

Santilli resigns School Committee seat

By RORY SCHULER



David Santilli

A Johnston School Committee member has quietly resigned, and a replacement has been sworn in.

On Dec. 22, 2021, David Santilli wrote a brief resignation letter and submitted it to Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena.

"I will be resigning my position as School Committee Member for District 3 effective December 31, 2021," Santilli wrote in his letter. "I thank you for the opportunity to serve our Town and my Constituents of District 3."

Santilli did not respond to multiple calls for comment.

At Monday night's meeting, Marysue Andreozzi was sworn in by Polisena after Town Council members voted in a quick, unanimous, secret ballot election.

Santilli voiced frustration with the new school building process after the Nov. 9 School Committee meeting. He went on vacation prior to the holidays and did not attend December's meeting. Then, days before Christmas, he submitted his letter of resignation.

"David has been involved in politics for a long time," Polisena said on Tuesday. "He's done a very credible job. He was on the School Committee years ago. And then he was on (Town) Council and again on the

School Committee. I assume he probably wants to spend more time with his family."

Santilli, a local businessman, owns and operates The Jewelry Center at 1463 Atwood Ave. He vacated his District 3 seat on the Johnston Town Council in 2018 when he announced he wouldn't seek re-election. That seat is now held by Joseph Polisena Jr.

"I think he did a great job, and we're going to miss him, but family comes first and family obligations come first," Polisena said. "He's done his time. He's got a business too ... a local business in town. When you own a business, it's not very easy to do your business and trying to do politics."

SEAT - PAGE 5

Johnston boys Team of the Year



BOYS TEAM OF THE YEAR: The Johnston football team had a big year in 2021. Despite the difficulties stemming from the pandemic, the Panthers enjoyed two successful seasons in the same calendar year, culminating in two playoff appearances and a Super Bowl berth. Johnston had suffered a lengthy playoff drought in previous seasons, and for its turnaround, it has been named the Johnston Sun Rise's Boys Team of the Year. For more details, turn to the sports section, starting on Page 17. (Sun Rise photo)

Knightsville: New Federal Hill

Renovations include park and plans for restaurant in historic Italian district

By EMMA BARTLETT

The roots of Italian heritage run deep in Cranston's Knightsville, and Maria Manzi is one of many whose ancestors migrated to the area from Itri, Italy. Trying to escape economic turmoil, many Itrani left Italy just before the twentieth century and settled in this small pocket of Cranston, Rhode Island. In earlier years, Knightsville's Itriani population reached 90 percent. Today, more than half of those in the community are of Itrani ancestry.

Due to these strong ties, Knightsville and Itri share a unique relationship. In 2000, the two formed an official sister city relationship, and in 2018, the Mayor Antonio Fargiorgio of Itri visited Cranston. The City now plans to revitalize the area and replicate its pocket park, sidewalks and street lighting after Itri to honor the local Itrani's heritage.

"I think that people are excited for it, and it means a lot to the community," said Manzi, whose grandparents



COLUMNS THAT TRANSPORT YOU: Knightsville's columns mirror the Italian vibe that the town is looking for. In order to make the area look more like Itri, Italy, the Cranston will imitate its lighting and sidewalks. (Sun Rise FILE photos)



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MEMORIAL MAN: The late Ricky Salzillo Memorial Game Dinner has been canceled again this year due to the surge in COVID-19 cases. (Sun Rise FILE photo)

This year's Ricky Salzillo Memorial Game Dinner canceled

By PETE FONTAINE

After setting down strict guidelines to guard against people contracting the COVID-19 variant and deciding to hold the highly-successful annual Ricky Salzillo Memorial Game Diner, organizers had second thoughts and this week announced the scheduled Feb. 6 fundraising event has been canceled.

The announcement marked the second time in as many years that the COVID-19 Pandemic has wiped out the event which back in 2020 attracted 350 people and raised upwards of \$10,000 for scholarships and benefitted a number of local charities as well as Hasbro Children's Hospital.

Recently, members of the organizing committee met to discuss ways in which they could ensure the safety of all game dinner attendees, worker and volunteers.

Thus, as Steven M. Placella, a prominent Johnston-based attorney who chairs the event, explained: "In our discussions, it became clear that during the actual dinner there would have been a continuous four-to-five hour period when an estimated 350-to-400 attendees would be eating and drinking and not wearing their provided masks."

As he continued with a deep concern ringing in his voice, Placella wanted it known: "We're all disappointed, but with the new variant being so easily transmitted and despite asking and requiring all people be vacci-

nated wear masks, etc., we felt that we would be putting everyone there at risk so we decided it was best to cancel the dinner for this year."

The long-serving chairman, who shares annual duties with Vincent LaFazia, went on: "Additionally, the collateral damage would be the close contacts family members and children of any attendee, worker or volunteer who contracted COVID-19 as a result of this event."

