



JUST DID IT: The view from behind Tori Viau showed off the graduating senior's decorated mortarboard, as her fellow students prepared to walk to the football field for commencement. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

'This is your town'

At first outdoor ceremony in years, Johnston High School celebrates class of 2021

By RORY SCHULER

"Life is a hot dog." Audry Mahony, salutatorian of the Johnston High School class of 2021, found secret answers to future questions hidden under a thin cylinder of meat, tucked into a split-top bun.

Special graduation section inside today's edition

While working a fast food drive-thru window, the graduating senior started asking her customers a simple, but tasty question.

"Is a hot dog a sandwich?" "Now I hope a lot of you are thinking, 'Absolutely not!'" Mahony told the crowd gathered for commencement. "However, I get the feeling that most of you are probably thinking, 'What does this have to do with graduation?' Which is also a fair answer, I guess."

Repeatedly during her shifts leading up to Friday's ceremony, Mahony asked this question of faceless customers, as they shouted orders into a box.

"A few weeks ago, while working at the drive through speaker, I decided to start asking this philosophical hot dog quandary," she said. "After a few seconds of silence, every one of them gave one of three responses."

Mahony said the first and most popular answer was "no, a hot dog is not a sandwich."



FORWARD TO THE FUTURE: Members of the Class of 2021 lined up from Johnston High School to the entrance of the Joseph M. Polisenia Athletic Complex prior to last Friday's commencement ceremony.

Only five times, her customers answered, "yes, a hot dog is a sandwich."

"One woman looked up the definition of a hot dog on her phone, which said that a hot dog is in fact classified as a type of sandwich," Mahony recalled.

There were some strange answers.

"One customer said that so is a taco, and in some circumstances, spaghetti and meatballs," Mahony recalled. "I didn't really follow up on that one."

The third answer Mahony received was a brief "no thank you."

"Which I presume came from people who thought that we were trying to offer them a hot dog," Mahony said. "Which was a little weird considering I work at Starbucks."

Mahony's question was the core of a social experiment.

"The hot dog question really breaks that cycle," she said. "It reminds the customer that fast food workers are not just an appendage of a corporate monolith. It reminded me that those coming through our drive-thru were not just customers with sometimes slightly concerning drink orders, but also individu-

als with opinions and thoughts to share."

Mahony applied the hot dog hypothesis to her 187 fellow graduating seniors.

"Ask every student graduating today what their high school experience was like, and you'll get 200 different answers," she said. "Life is a hot dog. There is no objectively correct way to classify your experiences. You can cite a gut feeling to justify your emotions, and nobody can tell you that you're wrong. Because the big secret is, no matter what anyone tells you, nobody really has life figured out."

From frankfurters to the fearful future, Mahony wanted the crowd to learn from her experiment.

"Just never forget, the world is your hot dog," she told the crowd. "Whether or not it's a sandwich is up to you. Face your fears. Talk to and learn from everyone you meet. Challenge the status quo and you can't go wrong."

To laughter, she added: "Unless you think spaghetti and meatballs is a sandwich. In which case, please seek help."

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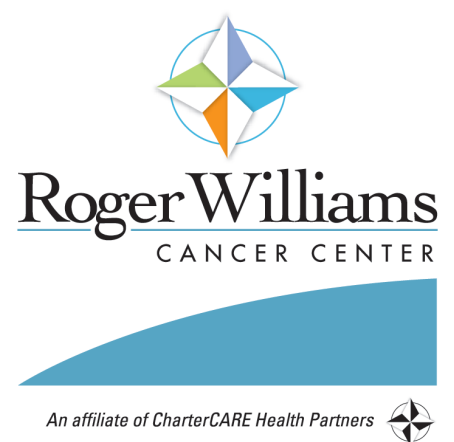
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Town set to raise property taxes for the first time in 4 years

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena has requested a 2.74 percent property tax increase, and residents can weigh in on the proposal at a budget hearing on July 6.

It's the first property tax increase in Johnston since 2017.

"We have not had a tax increase in about four years," Polisena said Thursday morning. "With the average house at \$250,000, the tax bill will go up \$70 for the year, or \$17.50 per quarter. This is a minimal tax increase."

A 2021-22 budget request proposes an increase in the town's total property tax levy to \$72,539,514, up from \$70,602,969 this year.

Currently, property tax rates are set at \$22.89 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for residential real estate, \$27.99 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for commercial real estate and \$63.99 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for tangible personal property.

The proposal asks for an increase to \$23.24 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for residential real estate, \$28.34 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for commercial real estate and \$64.34 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for tangible personal property.

Polisena said increases in "unavoidable" costs in the school budget are mostly responsible for the needed tax increase.

"I have a responsibility that the school department gets what they need," he said. "The school had put in a \$1,600,000 increase, and we're going to give them a million."

Polisena said the school department is facing "rising costs beyond their control."

The rising costs include an 18.5 percent jump in health care costs and about \$3 million to cover students who travel outside of the district for schooling, Polisena said.

"Unfortunately, the Rhode Island Department of Education says students who decide they want to go to other school districts, we have to pay for that, including busing," he said. "We can no longer level fund them, because I don't want the school system to collapse. It's not the school department's fault."

Polisena has requested a 2 percent increase in the total town budget expenditures.

The increase in educational funding expenditures, \$1,611,927, represents a 3 percent increase.

A property tax rate of \$23.58 for residential real estate, \$28.67 for commercial real estate and \$64.65 for tangible personal property would be needed in the coming budget year to raise the maximum levy, according to the budget proposal.

Other sectors of the town, besides the school department, have also requested budget increases.

The Johnston Fire Department is requesting 6 percent more funding for next year, or an additional \$1,190,974.

Polisena said that the pandemic is partially to blame for increasing costs in the Fire Department.

"Don't forget, with COVID, we had some firefighters who were out, and we had some extra personnel dealing with COVID," he said. "At one point, we were going out on 12 to 15 COVID calls per day."

The department is also down seven firefighters, Polisena said, and additional funds are needed to cover overtime to fill those shifts.

"It's cheaper to pay overtime than it is to hire people," he said.

Debt service will cost the town 28 percent more next year than it did this year, an increase of \$831,908.

The Police Department has requested a 3 percent increase (\$529,281), while the Parks & Recreation Department has requested 3 percent more funding (\$35,213).

"This is a very lean budget," Polisena said.

Some departments will be facing budget cuts.

Polisena has requested a decrease in the public services budget by about 12 percent, or \$719,356.

The library budget faces the biggest cut, 17 percent, and will have to operate with \$130,361 less funding next year, if the budget is approved as proposed.

Polisena said several open positions in the library department will go unfilled.

"I think it was a very lean bud-

get," the mayor repeated. "Obviously if the school department didn't have another increase, we would have had no tax increase for the fifth year in a row. But I can't allow the school department to go belly up."

The preliminary FY 2021-22 motor vehicle levy includes taxes on motor vehicles at the rate of \$30 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, in accordance with Rhode Island general law, which includes the exemption amount provided by the state's motor vehicle excise tax phase-out legislation up to \$5,000.

The town should actually see a 43 percent increase in state aid next year, or about \$2,311,065 more revenue from the state.

The FY 2021 and FY 2022 tax levies have excluded motor vehicle excise tax for the purpose of determining tax levy growth. The proposed increase of 2.74 percent falls to 1.26 percent without the exclusion of motor vehicle tax.

A budget hearing will be held at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, July 6, at Johnston Municipal Court, 1600 Atwood Ave.

POLICE LOG

HIT & RUN

At 6:10 p.m., on June 15, Johnston police officers responded to the area of Rosehill Drive at Brookwood Drive, to investigate a report of a motor vehicle accident, hit and run, with injuries.

Police were told the crash happened at the intersection of Atwood Avenue and Route 6 East.

Prior to his arrival on the scene, dispatch advised Johnston Police Officer Derrick Palazzo that a witness was traveling behind the suspect who fled the scene, and provided the car's registration plate number (which was affixed to a 2005 black Chevrolet Impala).

When Palazzo arrived on scene, he saw the suspect vehicle parked in the driveway of 4 Rosehill Drive with its hazards blinking, and a man with a ponytail and an elderly male and female walking into the residence. At the same time, the witness who called police flagged Palazzo down.

The witness, who was driving a silver SUV, pointed at the house and told Palazzo "that's him, the younger guy with the ponytail."

Palazzo exited his cruiser and knocked on the front door, which was eventually answered by the elderly female who he had just watched enter the home.

Palazzo asked who was just driving the black vehicle parked in the driveway, which had heavy front-end damage as well as both front airbags deployed.

Police also noticed a fluid trail line from the street, leading directly to the vehicle.

The elderly woman told police, "My son was just driving that car. I'll go get him. He ran to the bathroom to pee," according to the police report.

Several minutes later, a man wearing a black long sleeved shirt, jeans shorts and boots, with a salt and peppered ponytail exited the home.

Palazzo asked the man if he was driving the car when it was involved in a crash

from the scene. Truppi was charged with Duty to Stop in Accidents Resulting in Personal Injury, and Obstructing a Police Officer.

Truppi was arraigned and released on \$10,000 personal recognizance with a court date of Sept. 13.

Palazzo asked the man his name several times, however he was uncooperative. The man continued to refuse to answer questions, and became "even more belligerent and refused to answer any more of my questions," Palazzo wrote in his report.

The man, later identified as Victor R. Truppi, of 4 Rosehill Drive, Johnston, was placed into custody and transported to headquarters for processing. The vehicle was towed

from the scene. Truppi was charged with Duty to Stop in Accidents Resulting in Personal Injury, and Obstructing a Police Officer.

Truppi was arraigned and released on \$10,000 personal recognizance with a court date of Sept. 13.

ASSAULT

At 11:39 a.m. on June 19 Johnston Police investigated a domestic disturbance.

An alleged victim at the scene told police that around 9 a.m. Christopher L. Sousa, of 198 Oakland Ave., Pawtucket, showed up at his residence and announced that he wanted to collect payment for snow plowing

done over the winter.

The victim told police that Sousa did not like the dollar amount in which he was offered, at which time a brief verbal argument ensued. The victim told police that Sousa then pushed him, according to the police report.

The victim told police that he told Sousa to leave several times, but he refused, and pushed him some more.

The victim told police he wanted to pursue criminal charges and have him trespass from his property.

While on scene, the victim showed him surveillance footage from the inside of his rear garage where the incident occurred. Initially,

police observed the victim and Sousa talking cordially and then the conversation became more aggressive.

It appears the victim told Sousa to leave before he threw his paperwork out of the garage.

Sousa stood in front of the victim, who was trying to walk around him. Police saw in the surveillance footage that Sousa threw his left shoulder into the victim's chest, and continued to push him back into the garage.

Police said it appears the victim told Sousa to leave again, and then attempted to close the garage door, at which time Sousa pushed

him three more times.

At no time did police see the victim try to push or strike Sousa, while viewing the footage.

