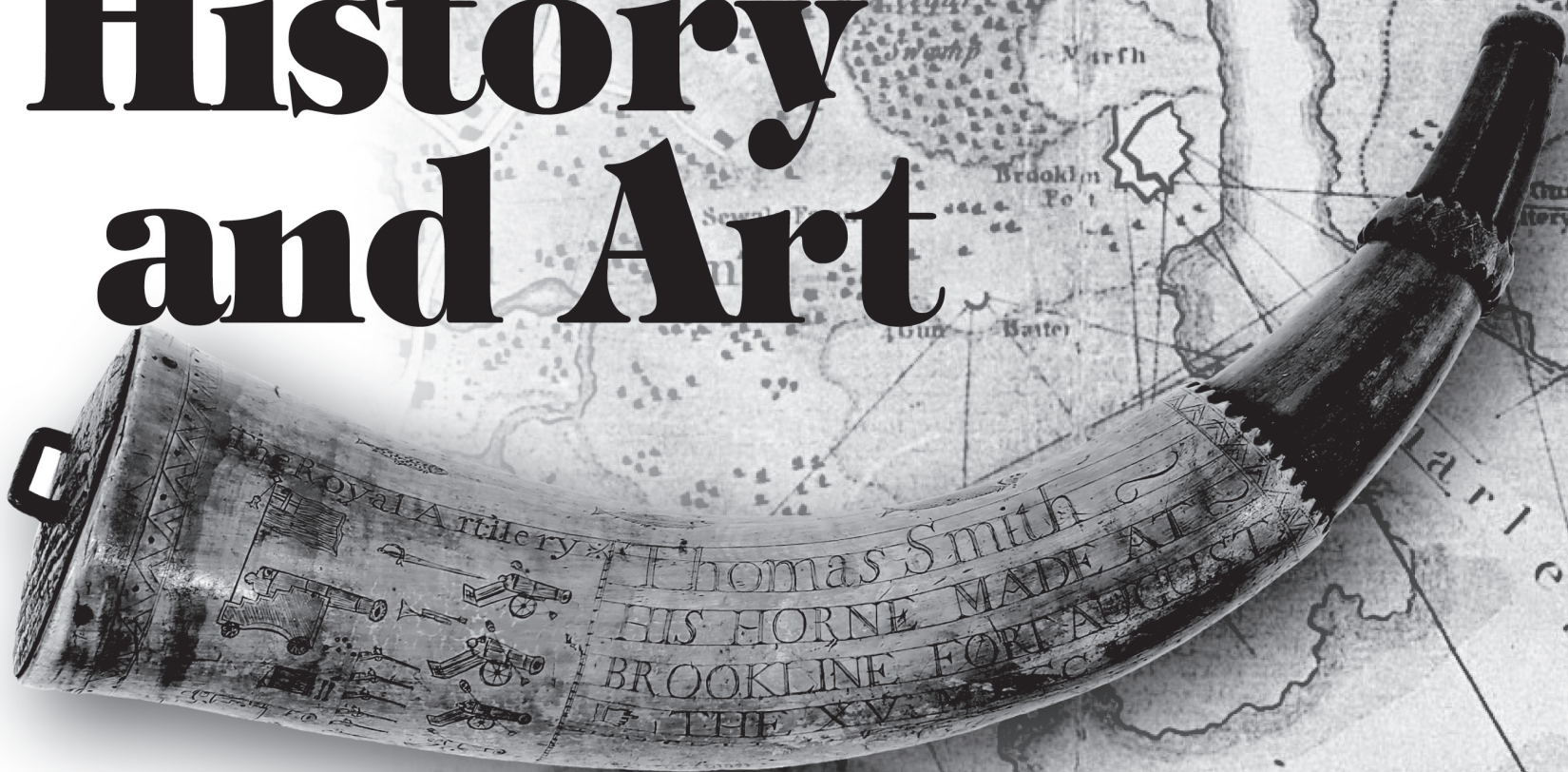
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# COLLECTIBLES

## Thomas Smith's Powder Horn: History and Art



Recently I was contacted by a person from the Midwest who found a powder horn in his grandmothers' closet while cleaning out her estate. I know, I talk a lot about powder horns but each one is different, like paintings done by different artists. This one turned out to be a work of art with amazing history!

I was stunned by the quality of the carving and what it depicted. It was marked "Thomas Smith/HIS HORNE MADE AT/BROOKLINE FORT AUGUST/THE XV: MDCC:LXXV: 1775." Below this is a man hunting deer with his dog marked "A. huntsman," and to the left of that "The Royal Artillery" with cannon, muskets, swords, a fife, a drum with sticks, stacks of cannon balls, and a "Ship of War," a rooster, "A sloop" with two small sailors on the deck, and three fish.