Placella then further explained the all-volunteer committee's thinking saying: "Notwithstanding, the fact that these collateral people either could or would also contract and become ill with COVID-19, their quarantine period — even if not infected — would keep these people out of work and school for a period of time."

So, as Placella, LaFazia and other committee members who were closely connected with the late Salzillo who was tragically killed in an automobile accident back in 1976, wrote in a prepared announcement: "We started this event many years ago to honor a great guy who passed away much too soon and to do some positive things for our community. Therefore, it would be truly sad and ironic if just one person contracted COVID-19 and died as a result of this event."

To which each and every committee member who attended the meeting each sternly stated: "It was simply not worth the risk going forward so we will see you next year!"



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THE OTHER VIRTUAL LEARNING: (Above and below) A Scituate student adjusts a machine in a virtual reality environment. The Scituate Career & Technology Education program uses virtual reality and GIS technology to help students explore potential career options. (Photos courtesy Scituate High School)

Scituate HS to host high-tech open house

Prospective CTE students & families invited to explore engineering, entrepreneurship, computer and biomedical science programs

By RORY SCHULER

Only one public school program in the Ocean State gives students the opportunity to electronically dissect a human body. The same school offers virtual reality lessons and will hold an open house in February.

The Scituate CTE (Career & Technology Education) program is also helping fifth-grade students explore potential science and technology careers through a new initiative that combines virtual reality, geographic information systems, and a database of Rhode Island professionals, according to the school.

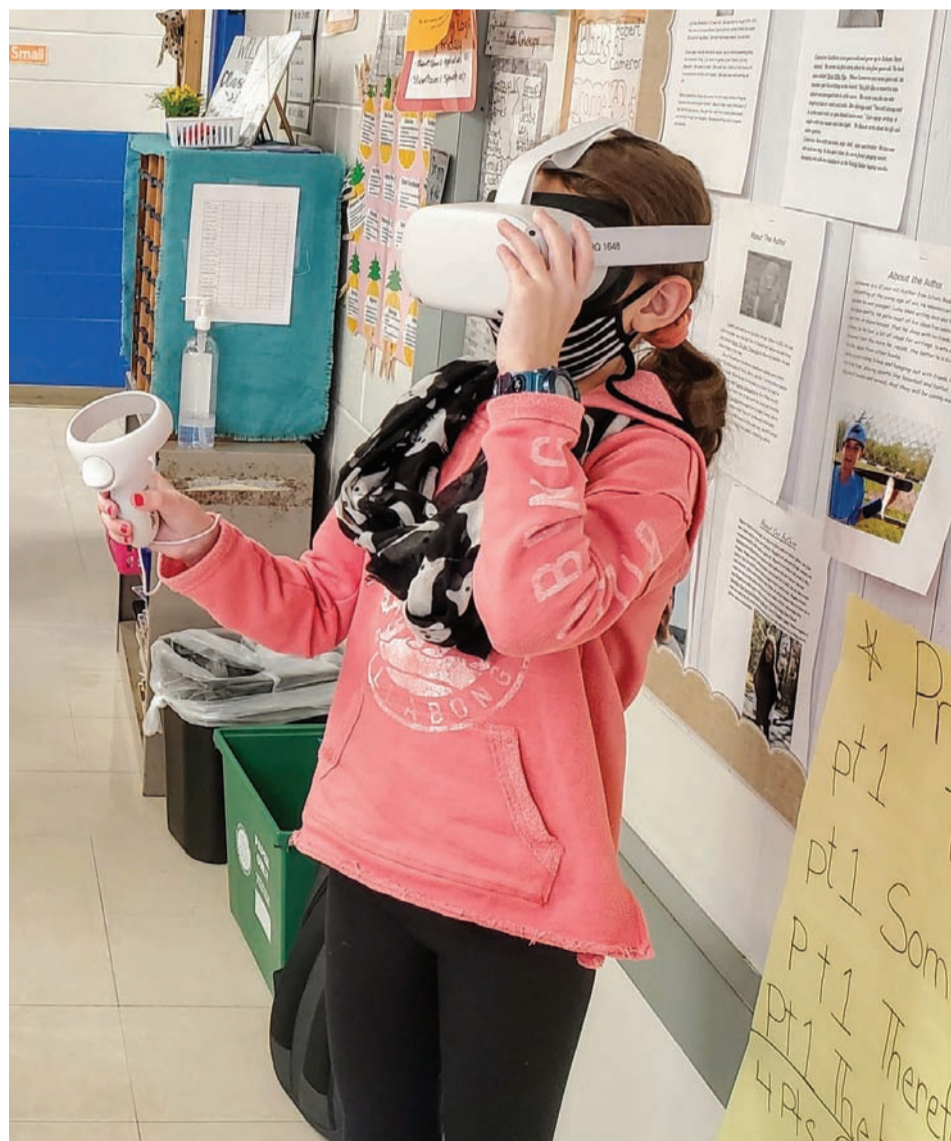
"The CTE program is seeking professionals who will help build the database by filling out forms that describe their professions," according to a school press release.