The victim was told to save the footage for the Detective Division.

Sousa was placed under arrest for Simple Assault and Disorderly Conduct. Sousa was cuffed and transported to headquarters for processing, and later released with a District Court summons to appear on Sept. 13.

Police told Sousa that he was being trespassed from the victim's property, and if he was to return, he would be subject to arrest.



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BACKYARD SPACE

M27, The Dumbbell Nebula

By Lucas Maguire
Special to the Sun Rise

The Dumbbell Nebula was the first planetary nebula ever discovered in 1764. The Nebula is roughly 1,227 Light-years away from our Earth and can be easily seen through a pair of binoculars or a small telescope even from the city. Located centrally within the nebula you'll notice a central star classified as a White Dwarf. There are two main gasses within the Dumbbell Nebula. H-alpha (which can be seen in Red) and Oxygen-iii

(which can be seen in blue). I took 10 images through each of the two filters (Ha and Oiii) that were 300 seconds in exposure length, stacked them together, and used astronomy specific editing software to bring out the details from within the image stack. This Image was taken from my backyard in Johnston.

GEAR USED

- * Imaging telescopes or lenses: William Optics Zenith 73 II
- * Imaging cameras: QHYCCD QHY183M
- * Mounts: SkyWatcher EQ6R-Pro
- * Guiding telescopes or lenses: William Optics 50mm Guidescope rotolock William Optics 50mm F/4 Guide Scope
- * Guiding cameras: ZWO ASI120MM-Mini ASI120MM-Mini

- * Focal reducers: Williams Optics Flat73A
- * Software: PixInsight · Adobe Phosotshop CC · NINA 10.1 · SharpCap · PHD2 Guiding 2.62 PHD2.62
- * Filters: Astronomik OIII 1.25" 6nm · Astronomik Ha 1.25" 6nm
- * Dates: May 12, 2021
- * Frames: 20x300" (1h 40')
- * Integration: 1h 40'
- * Avg. Moon age: 0.63 days
- * Avg. Moon phase: 0.45%

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lucas "Luc" Maguire captured this image from his backyard in Johnston. He will be submitting his deep space images to the Sun Rise for publication each week. Maguire's photography can also be found at his Instagram account @oceanstateastro and his Twitter feed @OceanStateAstro.



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PRAYER APPEAL: Family members joined in prayer at Conimicut Point in Warwick as first responders and volunteers joined in the off shore search for Yosekary Martinez and Valentin Cardona Sanchez Sunday afternoon. (Sun Rise photos by John Howell)

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Tragedy at the point

Girl, 10, and man who tried to save her, 35, drown in Warwick

By JOHN HOWELL

What was a Father's Day outing on a great day to be at the beach turned into tragedy when a 10-year-old girl was swept off the Conimicut Point sand bar by the incoming tide and a 35-year old man of no relation to the girl lost his life in an attempt to save her.

Two other men seeking to assist survived. One was pulled from the water by a Warwick firefighter and the second by someone either on the beach or on a craft offshore. Reports were not clear and neither the identities nor the condition of the men were released. Both were taken to Kent Hospital.

An extensive search party involving dive teams and vessels from bay community police and fire departments, as well as the Department of Environmental Management and the Coast Guard along with a Coast Guard helicopter

with scanning equipment, converged at the point.

The man, who Warwick Mayor Frank Picozzi called a "hero," was identified as Valentin Cardona Sanchez of Central Falls. He was found about four hours after the incident near Conimicut Light. An 80-foot Coast Guard cutter remained at the scene through the night and the search resumed in the early Monday morning fog.

During an afternoon press conference, Capt. Robert Hart, head of the Warwick Police Dive Team, said Yosekary Martinez of Providence was spotted from the helicopter about 100 yards from the light in the still bay waters. Fog quickly obscured the sighting, but the helicopter held position and directed police divers to the location. Her body was found in four to five feet of water, Hart said.

Hart said the extended Martinez family, esti-

mated to be as many as 20 adults and children, chose to visit Conimicut Point rather than Narragansett because of the shorter drive. The first of police and firefighters responded Sunday at about 2:30 p.m. The scene was a mix of first responders rushing into the water — many tethered — searching the waters offshore in inflatables and larger craft, lights flashing, while on the beach four women in a circle held hands and prayed. Spectators gathered on the point overlooking the beach while others on the north beach, seemingly oblivious to the unfolding tragedy sat in beach chairs with coolers at their side as their kids played at the water's edge. Off the south beach, kite surfers took advantage of the brisk winds dashing across the waves as yet more vessels joined the search.

■ POINT - PAGE 12



WARNINGS: Spectators gathered as police and fire conducted the recovery operation Sunday afternoon at Conimicut Point. Officials are considering means to emphasize the dangers shoal riptides.

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PANTHER PRIDE: Above, the graduating class gathered in the gymnasium at Johnston High School, prior to the commencement ceremony. At left, class president Nicholas Cronan showed the crowd a pair of air quotes as he delivered his speech during graduation. Below, a huge crowd packed the Joseph M. Polisenia Athletic Complex prior to last Friday's commencement ceremony. The parking lot at the school filled to capacity more than an hour before the event began. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



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Graduation

(Continued from page 1)

Johnston High School Principal Dr. Donna Pennacchia announced each speaker during the ceremony held Friday night, June 18, at the Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Athletic Complex.

"It has been a very difficult time for me to find the right words to express how proud I am to be the principal for each and every one of you," Pennacchia said. "Under normal circumstances, I would stand before you delivering a more formal speech. But not tonight. This is a celebration."

Nicholas Cronan, president of the senior class, addressed the circumstances under which this year's ceremony was held.

"In these unprecedented times, in these challenging times, in the middle of a pandemic – these are the words I think we can all collectively agree we never wish to hear in our lifetimes again," Cronan said. "Often used as a way of introducing a statement or reminder of things we have been unable to do this year, it is of no desire of mine to repeat any message to you like this."

"On a night as long awaited, anticipated and special as this, it is perhaps most appropriate for us to abandon any regrets of the things we have been unable to do, and remember precisely all the good things that brought us together for this moment."

Cronan served as president of the Class of 2021 for the past four years. Last year's class graduated under much stricter pandemic guidelines.

"Being the first outdoor graduation ceremony held by the high school in some years, I am extraordinarily grateful to stand here before all of you, here tonight, in person, one final time as your senior class president, looking out at the many bright smiling faces, that have made our class so respected and loved by many," Cronan said. "Well, I can now officially say that after a 12-year ride, we finally reached the end of one of the first big adventures of our lives."

Cronan recalled the early days his class shared, from playing with Legos as young children, to their first days at the high school.

"I'm not really sure how it's possible, but one moment we were witnessing the triumph in the tug of war over the seniors at freshmen year's battle of the classes," he said. "And one moment, we blinked an eye and now we've somehow grown to become those very seniors that looked so high and mighty to us. Through thick and thin, we've all become a true family."

The members of the graduating class were shaped by the world around them.

"I truly believe that given many of the challenges we faced, our class has evidently become de-

finied by its unmatched resilience and unceasing desire to succeed," Cronan said. "Just because we are graduating does not mean the magic we created together has disappeared. Do not give up hope for the future, just because this recent year may not have been as perfect as we all hoped. After all, who wants perfection when you can have magic? Who wants an expected and rigid way of life, when you can have an adventure?"

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena, for whom the football stadium where the crowd gathered was named, reminded the audience he was born and raised in this same small town.

"Some 49 years ago, I was like all of you, the graduates here tonight, a bit nervous, uncertain of what the future would bring," he recalled. "But like all of you, I was prepared because of the solid public education from the Johnston Public Schools system."

Polisena was a member of the class of 1972.

"Each of you will face new and exciting challenges, as you navigate throughout your future," he told the graduates. "In some instances, it won't be easy, but you will succeed. Determination, drive and thirst for knowledge will make you succeed."

He urged the graduates to give back to Johnston following commencement.

"This class of 2021 will have the ability to solve problems, navigate through life's most difficult challenges, overcome adversity and make our community, our world, a better place to live work, and play," Polisena said. "No matter what you decide to do in your future, please remember, this is your town. This is your community. It belongs to all of you. Always look for ways to give back to your community. And remember, when choosing your career, always make sure you love what you do, and always do what you love."

Johnston Schools Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. stepped to the podium next and addressed the crowd.

"On behalf of the Johnston School Department, I bring you good wishes on your special day," DiLullo said. "This is a major milestone in your life, and one you'll always remember. I'm proud of this class' accomplishments in spite of the many challenges you faced, particularly in the last two years."

DiLullo congratulated the graduating class.

"You've put in extraordinary effort, worked hard, and strived to do your best," he said. "You've met the high standards that faculty and staff have set for you, and that is something to be proud of. Tonight is both your reward for your diligence, and also the gateway to a successful future."

The next speaker, Louis DiMaio, served as advisor to the class of 2021 for the past four years.

"I'd like to welcome you



CLASS OF '21: Photos of graduates and a sign celebrating the Johnston High School Class of 2021 greeted all who drove into the school's parking lot. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

to the first class reunion," he joked to begin his address. "I know we're a little early for it. It does seem like that, if you really think of it."

He laughingly scolded Cronan for stealing his ideas, but continued anyway.

"I'd like to thank you for your patience, and your understanding, during these past months, and during these past few weeks, as the final plans for this celebration evolved, and clearly shifted, as did much of our social interactions in the world at large, as we emerged from the shadows of the pandemic," DiMaio said. "I hope you give yourselves credit, graduates, for truly the absolute positive stubbornness, with which you refused to be overcome by the challenges of this year. [There] is one thing that you did do that you need to remember ... no one has done what you had to do this year."

Kayla Aquilante earned the title of valedictorian of the Johnston High School class of 2021.

Her first-place class rank came at a high cost, but taught her valuable life lessons.

"I found out that I was in the running for this title in the winter of my sophomore year," Aquilante recalled. "It was then that I decided I wanted it. So, I worked hard for it. I sacrificed and stressed for it; ultimately earning myself this distinction."

Aquilante found out she earned the honor at the school's senior awards ceremony.

"I felt elated when I heard my name announced with this title," she said. "Such euphoria lasted for about 15 seconds; 15 seconds of my heart racing and my adrenaline pumping; 15 seconds of, 'Yeah, I did that.'"

After the initial thrill, a realization settled in.

"But there must come a 16th second," she told the crowd. "And on that 16th second, my smile relaxed and my face returned to its resting state. I took a deep breath and thought to myself, 'That's it? That was the culmination of four years of hard work? Why am I not feeling anything else?' To be honest, I'm not too sure what I was expecting."

Aquilante said she couldn't help feeling a

crush of disappointment.

"Perhaps I was hoping all of my problems would fade away," she said. "Unfortunately, however, that did not happen. I felt nothing. Not even in my heart. My lack of emotion shocked me, to say the least. This presented a huge problem for me and I needed to figure out why." Aquilante said she spent a great deal of time exploring the conflicting emotions triggered by the role of valedictorian.