Brookline Fort, or Sewall's Point as the land was called was a part of the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts. It was built in June/July 1775 during the Siege of Boston to protect from the British from getting boats up the Charles River and behind Provincial lines. It was a critical location and troops were brought in to defend it. Amongst those

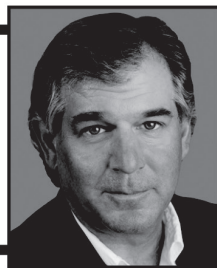
troops were men from Colonel Samuel Gerrish's regiment. Today, the Boston University bridge and part of the BU campus sit where the original fort was.

When I first saw the name Thomas Smith, I figured it

Thomas Smith was born in Rowley on September 11, 1748. He married Elisabeth Champney on April 17, 1769. When British forces marched to Concord on April 19, 1775, Smith was a member of Captain

Thomas Mighill's company of minute men. On April 24 he enlisted in Captain Mighill's company again which was now a part of the newly formed Massachusetts Army. Captain Mighill's company became a part of Colonel Samuel Gerrish's regiment and in July 1775 they were stationed at Brookline Fort. I was able to find the muster rolls for the company and Smith was there till the end of December

1775. Sadly, after that date I could find nothing on Smith. Like many folks he may have moved, and the rest of his history is lost. That said, I am thrilled that I was able to find what I did so that it will now go with this horn forever.



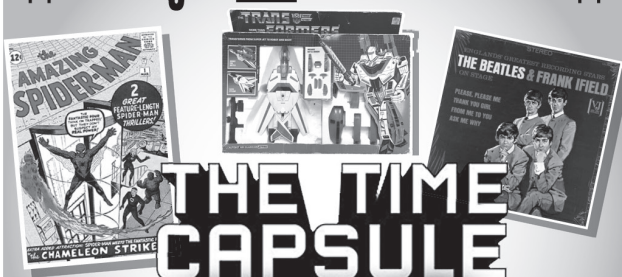
**By Joel Bohy**  
*Historic Arms & Militaria*  
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was going to be tough to find the Thomas Smith as it is such a common name. As I looked through Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution, I found nine pages of them. The easiest way for me to go through them was to print them all and look at each man. So, we know the regiment that was manning the fort during the summer and fall of 1775, Colonel Gerrish as I mentioned, and there were four companies of his regiment there. As I went through and crossed off names there was only one who was at Brookline Fort/Sewall's Point during that time. Thomas Smith of Rowley, Massachusetts.



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■ Summer  
(Continued from page 22)

## Rain Harvest Arts Festival

Roger Williams Park, Providence  
Saturday, June 12

Billed as a "unique event that combines water, science and art in a community celebration," this festival hosted by the Providence Stormwater Innovation Center will offer a wide range of activities for local families.

"Artists, musicians, environmental scientists, local students and educators share their inspirations and encourage public participation with performances, music, chalk drawings, scavenger hunts, tours of stormwater projects hosted by the Stormwater Innovation Center, water testing demonstrations, and more," a description reads.

To learn more, visit [stormwaterinnovation.org/rainharvestartsfestival](http://stormwaterinnovation.org/rainharvestartsfestival).



## St. Mary's Feast

Wednesday, July 14 through Sunday, July 18  
Knightsville, Cranston

Steeped in history and community, the St. Mary's Feast celebration in Cranston is due to return for its 116th year in July.

Last year's feast was significantly scaled back from the usual festivities, which draw tens of thousands of visitors to the Knightsville neighborhood for carnival rides, music and, most of all, food. The 2020 edition put a renewed focus on the religious roots of the feast, which was brought to Rhode Island by immigrants from the area of Itri, Italy.

For more information, follow the St. Mary's Feast Society on Facebook or visit [stmarysfeast.com](http://stmarysfeast.com).



## Music at Mulligan's Island

1000 New London Ave., Cranston  
Various dates, July and August

Looking to enjoy live music at a great outdoor venue? Check out the Summer Concert Series planned at Mulligan's Island Golf & Entertainment in Cranston, from the Doobie Brothers tribute Takin' It To The Streets on July 2 to Scarab: The Journey Experience on Aug. 27. For a full schedule of performances and to purchase tickets, visit [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com) and search for Mulligan's Island.

## Sip & Stroll

Roger Williams Park Zoo, Providence  
Thursday, July 15

This 21-plus event will offer adult visitors a chance to take an after-hours stroll through Roger William Park Zoo while enjoying beer, wine and zoo-themed cocktails. There will also be food, musical entertainment from Farm Dog Band, and RI Comic Con photo opportunities. To learn more, visit [rwpzoo.org](http://rwpzoo.org).



### PROUD TRADITION:

After the pandemic forced a significantly scaling back of the 2020 festivities, St. Mary's Feast is set to return in Cranston's Knightsville neighborhood in July. (Beacon Communications file photos)



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