"After much deliberation and thought, I have come to the conclusion that working hard is good, no doubt about it," she said. "But it should not be done ... at the expense of your happiness and the quality of your relationships with others."

At times, she said, the pressures of earning the number one spot were far greater than the ultimate reward.

"As I reflect upon my high school experience, I realize that the tremendous stress that I placed on myself to achieve this goal, and deliver this five minute speech to all of you, was paid for with the lack of nurturing my mental health, building memories with my fellow classmates, and attending to relationships in my life," Aquilante told the crowd. "While I can easily discuss my numerous honors and awards, I would rather bring light to the reality of how I earned them. I certainly spent countless hours devoting myself to my studies."

She recalled many dinners eaten alone in her room while studying. She remembered the many invitations she declined, because of pending exams.

She had been "socially isolating" herself, "in order to maintain a perfect academic record," she told the crowd.

"I feel that a lesson learned, should be a lesson shared," Aquilante told the stadium full of family and fellow graduates. "I am glad that I learned this at such a young age. And I cannot imagine if I only understood it at the end of my life."

She begged the crowd to learn from her mistakes.

"Here's the lesson," Aquilante said. "Have no regrets in the 16th second. Nothing is more important than your emotional well-being and healthy relationships. Nothing."



TOWN OF JOHNSTON

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX RATE CHANGE

The Town of Johnston proposes to increase its total property tax levy to \$72,539,514 in the 2021-2022 budget year, the total property tax levy this year is \$70,602,969. The FY 2021 and FY 2022 tax levies have excluded motor vehicle excise tax for the purpose of determining tax levy growth pursuant to current law. This is a proposed increase of 2.74%. Without the exclusion of motor vehicle tax, the result is a proposed increase of 1.26%

The tax rates are as follows: Property tax rate of \$23.24 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for residential real estate, \$28.34 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for commercial real estate and \$64.34 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for tangible personal property, as compared to the current property tax rates of \$22.89 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for residential real estate, \$27.99 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for commercial real estate and \$63.99 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for tangible personal property.

The preliminary FY 2021-2022 motor vehicle levy includes taxes on motor vehicles at the rate of \$30.00 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, in accordance with RI general law, which includes the exemption amount provided by the state's motor vehicle excise tax phase-out legislation up to \$5,000.

A property tax rate of \$23.58 for residential real estate, \$28.67 for commercial real estate and \$64.65 for tangible personal property would be needed in the coming budget year to raise the maximum levy authorized by Section 44-5-2 of the general laws.

The Town of Johnston's 2021-2022 budget will be considered at 5:00 P.M. on Tuesday, July 6, 2021 at the Town of Johnston Municipal Court located at 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919. The meeting can also be accessed virtually via zoom as follows: <https://zoom.us/join>
Enter the Webinar ID: 880 6375 1831
Password: 169027 or dial in by phone:
833 548 0282 (Toll Free) or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free)

The above property tax estimates have been computed in a manner approved by the R.I. Department of Revenue.

Dated: June 25, 2021

Mayor Joseph M. Polisena

REPORT TO TAXPAYERS ON CURRENT AND PROPOSED BUDGET

	Current Budget 2020-2021	Proposed Budget 2021-2022
Expenditures:		
Operating		
Education	\$57,945,389	\$59,557,316
General	6,675,293	6,331,724
Public Services	5,945,847	5,226,491
Police Protection	17,760,868	18,290,149
Fire Protection	20,324,197	21,515,171
Parks & Recreation	1,061,640	1,096,853
Public Libraries	773,435	643,074
Other Departments	236,134	236,134
Debt Service	2,983,249	3,815,157
Transfers to Capital Fund	600,000	
Total Expenditures:	\$114,306,052	\$116,712,069
Revenues:		
Local Property Taxes	\$77,814,864	\$77,852,651
General State Aid	5,374,933	7,685,998
State-School Construction	250,000	170,109
State-School Aid & Music	19,246,374	19,948,301
Other Revenues	11,019,881	11,055,010
Fund Balance Appropriation	600,000	
Total Revenues	\$114,306,052	\$116,712,069

Certification:

This is to certify that the data contained in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: June 25, 2021

Mayor Joseph M. Polisena

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Watch Your MOUTH

by Rochelle Rhodes, D.M.D. and David McFarland, D.D.S.

WHITE SPOT LESIONS

White spot lesions are opaque, chalky, white spots that form on the teeth, often due to a loss of minerals in the tooth's enamel. They are very common for people with braces who do not brush and floss their teeth properly. They can also be caused by consuming a lot of acidic foods such as citrus fruits and coffee, and are often the first sign of a cavity. Although the lesions cannot be removed once they form, in some cases the dentist may be able to reduce their appearance with micro-abrasion treatments. An appointment with the dentist should be made as soon as they appear to avoid cavities and other serious problems.

interest in his or her patients' complete health and who is up to date on the latest oral health care issues. If you are looking for just such a dentist, we invite you to call us at DENTAL ARTS GROUP, 401-521-3661, for an appointment. At our state-of-the-art office, all dental problems are dealt with efficiently, effectively, and compassionately. And any medical problems noticed during a dental exam will be discussed with your other health care providers if you so choose. We're located at 1136 Hartford Ave., Johnston, where we offer complete gentle, dental care for all members of your family.

P.S. One common cause of a white spot is trauma to the tooth during its development.

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NOW HIRING:
Big red banners urge passers-by to stop and apply for positions at the soon-to-open Johnston Market Basket store.
(Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

Market Basket hiring employees to staff Johnston store

By RORY SCHULER

Market Basket has started hiring new employees to work at the Johnston location.

The supermarket chain has yet to announce an of-

ficial opening date.

A trailer is on-site in the lower end of the market parking lot, at the location along Route 6A in Johnston, across from the Johnston Senior Center.

Applicants can fill out an application online, or bring completed applications to the trailer for an interview.

According to the Market Basket website, the company is accepting applications for numerous positions

in various departments, including Front-End, Grocery, Dairy, Produce, Deli, Seafood, Meat, Market's Kitchen & Café, and the store's Bakery.

"Be part of the first team at our new Market Basket location in Johnston, R.I.!" Declares the add on the store's website. "To apply for the Johnston, RI Market Basket part-time position(s), please either download the application form and email us the

completed form, or, email your contact information to Market Basket Rhode Island Hiring Team."

The store was initially billed as the first Market Basket location in Rhode Island. However, after delays at the site, the store remained closed as another location opened in Warwick.

A store spokesman has failed to return several calls for comment regarding delays at the store.

Scituate

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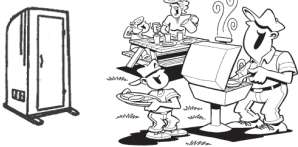
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JRTC announces board members

The board members of the Johnston Republican Town Committee (JRTC) include, (top, left to right) Nick Grasso, James Leonard and Richard Fascia; (bottom, left to right) Vice-Chairman Diana Bajakian, Chairman Frank Ricci and Secretary Tammy O. The JRTC is the official Republican organization for the town of Johnston. Ricci said the group will support "fiscally and constitutionally responsible political candidates," and the purpose of the organization is "to make Johnston and the state of Rhode Island a truly great place to live and prosper." (Courtesy of Frank Ricci)

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By JENNIFER COATES

Ahhhhh . . . summer. Summer is officially here, and so are the days of beachcombing, swimming, sunbathing, sailing and lounging . . . and also sweaty, grass stained and mud-puddle-splattered clothes! With those sunny skies and the beach beckoning you, why get stuck in the laundry room struggling to get rid of those pesky summer stains? Why labor one more minute tackling endless piles of laundry when you could be at the beach? Instead, bring your laundry to the capable and willing hands of Kaushal Jain of Jain's Laundry on Route 44 in Johnston.

For an incredible .69/pound, Kaushal will wash, soften, dry, and even fold your laundry ~ all on the same day ~ at this user-friendly, downy-fresh and sparkly clean Laundromat. This budget-conscious price also covers the cost of the softener, bleach, soap and hangers. Imagine having this tiresome chore done for you, all for this incredibly low price, so you can spend your time catching up on more pressing (and fun) activities.

If you are more the "do-it-yourself" type of person, you will also find a room full of coin-operated washers and dryers as well as vending machines with extra supplies. There are large capacity machines available for all size loads, from 25 pounds to 65 pounds. The top loading machines are available here for only \$2.00 per load compared to \$2.50 in most other places. You will get your work done in a fraction of the time.

Jain's Laundry also has dryers, including four large capacity ones that hold up to 50 pounds, that utilize a new technology where they spin both clockwise and counterclockwise, thus allowing for more even and



Head to the beach this summer and escape the labor of doing laundry ~ come to Jain's Laundry on Putnam Pike where you can have your laundry washed, dried and folded! Kaushal Jain is seen here with a neatly folded bundle of clothes, ready to be taken home!

efficient drying. This prevents items from getting bunched up in the middle and, for larger items such as comforters and blankets, stops them from getting tangled up and twisted.

Though these upgraded dryers were a big investment, the price of doing laundry here at this neighborhood Laundromat is still the best bang for your buck in Johnston!

Vending machines are also on-site if you need to restock your supply of detergent, softener or laundry bags. There is never a need to wait because there are rows and rows of machines ready to go at any given time.

Everything you need is right here at Jain's Laundry.

Residential and commercial customers will always find friendly Kaushal ready to meet their needs. You can stay in their clean waiting area between cycles, or even leave and return between loads. There is always someone on the premises to guard your clothes. In addition, there is a coin machine on the premises that accepts up to \$20 bills.

Jain's Laundry is found in the Plaza 44 shopping plaza. It is open seven days a week - from 8 am to 9 pm, Monday through Friday, and 7 am to 8 pm on Saturday and Sunday. For more information, call 401-231-7019.

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COLLECTIBLES

Lights, Camera, Action!



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

Gale in Wizard of Oz sold for 1.56 million dollars at auction. How incredible is that! In the same auction Steve McQueen's race suit from Le Mans sold for \$425,000.00. Now these are examples of the top echelon of costume and prop collecting, but the point is this can be a big money game. Also do not think that it is only older films and series, being in 2021 even contemporary props from the past 20 years can bring record numbers. Especially when it is a hot brand like Star Wars, Transformers, Harry Potter, or a cult classic like American Pie or Top Gun. If it was a popular franchise, then the props, costumes, and set pieces used to create the magic are hotter than ever before.

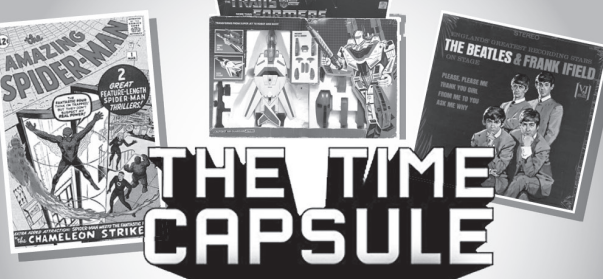
Wars: Galaxy's Edge at Disney World, Florida and Disney Land, California. In the 1990's he was a prop master for Nickelodeon working on numerous shows including Clarissa Explains It All, The Mystery Files of Shelby Woo, and Legends of the Hidden Temple. From a collector's standpoint, you could not ask for any better level of provenance, which is extremely important in the prop collecting world. In my opinion one of the standouts of Eric's collection among many will be a pair of prototype Shrunken Heads from the Wizarding World of Harry Potter. Nearly identical representations to the ones seen in the films, these were cast for the park then rejected during set design. Another standout due to all the 1990's rage in the market is the Upside-Down Compass of Henry Hudson from Legends of the Hidden Temple. A screen used prop from the 90th episode of the popular contestant-based show. These are only two of several props and costumes featured from his collection. Eric's collection is going to be a true test of the 1990's kid's television prop market. It is from an age where the viewers are now turned collectors with expendable income, and nothing has really been seen on the market before. It is going to be a very interesting auction to follow with a record or two being set along the way. Stay tuned!



On July 10th at Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers as part of our Comic, Trading Card, and Toy Auction we will be featuring the collection of Eric Baker. Eric was the creative lead behind the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios, Florida and at the recently completed Star

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THE SEARCH: First responders searched the point shallows as well as offshore Sunday. It wasn't until Monday morning before they found Yosekarly Martinez. (Sun Rise photo by John Howell)

Point

(Continued from page 5)

Cranston Mayor Ken Hopkins, who was visiting friends at Gaspee Point to the north, could see the activity at Conimicut. When he learned Cranston had joined the search, he joined Picozzi at the point. On multiple occasions, it seemed the helicopter crew had spotted something as it hovered no more than 60 feet over the water and rescue boats converged in the wash of the overhead rotors.

On the beach, Yosekarly's mother, Carla Martinez, maintained a silent vigil, her head bowed, eyes closed and hands clasped in prayer. She was joined by Father Robert Marciano, pastor of St. Kevin Church, president of Bishop Hendricken High School and chaplain of Warwick Police and Fire. He placed his arm around her. Together, they prayed.

Initially, Carla planned to spend the night at the point, Picozzi said, but as it turned cold, Hart said the family left about 10 o'clock to return early Monday morning.

At the press conference, Hart described the dangerous tidal conditions as being created when the volume of incoming water is compressed by Conimicut shoal into the narrower confines of the upper bay and Providence River. He said the undertow can pull people, even experienced swimmers, not only off the point but under water.

Picozzi said he is looking at ways to better inform people of the danger of walking the point, including increased signage. Possibilities mentioned include signs in Spanish and a sign listing the names of those who have lost their lives at the point.



Yosekarly Martinez

In 2016, Lonnie Barham, a resident of Shawomet Avenue in Warwick, did an extensive search of tidal warning systems and what might be installed at the point to warn people of a strong undertow. In an email to the mayor, he explains that his research led him to Doug Wilson, president of Caribbean Wind LLC in Annapolis, Maryland, who started his company after completing a 30-year career at NOAA.

The mayor said Tuesday he plans to meet with police and fire as well as representatives from the Department of Environmental Management to consider measures to inform the public of dangers of the point. He said he followed up on Barham's information but has no plan at this time.

Wilson visited Warwick to inspect the sandbar, to coordinate with state and regional organizations that might offer insight or research, and to brief the Conimicut Village Association and local environmental officials on what might be done to install a ripptide warning system at the head of the sandbar.



Valentin Cardona Sanchez

The system, estimated to cost \$50,000, would have included an offshore buoy that would transmit on an onshore device that would have an alarm.

The village association was not able to underwrite the cost of the system nor did it seek grants. Hart advised swimmers use the north or south Park beach and Oakland Beach. Swimmers at Conimicut would be advised to do so at their own risk.

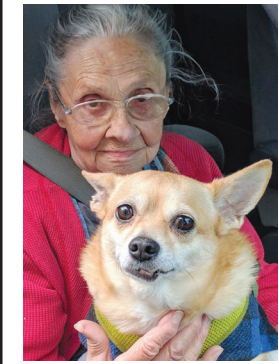
While not related to the drowning, Picozzi said the city has not been able to recruit enough certified lifeguards to open all three city beaches. He is considering staffing City

Beach parking fees at all three beaches take effect on July 1. Residential and non-residential beach parking passes are available at the Warwick Public Library.



SUPPORTING PRAYER: Father Robert Marciano, police and fire chaplain joined Yosekarly's mother Carla Martinez to pray Sunday afternoon at the point. (Sun Rise photo by John Howell)

Margarete H. Hosemann
Second Anniversary
JUNE 28



Gone but not forgotten, although we may be apart, your spirit stays with-in us, forever in our hearts.

Loved and missed -
Family, Friends & Peanut

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

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

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Inaction no longer an option at Conimicut

It is always unfortunate how it takes the occurrence of a tragedy in order to enact changes that may hopefully prevent further tragedies from taking place. It is far more disappointing when our failure to learn from past inaction results in even more potentially avoidable loss of life. Such has become the case at Conimicut Point.

It has become glaringly apparent that the sandbar off Conimicut is a dangerous spot for those unaware of the presence of strong currents that flow

• WHERE TO WRITE:
1944 Warwick Avenue
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on either side of it once the tide picks up. It has killed multiple people throughout the past decades

and nearly claimed the lives of many more – most of which don't even go reported.

Following this past Sunday, we are left once again to wonder what could have been done differently to prevent the devastating drowning of Yosekarily Martinez, a 10-year-old Providence girl, and Valentin Cardona Sanchez, the 35-year-old Central Falls man, who perished heroically trying to save her once she was swept away by the strong current.

The beauty of our natural resources is what makes Rhode Island such a special place to live and raise a family. Though we may often take it for granted, very few people across the country and the world have such easy and extensive access to the shoreline as we do here. Particularly at Conimicut Point, where the normally shallow waters recede even farther at low tide to expose a sandbar that practically beckons curious beachgoers to venture out onto its expanse.

But it is that deceptive beauty which belies the true dangers and power of the ocean. People have a great deal of respectful fear when it comes to open water and exceedingly rare encounters with the kinds of wildlife that inhabit the depths – but it is apparent that more effort must be made to educate people about the much more real and present dangers they face when surrounded by water with their feet on solid ground; like how currents work and just how powerful water can become when it is moving even slightly fast.

This is not to imply in any way that the victims lost this past Sunday are responsible for their terrible plights, but rather to point out that we, as a community, have ignored this known problem at Conimicut for too long already – and this most recent incident only serves to drive home the severe consequences of that continuing inaction.

As far back as 2013, The Beacon has called for more measures to educate people about the dangers of the sandbar and implement means to discourage individuals – especially those wholly unaware of the hidden danger that surrounds it – from venturing out onto the sandbar. Erecting more, larger signage in both English and Spanish is, at this point, merely a necessary starting point. Serious conversations should also be had regarding the installation of tide-triggered alarm that would provide a more explicit and crystalline warning about the danger.

Another measure, supported by the Conimicut Village Association, would be to construct a memorial of sorts near the access point of the sandbar – both to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the area, and serve as another cautionary warning to those who may not have totally thought through the potential risks they would be taking by venturing onto the sandbar.

One or two accidents resulting in death can be chalked up to statistical probability, but the drownings at Conimicut Point have clearly gone beyond mere random chance. We owe it to those who have perished – and the loved ones they have left behind – to safeguard against future tragedies in this area.



LETTERS

'Smart' doesn't necessarily mean wise

To the Editor:

I'm a retired teacher from the RI School for the Deaf, and I've been an advocate for public school students since retiring in 2011. In the past few years, I've become aware of a threat not only to schoolchildren, but to all of us, as well as to the flora and fauna we share our environment with.

That threat is the pulsed radiofrequency/microwave radiation emanating from handheld devices as well as the "small cell" antennas that are going up in neighborhoods across Rhode Island to enable 5G and the "Internet of Things."

New Hampshire has already undertaken a thorough examination of the biological effects of wireless radiation on humans and the environment. In their invaluable report released on Nov. 1, 2020, the majority of those on the

commission "acknowledged the large body of peer-reviewed research that shows that the type of RF-radiation generated by wireless devices can have a deleterious effect on humans, especially children, as well as animals, insects, and vegetation." The report's "15 Recommendations Include Reducing Public Exposure to Wireless, Radiation Measurements, Reducing Radiation from Cell Phones and Protection of Trees and Bees."

The safety guidelines put in place by the FCC in 1996 were already misguided and inadequate, since they dealt only with thermal effects, and not biological effects. Since then, the use of wireless devices – from baby monitors to smart phones, to tablets and laptops, to "small cells" for 5G – has exploded. Yet the FCC has stubbornly refused to

even consider revisiting the guidelines.

In order for all Rhode Islanders to have access to broadband internet that is safe, as well as reliable, secure, and affordable, that access must be via wired fiber-optics to the premises rather than wireless. Rhode Island is in an excellent position to utilize fiber-optics to residences and businesses, since it already has more fiber-optic cable per square mile than any other state.

We must question the right of private, for-profit telecom companies to endanger us with an inferior product. We must abandon the notion that wire-

less 5G is the only means to provide internet access. The safe, reliable, affordable, and secure means to do so is fiber to the premises.

Smart doesn't necessarily mean wise. Rather than creating "Smart" cities, we have the responsibility to apply human wisdom and foresight toward the protection of our residents and of the natural environment on which all of us in the Ocean State depend.

Sheila Resseger Cranston

The author is the co-founder of 5G Free RI.

Freeze on nuclear weapons needed

To the Editor:

I don't know if nuclear first strike capability is possible. We need to determine if an arms race with Russia could lead to our annihilation; and if so, we need to have both countries agree to a freeze on new nuclear weapons (at least if such a freeze is verifiable).

There should of course be immediate inspection of any suspected nuclear weapon sites. If Russia

doesn't agree to this – and if any diplomatic gesture such as inviting them to join NATO doesn't work – then we need to have tougher sanctions than we do at present.

We should also (especially if such a freeze is non-verifiable) consider removing the threat by the prospect of increased trade.

Alvin Blake
Warwick

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2. RHODE ISLAND ADVANTAGE applies to any Rhode Island students attending school in any state or Non-Rhode Island students attending a school in Rhode Island who select an Immediate Repayment loan.



**Request for Proposals
Town of Johnston**

**Auditing Services for Fiscal Years
Ending June 30th, 2021,
June 30th, 2022 and
June 30th, 2023**

The Town of Johnston is requesting proposals for Auditing Services. Proposal documents are available at the Johnston Town Clerk's Office located at 1385 Hartford Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919 beginning June 25th, 2021 weekdays between the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Sealed proposals will be accepted until 10:00 am July 15th, 2021 at the Johnston Town Clerk's Office at the above address and will be opened at that time in the Town Hall conference room. The opening can also be attended virtually via Zoom by going to <https://zoom.us/> and clicking on "Join a meeting". Enter the following meeting information:
Meeting ID: 873 7382 4184
Password: 666945

If you do not have a computer or mobile device - *Dial in by phone:*
833 548 0282 US Toll-free- 877-853-5247(Toll Free)

The Town of Johnston reserves the right to reject any or all responses or parts thereof, to waive any informality in them, or accept any proposal deemed in the best interest of the Town. The Town of Johnston will offer interpreters for the hearing impaired provided the request is at least three (3) days prior to scheduled proposal opening by calling (401)553-8830.

Joseph Chiodo, CPA
Finance Director

6/25/21

SUN RISE SCOOPS

By MERI R. KENNEDY

Johnston Senior Center back in action

The dining room at the Johnston Senior Center is now open daily, Monday to Friday, at noon. For reservations, call Brenda at 944-3343, ext. 109.

A trip to Myrtle Beach is planned for six days and five nights, Sept. 12-17, at the price of \$998 per person (double occupancy) and \$1,287 for single occupancy. Contact Ellen at 944-3343 for further information.

On a weekly basis, the center offers the following activities.

Mondays: Walk away the pounds from 9-9:30 a.m. and crafts at 10:30 a.m.

Tuesdays: Bocce from 9:30-11 a.m. and Tai Chi at 1 p.m.

Wednesdays: Quilting at 9:30 a.m., bocce at 9:30 a.m., Zumba from 10-10:45 a.m. and Chair Strong & Fit at 11 a.m.

Thursdays: Walk away the pounds at 9:30 a.m., bocce from 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Fridays: Line Dancing from 10-10:45 a.m. and Zumba from 11-11:45 a.m.

Johnston Youth Basketball Clinic

Johnston Parks and Recreation, in conjunction with the Providence Pirates, will host a six-week basketball clinic beginning on July 7 and ending on Aug. 11. Clinics will be held at the Johnston Memorial Park basketball courts.

Grades 3-6 (coed) will meet from 6 to 7 p.m. and grades 7-9 will meet from 7:15 to 8:15 p.m. The cost is \$75 per player and checks should be made payable to JYSA. The price includes a T-shirt.

For more information and to register, visit johnstonrec.com.

Amateur radio

The Blackstone Valley Amateur Radio Club (BVARC) invites members of the public to discover the adventure, challenge and excitement of amateur, or "ham," radio by participating in the club's annual Field Day, scheduled Saturday, June 26, and Sunday, June 27.

Sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), Field Day is BVARC's largest event of the year and is held on the grounds of the Scituate Senior Center, the former Chopmist Hill Inn, Route 102, Scituate. Activities are conducted regardless the weather.

The two-day event provides visitors the opportunity to discover what amateur radio involves and the services ham radio provides, including emergency communications.

Three radio stations will be set up on the grounds, including a GOTA ("Get on the Air") station, where visitors will be afforded the chance to operate radios and make contacts with other hams worldwide. The stations will be on the air continuously from Saturday 2 p.m. to Sunday 2 p.m.

Demonstrations are planned, including operating with low power and using satellites to make radio contacts.

Refreshments will be available.

BVARC's Field day culminates the weeklong Amateur Radio Week. More information about the club and Field Day is available at w1ddd.org.

St. Mary's Feast kickoff event

The St. Mary's Feast Society will host a kick-off to this year's festival on Wednesday, July 14, from 6 to 10 p.m.

The event, which will be free, will be held at the Feast Society's building at 15 Phenix Ave. It will feature entertainment from Lance Mantia's The Rewind Party. There will be a cash bar and food.

This year's St. Mary's Feast from July 14-18. The feast's fireworks display is scheduled for July 18 at 10 p.m.

For more information, visit the St. Mary's Feast Society Facebook page.

Help the Historical Society

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

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

One Act Play Festival at Artists' Exchange

Artists' Exchange proudly announces the return of its 16th annual One Act Play Festival, running June 24-27.

This year, for the first time in festival history, the stage will be set outdoors in the heart of Rolfe Square.

This family-friendly event will have audiences of all ages enjoying quality, never-before-seen productions of seven one-act plays, all while celebrating the summer season and sunshine.

Performances are Thursday, June 24, through Saturday, June 26, at 6 p.m., and Sunday, June 27, at 12 p.m. outdoors under the trees in the lot next to Artists' Exchange and across from Durfee's Hardware.

Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door, or for groups that wish to both save on ticket admission and sit together, take advantage of our new "pod seating," which costs only \$50 for a private 9-by-9-foot section for you and seven guests.

This event is truly family friendly, as well as handicap accessible. Additional event details, as well as behind the scenes information about casts, directors and playwrights can all be found online at artists-exchange.org/one-act-play-festival.

Summer concerts returning at Garden City Center

Your favorite summer tradition is back at Garden City Center!

Join in on Wednesday nights in July and August for good tunes, family fun and memories that will last well beyond the dog days of summer as part of the shopping center's Summer Concert Series.

Garden City will be making these concerts even more exciting than ever, so stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks!

As of now, the schedule includes Funk Night featuring XS BAND on July 21; Tropical Night featuring The Copacetics on July 28; A night on the boardwalk featuring Elton John vs. Billy Joel on Aug. 4; and '80s night featuring Fast Times on Aug. 11.

As always, the concerts are free of charge. To learn more, follow Garden City Center on Facebook or visit gardencitycenter.com.

Warwick Center for the Arts Summer Art Camp

Warwick Center for the Arts, located at 3259 Post Road in Warwick, will hold its 2021 Summer Art Camp from June 28-Aug. 13.

The camp will feature a variety of courses, such as "Comics and Coloring Books," "The Art of Musical Theater," and much more. Spend your summer creating, making friends and having fun.

For cost and times, and additional information, visit warwickcfa.org, call (401) 737-0010 or email danielle@warwickcfa.org.

Friends of the Mohr Public Library

Friends of the Mohr Public Library is a nonprofit 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).

Did you know?

The first organized Fourth of July fireworks were set off in Pennsylvania and Boston in 1777, one year after the Declaration of Independence was signed. (Source: 4th of July Fun Facts)

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

LEGAL NOTICES

PLANNING BOARD MEETING Tuesday June 29th, 2021; 6:00 P.M. VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Via Computer:
<https://zoom.us/j/99905826587?pwd=aGZncEZXRDRhRkUydnlnwZlUC9EzZ09>

Passcode: 774013

iPhone one-tap: +13126266799

Via Telephone: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 999 0582 6587

Passcode: 774013

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 21-03 - 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.

Item 2 - Scheduled for 6:40 PM
PB 21-02 - Pilozzi Private Road Subdivision - Preliminary Plan and Public Meeting of a Minor Subdivision. Located at 30 Hopkins Avenue AP 57 Lot 77 - Zoned R-40. Applicant Anthony and Emilio Pilozzi - Surveyor - John Tzitzouris. A Public Meeting on a proposed 2 lot subdivision where one lot will be accessed off of a private road and the other lot will have access to a Town Road. A variance has been granted by the Zoning Board to permit one lot to be under-sized.

Item 3 - Scheduled for 6:50 PM
PB 21-22 - 31 Starr Street Rezoning from R-20 to I- Industrial. - A Public Meeting to make an Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the requested change. Located at 31 Starr Street AP 5 Lot 370. Applicant - Jefferey Cadieux. A public meeting to discuss and advise the Town Council as to whether the proposed zone change is in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan and/or best land use practices.

Item 4 - Scheduled for 7:00 PM
Bishop Heights Subdivision - Call of the Improvement Guarantee
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.
6/18, 6/25/21

Sports



IN THE CIRCLE: Johnston softball pitcher Taina Lopez delivers a pitch against Scituate last week in the Division II Quarterfinals. The Panthers fell to the top-seeded Spartans 8-1. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

Panthers fall in quarters

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston softball team wrapped up its season last week when it fell 8-1 to top-seeded Sci-

tuates in the Division II Quarterfinals. The Lady Panthers had a tough draw, going up against Scituate ace Haley Venturini, who was re-

cently named Gatorade Player of the Year and pitched nine shutouts

PANTHERS- PAGE 16

Winning while losing and a few upsets

This was a rough weekend for our three teams that were playing in state championships as they went a combined 0-3.

Pilgrim boys lacrosse, Toll Gate girls lacrosse and Bishop Hendricken volleyball all came up short in hard-fought battles. All three games were competitive and each team had their moments, but ultimately they just were one step behind.

On Sunday after Toll Gate lost, I had a feeling of sadness for our three teams. When you get to know the teams you cover, there is part of you that truly roots for them. As a journalist, your job is to be as unbiased as possible, but at the high school level it is just different. It's hard to not grow attached to those teams that are playing simply for their love of the sport.

As I was driving away from Cumberland High School, something hit me though ... these kids made it to the final game of the season and successfully completed the spring.

Luckily, we are in the home stretch of the pandemic. Numbers continue to drop, restrictions are being lifted. Sure, it's still

My pitch



by ALEX SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR
ALEXS@RHODYBEAT.COM

out there and affecting the world, but we are fastly approaching the light at the end of the tunnel.

A few months back, we weren't sure if there would be a season at all. We weren't sure what restrictions would be in place, there were just so many unknowns.

Although the season didn't end in the ideal fashion for these three teams, they got to enjoy a full season and play in the championship games which is pretty cool.

Kids are resilient and high schoolers have much more to worry about than wins and losses. It all hit me that the ones that will take the most of this spring will be the players. There's

PITCH- PAGE 17



HOMETOWN HERO: Gary Balletto III makes his way to the ring. (Photos courtesy of Gregg Marnane)

Ochoa, Balletto win at Stadium boxing event

FROM STAFF REPORTS

An afternoon more than 60 years in the making delivered as anticipated.

Promoting its first event in front

of a live audience since February of 2020 – and the first outdoor event in Rhode Island since the late 1940s – CES Boxing returned to UFC FIGHT PASS Saturday at historic Cranston Stadium under the bright

sunny skies for an action-packed afternoon of hard-hitting combat sports.

BOXING- PAGE 17

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■ Panthers

(Continued from page 15)

this season. The Panthers picked up four hits and a run in the loss. Ariana Velasquez drove in Johnston's only run.

"The final score was not indicative of how well the girls played. They did a great job this season, it was a shortened season where they had a new coach that they had to get used to, the new coach had to get used to them, there was a little bit of a learning curve. I thought from the beginning of the year to the end of the year the girls improved tremendously," said Johnston coach Dave Iannuccilli.

The biggest improvement made this spring season was communication, according to Iannuccilli.

"It was the communication, we had a lot of communication breakdowns toward the beginning and it was because the girls were not yet comfortable with our procedures. We practiced that all season long and by the end of the year those things were no longer happening. We won our last four games and we up-

set Prout in the playoffs. That was probably the best game that they played."

The Panthers graduate four seniors in Tori Viau, Abby Clesas, Janitza Bonilla and Taina Lopez. Iannuccilli appreciates the leadership they provided this season and looks forward to seeing the younger girls develop next spring.

"The seniors did a great job of leading, but at the end of the day you have to make plays, and they did. Everyone did, when we collapsed we collapsed as a team, when we won we won as a team," said Iannuccilli. "We have a young team and are graduating only for seniors, so the future is bright for this softball team. And there is a lot of talent there, and even in the games that we lost, we went toe to toe with some of the best teams."

Dedication to the sport will be key in the team contending next year.

"The sky is the limit with this team, it's just going to depend on how hard they work," said Iannuccilli. "They buy into the system, they believe in it and that's a big plus for us. If you don't believe in it, you won't give 100 percent. They do respect it. Overall, I'm looking forward to next year."



PLAYOFF ACTION: Johnston's Tori Viau makes a play to first.



STRONG FINISH: Johnston's Emily Iannuccilli makes a play against Scituate.

Business Card DIRECTORY

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FAMILY AFFAIR: Gary "Tiger" Balletto (right) and his family.



RINGSIDE: The crowd at Cranston Stadium watches the event last Saturday night.

Boxing

(Continued from page 15)

Compton, CA, featherweight Adan Ochoa kicked off the event with a first-round knockout win over Angel Luna to capture the vacant WBC USNBC title and female boxing pioneer Jaime "Hurricane" Clampitt closed the show with a thrilling, six-round draw against former world champion Olivia Gerula.

On what turned out to be a bright, sunny day with an occasional breeze, the action in the ring was as hot as the temperature outside.

The 23-year-old Ochoa (12-2, 5 KOs) wasted no time against Luna (14-7-1), scoring the knockout within minutes of the opening round, staggering Luna with a left hand before sending him through the ropes with an impressive flurry to close it out. The 31-year-old Luna never recovered, and referee Danny Schiavone stopped the bout before he could climb to his feet, awarding Ochoa the victory in his first title bout as a pro.

Ochoa was originally scheduled to fight Worcester's Irvin Gonzalez, but Gonzalez was forced to withdraw due to an elbow injury. A second opponent fizzled within days, prompting Luna, a Dominican Republic native who now lives and trains in East Haven, CT, to step to the plate for an opportunity to fight for the green and gold belt.

Also on the main card, New Bedford, MA, super lightweight Wilson Mascarenhas (4-1, 1 KO) scored his first career knockout win, stopping the tough Geoffrey Then (1-1) of Danbury, CT, at the 1:31 mark of the third round. Mascarenhas, who has now won four in a row, looked sharp from the opening bell, landing combinations and working the angles to keep Then at bay. Then kept pressing, so Wilson wisely remained patient and began to counterpunch effectively, dropping Then twice in the second round and again at the start of the third before a double left hook – the second one sending Then crashing to the canvas again – finished the fight for good. Then, also a professional Muay Thai and MMA fighter, boxed for the first time since 2019.

Fighting for the first time since 2019,

Providence super welterweight won a narrow majority decision over the hard-charging Martez Jackson of Georgia, 40-36, 39-37, 38-38. Peter Hary scored the bout a draw while Bob Paolino and Eddie Scuncio scored it in favor of Reynoso, who used his height advantage to occasionally stall Jackson's and mixed in an effective jab to control the action. Jackson fought well on the inside and really surged in the middle rounds, but Reynoso boxed efficiently in the final round to seal the win. Jackson dropped to 5-5-3 while Reynoso remained unbeaten at 7-0.

Just over a month removed from his eighth career MMA bout, light heavyweight Gary Balletto III (2-0), a Cranston native, returned to the ring for his second pro boxing bout, taking on newcomer William Dunkle (0-1) from Idaho. Dunkle, also a pro MMA fighter, ran out of gas midway through the scheduled four-round bout, but hung tough against the slick-boxing Balletto, who found his groove early in the fight and effectively out-boxed his opponent to earn a methodical 40-36, 40-36, 39-37 win on the scorecards.

In the finale, Clampitt (22-5-2) and Gerula (18-9-3) staged a back-and-forth war over six entertaining rounds, a fight so close all three judges scored it 57-57. Gerula appeared to come forward more consistently in the middle rounds, while Clampitt finished strong in the fifth and sixth, showing no signs of fatigue despite boxing for the first time in eight years.

The 42-year-old Gerula, a native of Winnipeg who now trains out of Las Vegas, fought to a draw for the third time in her career and first time since 2003, coincidentally against Mia St. John, whom Clampitt defeated in 2007 for one of her four world titles. Clampitt last boxed in 2013, defeating Dominga Oliva, and returned Saturday at the age of 44, also fighting to a draw for just the second time in her career and the first time since 2004. The two lightweights never let up from the opening bell, each rallying at various points in the bout to grab control of the momentum.

Highlighting the preliminary card, Mansfield, MA, welterweight James Perella (7-0, 5 KOs) made quick work of Mexican challenger Gael Ibarra (5-4), stopping his opponent with a body shot at the 1:21 mark of the opening round.

Pitch

(Continued from page 15)

no reason to feel bummed out for them. They had fun, including on the championship stage.

Congrats to all of our teams that played in championship action this past weekend, it was a pleasure to cover you this season.

Prior to the weekend, two of our baseball teams pulled off huge upsets. Cranston West topped Bishop Hendricken while Pilgrim beat Portsmouth.

Each club ended up being eliminated after, but for them to get through these two teams was impressive.

Bishop Hendricken has been the best program in the state over the past two decades. I don't need to list the championships and accomplishments ... we all know what they are made of.

West traveled to Warwick and pulled off one of the biggest upsets of the spring and certainly one of the biggest baseball upsets of the year ... maybe even the biggest.

Between sharp pitching, clean defense and timely hitting, the Falcons were ready to go and got the job done. West coach Rob Malo collected his 200th career win, it was just a great story all around.

Pilgrim beat top-seeded Portsmouth as well. Now, Portsmouth isn't quite the

power that Hendricken is, but it was one of the hottest teams in the state throughout the spring, outside of a few games, they were never really even challenged.

In came Pilgrim.

Pilgrim's Jared Reminder was the staff ace and arguably the top pitcher in Rhode Island this spring. But this time it was on Kenny Rix's shoulders and he pitched a gem. It was one of those games that show how much a strong pitching performance can do for a team. Similar to riding the hot goalie in hockey, sometimes one player can be an x-factor.

That's not to take credit away from the rest of Pilgrim, who had a fantastic season. But on that day against Portsmouth, it was Rix's moment and he delivered.

We get one more weekend of championship action this week and it should feature another great slate of matchups and athletes. When looking back on it all, we should be very proud and thankful that we were able to have a full schedule of sports and games this school year.

Was it always pretty? No. Was it always easy? No. Was it always comfortable? No.

But we did it. Sports are back and 99 percent normal. By fall, it should be 100 percent.

Let's enjoy this last week here and get excited for the summer, which I can't believe is already knocking on our doorstep.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER

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CLUES ACROSS

- College group
- Small morsels of food
- Actress Dunham
- Puts a limit on
- Used for baking or drying
- Commercial
- Zookeeper Bindi
- Walk in one's sleep
- The Great Lakes State
- Winter sport
- A thin layer on something
- Peacock network
- Give birth to a lamb or kid
- "Too Scared to Cry" author
- Nose
- Friend
- Country music legend Haggard
- Curved
- More deformed
- Bleated
- Set on its end
- An aspect of Ra
- Releasing hormone (abbr.)
- Harsh, grating noise
- ___ Francisco
- Common Japanese surname
- Punish with an arbitrary penalty

CLUES DOWN

- Excessively showy
- Put an end to
- Blood disorder
- Ingredient in wine
- Shellfish
- Made smaller
- We
- The Treasure State
- ___ Eklund, actress
- Male parent
- One hundredth of a watt (abbr.)
- Dish of minced meat
- Smothered laugh
- Article
- Atomic #12
- Small parrot

- Fictional "Star Wars" planet
- French wine grape
- Football stat (abbr.)
- Sound unit
- Where you sleep
- University of Dayton
- Miller beer offering
- Feel embarrassed
- Able to be estimated
- Commune in NW France
- Adult female chicken
- Intergovernmental organization
- Archaic term for until
- That which is not sacred
- Sound made in speech
- Handgun (slang)
- Fill up again
- Evoke or awaken
- Beam Me Up, ___!
- Spider wasp genus
- Headdress
- Exclamation of surprise
- Of I
- Figures
- Men's fashion accessories
- Indicates position
- Megabyte
- The Prairie State

CHERRY HILL SCRAMBLE

WORD OF THE WEEK:

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Barbecue season has arrived, so soon people will be bonding in the backyard over hamburgers and hot dogs. Backyard barbecue season begins in spring and continues through summer and, where the weather allows, into fall. Barbecues are a perfect summertime soiree, as they're usually laid back affairs and make use of the pleasant weather.

While it's fun to expand your culinary horizons over the open flame of a grill, it's important that you never forget the basics, especially when entertaining crowds who are no doubt looking forward to grilled burgers. Giving the masses what they want is good hosting, but you can still try your hand at a little experimentation when serving burgers at your next backyard barbecue. The following recipe for "Herb Cheese-Stuffed Garlic Burgers" from Andrew Schloss' and David Joachim's "Mastering the Grill" (Chronicle Books) provides the best of both worlds.

Herb Cheese-Stuffed Garlic Burgers

Makes 6 servings

- 2 pounds ground beef chuck, 85 percent lean
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons herbed garlic cream cheese, such as Boursin
- 6 hamburger buns, split
- Oil for coating grill grate

THE GRILL

Gas: Direct heat, medium-high 425 F to 450 F; clean oiled grate
Charcoal: Direct heat, light ash; 12-by-12-inch charcoal bed (about 3 doz. coals); clean, oiled grate on lowest setting
Wood: Direct heat, light ash; 12-by-12-inch bed, 3 to 4 inches deep; clean, oiled grate set 2 inches above the fire

1. Heat the grill as directed.
2. Using your hands, mix the beef, garlic, salt, and pepper in a bowl until well blended; do not overmix. Using a light touch, form into 12 patties no more than 1/2-inch thick.
3. Put a portion (about 1 1/2 teaspoons) of cream cheese in the center of each of the 6 patties; top with the remaining patties and press together, taking care to seal the edges well. Refrigerate the burgers until the grill is ready.
4. Brush the grill grate and coat it with oil. Put the burgers on the grill, cover and cook for 9 minutes, flipping after 5 minutes, for medium-done (150 F, slightly pink). Add a minute per side for well-done (160 F).
5. To toast the buns, put them cut-sides down directly over the fire for the last minute of cooking.
6. If serving the burgers directly from the grill, serve on the buns. If the burgers will sit, even for a few minutes, keep the buns and burgers separate until just before eating. TF205948

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CLASS OF 2021

Johnston Sun Rise

Friday, June 25, 2021



JHS Seniors cheered at graduation parade



By RORY SCHULER

Dolores and Domenic Centracchio sat in lawn chairs outside Walgreens waiting for the parade to begin. "We're so proud of Grace," Dolores Centracchio said as she handed her husband a life-size cardboard cutout of her granddaughter's senior photo, mounted on a stick.

The brief sound of sirens blared.

The couple stood at attention as emergency vehicles, their lights flashing, crawled up the hill toward their spot.

The Centracchios waited for their granddaughter, Grace, a graduating senior, to appear.

The Johnston High School Class of 2021 rode in a graduation parade on Thursday, June 17.

The graduates met at the North Woods Office Park, and rode north on Atwood Avenue to the Johnston High School parking lot, where an ice cream truck welcomed them with Italian ice and scoops.

Parents, siblings and friends lined the parade route, on both sides of Atwood Avenue.

Susan Perrino, Robert Perrino and Kim Gaunt waited for Haley Gaunt to pass by.

They held signs and cheered at each passing car.

Kim Gaunt wanted nothing more than a photo of her daughter in the parade. She shouted down anyone who crossed in front of her camera.

"I was afraid she was coming next," Gaunt explained.

She got her shot.

Floats carrying flower-faced panthers traveled the route.

Seniors stretched through moon-roofs and perched on the back of convertible back seats.

The parade marked the Class of 2021's last night as seniors.

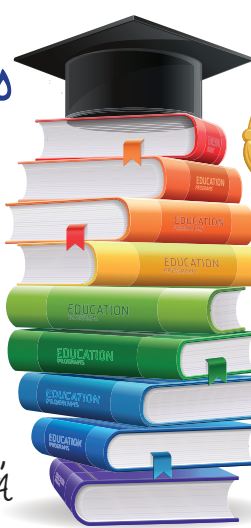
Commencement was planned for the next night.

After that, adulthood awaited them all.

Scenes from the graduation ceremony

Congratulations
Emma Salzillo
 Johnston High School Graduate
 Class of 2021

Love,
 MOM, DAD, MICHAEL,
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Johnston High School Class of 2021

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Sarah Bandoma
Liliana Bankauskas
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Kendall Bernier
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Ian Michael Cabrera
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Alex Cavanaugh
Jaheim Cea
Grace Centracchio
Justin Chacon
Orlando Chavez
Patricia China
Jonas Chuk
Trista Clark
Abigail Clesas
Stefania Cogean

Priscilla Constant
Talia Conti
Grayson Costa
Julia Costa
Jeremy Council
Jessica Council
Jazelyn Couture
Nicholas Cronan
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Zoe Georgio
Cody Giroux
David Gravier
Grace Harley
Laila Harrington
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Brianna Haynie
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Angelina Pennacchia
Nicholas Petrillo
Anthony Petronelli
DeShawn Piersaint
Andres Pineda
Jonathan Pineda
Michelle Pinto
Morgan (Alex) Pouliot
Melanie Privitera
Mariela Quintanilla
Jeseth Quinteros
Brenda Razana Ortiz
Nicholas Reagan
Hannah Reedy
Sean Reth
Madeline Reyes

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Congratulations Johnston High School Class of 2021

from the Johnston School Committee

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Great Work!

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Johnston High School
Class of 2021*



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Johnston High School Class of 2021 TOP 10 STUDENTS



1. Kayla Aquilante

Valedictorian of the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Kayla Aquilante, of Lookout Avenue, plans to attend the University of Rhode Island in the fall.

She plans to major in Cell and Molecular Biology, and after she earns her degree, hopes to attend a Physician Assistant program and practice as a PA for her career.

Throughout her four years at Johnston High School, Aquilante participated and held office in many activities, including Peer Tutor, Academic Decathlon (junior year), Rhode Island Youth Force Traffic Safety Group, Providence County Youth Prevention Group and Float Committee.

She served as vice president of National Honor Society, Editor-In-Chief of the Yearbook Committee, and President of the Above the Influence organization.

"With our upcoming high school graduation, it has finally dawned upon me that all of the fun of high school is coming to an end," she said. "With this being said, my fondest memories are those formed at events like Battle of the Classes, Homecoming, Winter Ball, Senior Sendoff and float meetings. I also really enjoyed just spending time laughing with my friends in class."

Aquilante won many awards during each of her four years at Johnston High.

During her freshman year, she won second place at the school Science Fair.

During sophomore year, she won fourth place in the National History Day Writing Competition and second place at the Science Fair. She also won the Science Department Award, the Mathematics Department Award, the Social Studies Department Award and American History Excellence Award.

Aquilante won first place at the Science Fair during her junior year, as well as the Science Fair Best Biology Project Award. That year she was also the recipient of the Brown University Book Award.

In her final year at Johnston High, Aquilante won the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award, Excellence in English Award, the U.S. Air Force Math and Science Award, and the U.S. Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award.

"My friends were certainly fundamental to my success and enjoyment of high school," Aquilante said. "They were always there for me: helping me with my coursework, motivating me to keep going, and answering my dozens of FaceTime calls at ungodly hours of the night. Aside from assisting me with school, they knew how to have a good time!"

Aquilante looked within for motivation in attaining first in her class ranking.

"Upon learning in my sophomore year that I was ranked #1 in my class, I knew that I wanted to keep the position of valedictorian," she said. "While it was incredibly difficult to achieve this feat, I continued to persevere and work hard throughout high school to prove to myself that I was capable of such a massive accomplishment. I had no external factors motivating me to excel. Instead, I had an inner drive and desire to show myself that I could do it."

2. Audry Mahony

Salutatorian of the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Audry Mahony, of Elizabeth Ann Drive, plans to attend Smith College in the fall.

She intends to major in Environmental Science and Conservation Biology.

Mahony served as captain of the Academic Decathlon and Cross Country teams at Johnston High.

During her years at the school, Mahony was the recipient of several awards, including the Harvard Book Award, the Rhode Island Academic Decathlon Gold Medal Scholarship, the Math Department Award and the Spanish Department Award.

"I think I will mostly remember just how much I've changed as a person over my high school years, as well as all of the friends I've made along the way," Mahony said. "I think I'll remember all of the times I've gotten to explore and expand my interests, from forming a band in my sophomore year to volunteering to take care of animals with the Audubon Society."

Mahony was asked who contributed most to her success and enjoyment of high school.

"My friends always reminded me that academics aren't the most important aspect of being a student, to have fun in all of my endeavors," Mahony answered. "They definitely made my high school experience more enjoyable while we worked together in and outside of the classroom. They have always supported me, whether it meant ordering and buying baked goods from me when I needed to start saving gas money, or encouraging me to speak up for myself when it was necessary. We have always celebrated each other's successes, big and small, and I think that's something I can take with me as I transition into college and beyond."

Motivation is always key to any student's success.

"Overall, I think I'm a pretty self-motivated person," Mahony said. "I always want to get the most out of what I do, whether I'm competing in cross country or learning in the classroom. For me, 'excelling' academically was more about learning as much as I could and getting the most out of my education than it was getting good grades."



3. Nicholas Petrillo

Ranked third in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Nicholas Petrillo, of Bishop Hill Road, plans to attend Boston College in the fall.

He plans to major in Accounting and Business Management.

During his four years at Johnston High, Petrillo participated in many activities and held offices in several organizations.

Petrillo served as president of Student Council and captain of the Cross Country team for two years, each. He was a member of Students Against Dangerous Decisions (SADD), National Honor Society, Float Committee and Panther Cubs.

Petrillo was the recipient of several awards, including the Rhode Island General Treasurer's Young Leader Award (2020), the Rhode Island Secretary of State's Civic Leadership Award (2020), College Board AP Scholar Award (2020), and the Bryant University Book Award (2020).

Petrillo won first place in the Johnston High School Science Fair in both 2019 and 2020. He won the Excellence in Business Award, the U.S. Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award, The Herbert and Claiborne Pell Medal Award for Excellence in U.S. History, the Governor Daniel J. McKee Leadership Award, and the Mathematical Society Award.

"I will remember building the Homecoming float, student council meetings and my AP Biology Class the most," Petrillo said. "The friends I have made and the teachers who have gone the extra mile for their students will stick with me for the years to come."

When asked who contributed the most to his success and enjoyment of high school, Petrillo answered "my parents, Mr. Russo, Mr. DiMaio, Mrs. Nixon."

"My parents and teachers have motivated me to excel," Petrillo said. "I have also pushed myself to be the best I can be, both academically and in leadership roles."



4. Grace Centracchio

Ranked fourth in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Grace Centracchio, of White Falls Trail, Wakefield, plans to attend Boston University in the fall.

She plans to major in Business Management and Organizations.

During her years at the school, Centracchio was a member of many organizations and participated in a long list of school activities. She served as Vice President the Float Committee for Class Council, and Captain of the Cross Country team. She also participated in Outdoor Track & Field and Indoor Track.

Centracchio was a member of Junior National Honor Society and National Honor Society, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), Panther Cubs and Above the Influence.

She was the recipient of several awards at the school, including second place in the Science Fair in 2018, and first place in 2020.

Centracchio participated in the National History Day as part of the 2019 Rhode Island State History Fair. She earned the Outstanding Achievement in Spanish II Honors (2018-2019) and participated in the Rhode Island Science and Engineering Fair Senior Division in 2020.

Centracchio won the Boston College Alumni Association Book Award in 2020, and the Hopkins Family Memorial Scholarship, FM Global Scholarship and the Michael E. and Linda M. Contillo Scholarship.

"I will remember always having something to look forward to and be a part of, whether it be a class event, meet, or a variety of other tasks," Centracchio said. "I really enjoyed being involved academically, socially and athletically because there was truly never a dull moment."

Many people helped Centracchio along the way.

"My friends, family and teachers have each contributed greatly to my successful high school experience," she said. "Without them, it would not have been as fulfilling, enjoyable, and especially memorable."

Centracchio credited many motivations for helping her succeed.

"The idea of a successful future, being able to attend college, travel and achieve my dream career have definitely motivated me to excel," she said. "I also have to thank my parents, sisters, teachers, and classmates for their constant support and encouragement."



5. Trista Clark

Ranked fifth in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Trista Clark, of Joan Drive, plans to attend Northeastern University in the fall. She plans to major in Biology.

During her years at the school, Clark was a member of many organizations and participated in a long list of school activities.

She was a member of Student Council, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), and Float Committee. She served as Historian for the National Honor Society and Secretary of the Above the Influence organization.

Clark won the Science Department Award and the Salve Regina Book Award.

"I will remember the fun times with my friends in class and after-school activities," she said. "Additionally, I will remember the numerous school functions and field trips we attended over the last four years."

Many people helped Clark along the way.

"My teachers contributed the most to my success," Clark said. "They prepared me for my future endeavors and taught me life-long skills. My friends, classmates and advisors such as Mr. DiMaio and Mr. Russo contributed the most to my enjoyment of school. These advisors taught engaging and thoughtful lessons in school, while outside of school, they planned school dances, homecoming and other unforgettable school events."

Clark credited two individuals in particular for helping her succeed.

"My parents gave me the motivation to work hard and strive for excellence," she said. "Their support, time and dedication to my education led me to where I am today."



6. Derek Papa

Ranked sixth in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Derek Papa, of Betsy Williams Circle, plans to attend Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the fall.

He plans to study Interactive Media Design.

During his years at the school, Papa was a member of many organizations and participated in a long list of school activities.

He served as Vice President of the Above the Influence organization, Yearbook Editor and Peer Tutor.

Papa participated in the Academic Decathlon, Mock Trial and the Float Committee.

Papa said he would most remember "the many hours of hard work that finally culminated in a high rank and moving onto a college in order to pursue my passions," from his time at Johnston High.

Many people helped Papa along the way. "A few specific faculty members come to mind," he said. "Mrs. Chiulli deserves credit for almost every success in Johnston High School. She is the kindest and most supportive person you could find within the halls of JHS."

Several faculty members made a big impression on Papa.

"Mrs. Avila was the one who watched many of the Top Ten grow as students, and as people," Papa said. "Without her, our high school experience would have been severely lacking, whether it's because we wouldn't have someone to vent to or to write our letters or to make us feel safe in our Freshman year, she played an instrumental role in our development as people."

The senior class advisor also played a pivotal role.

"Finally, how could I ignore our class advisor Mr. DiMaio?" Papa asked. "Both having him as a teacher, where many life lessons were learned and ideas challenged, and as an advisor, meaning many important events are at least partially credited to his hard work, he played a very large part in the success of our class."

Papa credited one particular motivation in contributing to his success.

"The future," he said. "Simply put, I knew that if I didn't excel, then I might fail and failure meant being and doing something that didn't seem like the right path for me."



7. Laila Harrington

Ranked seventh in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Laila Harrington, of Mills Drive, plans to attend Southern Methodist University in the fall.

She plans to study Computer Science at the university.

During her years at the school, Harrington was a member of many organizations and participated in a long list of school activities.

She played on the Tennis Team, and served on the National Honor Society, World Cultures, and participated in the Academic Decathlon.



Harrington was awarded the Carcieri/Webber Scholarship.

"My friends and I formed a band together and we named it 'Girl Band,'" Harrington recalled as the most memorable experience she had at Johnston High. "We performed the song 'Sucker' by the Jonas Brothers."

Several people contributed to her success and enjoyment of high school.

"Along with my friends, my homeroom advisor and Spanish teacher Mrs. Avila, made school more enjoyable and taught me very important life lessons," Harrington said. "My tennis coach Mr. Barrette also motivated me to find a form of joy and success outside of academics."

Harrington credited two primary motivations for helping to contribute to her success.

"My family always encouraged me to excel in school, but I also found motivation in seeing my close friends do well alongside me," she said.

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Class of 2021

Councilman Joseph Polisena Jr.

TOWN OF JOHNSTON, RI INCORPORATED 1759

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I would like to recognize and thank all the teachers, administrators and parents for all the work and sacrifice on their part to prepare our graduating Class of 2021. It is no secret that our society has faced challenges like never before. I want to commend and congratulate the Class of 2021 for all your hard work. You are now part of a new generation of graduates that will have to focus and concentrate on your future whether it be furthering your education, continuing into a trade or starting your work life. You are the future of this wonderful country and we need now more than ever future leaders that will continue to preserve America's status as the greatest country in the world.

CONGRATULATIONS JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2021

Robert V. Russo

DISTRICT 4 TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

8. Vanessa Melgar

Ranked third in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Nicholas Petrillo, of Bishop Hill Road, plans to attend BRanked eighth in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Vanessa Melgar, of Hillside Avenue, plans to attend the University of Rhode Island in the fall.

She plans to study Computer Science.

During her years at Johnston High, Melgar was the recipient of several awards at the school.

In tenth grade, she earned the Achievement in French Award. In the eleventh grade, she earned the AP Scholar with Honor Award, the University of Rhode Island Foundation and Alumni Engagement Book Award. And during her senior year, she won the Mayor and Town Council Scholarship.

"The start of my high school career will always be filled with the gratifying days I have spent with my family and friends," Melgar said. "Despite this, my final tow years will likely be the most memorable. Seeing as the Covid-19 pandemic has taken such a tight hold over me, as it has on the entire world, I will never forget how someone's life can be so greatly impacted in such a short period of time."

A large group of supporters contributed to Melgar's success and enjoyment of high school.

"The pandemic has managed to fill my days with anxiety and fear," she said. "However, through the help of my teachers and loved ones, I was able to make it through these difficult times. My mother and father, especially, have done so much to support me over these four years. Their ability to adapt and fight through this pandemic has inspired me to work harder than ever. My family and friends have done so much to help me succeed and take pride in where I am today."

Melgar found motivation to succeed when she looked toward the future.

"My primary motivation to maintain high grades in school comes from my desire to attend university without the financial burdens that come along with obtaining a college degree," she said. "My strive for excellence has also allowed me to successfully complete this portion of my life with a sense of fulfillment. My new goal leaving high school is to work towards a respectable career in which I will be able to focus on helping the people around me."



9. Nicholas Cronan

Ranked ninth in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Nicholas Cronan, of Paradise Lane, plans to attend Johnson & Wales University in the fall.

He plans to major in Political Science.

During his years at the school, Cronan was a member of many organizations and participated in a long list of school activities.

He served as Class President during his time on Student Council. He was a member of the Class of 2021 Float Committee, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), Above the Influence, Panther Cubs, National Junior Honor Society and the National Honor Society.

Cronan was the recipient of the Senior Class President Award and the Excellence in Architecture Award.

"Of all the memories made from my high school years, I will most remember the many friends I have made throughout the span of the past four years," Cronan said. "Being Class President since I was a freshman has allowed me to engage in countless activities for the school, especially float and homecoming, and the social aspect of JHS has been the most rewarding for me."

A core group of supporters contributed to Cronan's success and enjoyment of high school.

"It is undeniable that the success and enjoyment of my high school years wouldn't have been possible without the support of my friends, and love of my family," he said. "Having the privilege of spending most of my days with my friends the past four years has truly engaged me in a more enriching social life, and having my family by my side has helped me succeed in all my endeavors."

Cronan credited several primary motivations for helping to contribute to his success.

"What mainly motivated me to excel was the endless support of those around me, as it would be impossible in a year as challenging as this to accomplish our goals without the encouragement of the people most important to us," he said. "Regardless of how difficult it has been for many seniors to see success beyond high school, it has and always will be essential for us to enjoy our time with our loved ones in order to persevere."

10. Olaitan (Lala) Olagundoye

Ranked tenth in the Johnston High School Class of 2021, Olaitan (Lala) Olagundoye, of George Waterman Road, plans to attend Quinnipiac University in the fall.

She plans to earn a dual-degree Bachelor of Science in health Science, and a Doctorate in Physical Therapy.

During her years at the school, Olagundoye was a member of many organizations and participated in a long list of school activities.

She served as captain of the Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field Teams. She also served as captain of the Girls Soccer Team and the Mock Trial team.

Olagundoye served on Student Council. She was a member of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and Above the Influence, and World Cultures.

She also ran Cross Country.

During her years at Johnston High School, Olagundoye won many awards and honors.

She won the Civic Leadership Award in 2020.

She also earned distinctive athletic honors, including the Rhode Island Girls Track and Field First Team All-State in Long Jump and High Jump (2021), State Champion in High Jump (2019-2021), State Champion in Long Jump (2021), Rhode Island Track and Field Coaches Award and All-Academic Award (2021), Providence Journal Female Honoree for Indoor Track and Field (2021), RIIL Athlete of the Year Finalist (2021) and the RIIL Student-Athlete Athletic Achievement Award (2021).

"In becoming a member of many extra curricular activities, I realized my love for helping others and for making people smile," Olagundoye said. "Being a part of a team or a club really accentuated my high school experience and it introduced me to many new people who quickly became my friends ... The ability to build connections and develop new relationships with the people around me is one of the most rewarding aspects of me going to school daily."

Olagundoye will cherish many high school memories.

"When I think about instances that may make me 'come alive,' physical activity, such as playing sports with my team, come to mind," she said. "But when physical activity becomes integrated into helping other people do the things they love, that is when I truly come to life. There's just something about seeing peoples' faces light up when they can finally do something they so longed to do, that always manages to put a smile on my face and prompts me to continue to help people in any way I can. I believe that I have the characteristics of an exemplary leader, with the ability to have a positive influence on others around me. With this, I intend on paying the opportunities that I have been given forward, in acting as a leader and contributing my support to those in need of guidance."

A large group of supporters contributed to Olagundoye's success and enjoyment of high school.

"My sisters, Tolani, Jummy, Tobi and Josephine," Olagundoye said. "My parents, Richard and Benedicta. Mr. DiMaio, my advisor, coach and teacher. Mr. Russo, my teacher, advisor and friend. Mrs. Fagundes, my coach, who encouraged me to be the best student athlete I could be. Mr. Saravo, freshman year biology teacher who sparked my interest in the study of life and encourages me daily."

Olagundoye looked to her family for motivations as she excelled in high school.


"My family's history and the determination of my parents, especially that of my mother, have really contribute to my ethics and my moral decency," she said. "I am now living in this 'American Dream' that my parents dreamed of, and achieved. Witnessing my parents struggle and sacrifice to provide a good life for my four sisters and I, I vowed myself that I too would work hard to be the best me I could be, while spreading love and kindness to others. It is my goal to make my parents proud and to show them that their strenuous efforts are being paid off through my success!"



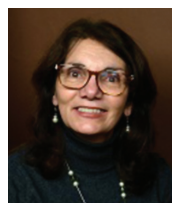
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Dolores and Domenic Centracchio held cutouts of their granddaughter's senior picture. The couple eagerly awaited the appearance of graduating senior Grace Centracchio during the Johnston High School Class of 2021 graduate parade. When they finally spotted the car carrying Grace, they ran to greet it. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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Johnston High School
Class of 2021



Rep. Deborah A. Fellela (D)
District 43 - Johnston



Congratulations
Class of 2021!!



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Susan Perrino, Robert Perrino and Kim Gaunt held signs and waited for graduate Haley Gaunt to pass by during the senior parade. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



Congratulations
Johnston High School
Class of 2021

To the hardworking graduates of 2021, we salute your perseverance through a uniquely challenging senior year.

Best of luck as you take the next step!

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CONGRATULATIONS
Class of
2021



Woo-hoo you did it! You'll be going places! Big congratulations to this year's graduates!



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