"The Scituate CTE program (grades 9-12) is open to students from all over Rhode Island, and the professional database Scituate is building will be available to anyone over the internet," said Scituate High Principal Michael Hassell.

Students can use virtual reality headsets provided by partner Polarix MEP to immerse themselves in virtual workplaces in manufacturing, skilled trades, hospitality, and emergency management in the CTE program. They explore other careers using Career Explorer tools provided by partner Nepris.

The program is "a first step in helping elementary students discover interests and talents that could develop into careers," according to the school.

"There are four stages of adopting a career path: exposure, exploration, experience and expertise," said Scituate CTE Coordinator Shannon Donovan. "We want to push more exposure down to the elementary level so students can explore their interests. When they get to high school and have to start seriously considering a career path, they will already have an idea of what they like, what they're good at, and what they might want to do."



CTE - PAGE 4

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DIGITAL HUMAN DISSECTION: A Scituate CTE (Career Technical Education) student works on the program's anatomage table. Scituate is the only CTE program in Rhode Island with an anatomage table. (Photos courtesy Scituate High School)

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CTE

(Continued from page 3)

Students create story maps that feature careers of interest in Rhode Island as the final phase of the career exploration program.

"To complete this project, the CTE program needs Rhode Island professionals willing to describe their careers in a new database" Donovan will build, according to the school.

Those professionals who "would like to contribute to the career exploration program," can complete the form at: <https://rb.gy/j2012s>.

Donovan plans to make the database public when it is completed, for use across the Ocean State.

"It will be very similar to any professional directory, but it will be searchable and oriented toward elementary-age students," Donovan said. "Everyone who volunteers to be in the listing supports students in the earliest stages of finding a fulfilling career path."

Students from Johnston and across Rhode Island can explore technologies of the future and careers of the present in Scituate.

Scituate High School's CTE (Career and Technical Education) Academies will hold an open house for students interested in engineering, computer science, biomedical science and entrepreneurship careers at 6 p.m. on Feb. 2, according to the school. A potential snow date has been set for Feb. 9.

"The open house begins with a brief orientation in the school auditorium before the program moves to the gym with demonstrations of programs that teach everything from piloting drones to suturing incisions," according to a Scituate CTE news release. "Students from any community are invited to attend."

"The CTE engineering academy will demonstrate virtual reality headsets used by manufacturing companies for remote training, maintenance and repair operations," according to the school. "Prospective students can also see how CTE students learn to pilot drones used to monitor crop growth and inspect buildings, bridges, power lines, etc."

"Students interested in medical science careers — such as medical researcher, health policy analyst, and technician — can watch a demonstration of the biomedical academy's anatomage table," according to the school. "An anatomage table is a horizontal video screen that enables students to electronically dissect a human body; Scituate CTE is the only Rhode Island public school program that has one."

"Our students work with exciting, advanced technology in a hands-on learning environment," Donovan said. "A lot of it will be on display at the open house, and there will be plenty of CTE students there to answer questions. We hope we can help students who are interested in technical careers make good decisions about their futures."

Opinion

Something to hope for

EDITORIAL

Politics as a profession may be described as being reliant on mastering the difficult duality between offering lofty promises of positive change with the harsh reality of understanding what can feasibly be accomplished by any one person or government body.

Successful politicians, therefore, are metaphorical tight rope walkers regarding the promises they make and the goals they attempt to accomplish. This approach can cause justified frustration and criticism among the voting populace when change occurs slowly, or perhaps not at all, despite all those optimistic messages of gradual improvement and little victories.

This is why we sincerely hope that the messaging coming directly from Senate President Dominick Ruggerio, in a memo sent to media outlets last week, represents something different.

Ruggerio outlined a platform for the Rhode Island Senate in 2022 full of goals that, should they be accomplished, would represent a huge leap forward for Rhode Islanders and the state as a whole.

The Senate President targeted not just one goal, but four specific goals and a few more vague ones that could have, as he writes, a transformational effect on some of the most important issues facing us today, including universal Pre-K, student loan relief for teachers and health care workers, improving clean water infrastructure and fighting climate change.

This holistic approach to making positive change is what we need at a time where political cynicism is high and everyday spirits have been battered by a seemingly never-ending period of crisis. It is an approach that doesn't shy away from complex problems, but rather attempts to tackle them head-on.

We find the increased access to Pre-K and student loan forgiveness suggestion for healthcare workers and teachers particularly of note. These two investments would have a profound effect on three areas that need critical assistance: childcare, healthcare, and education. We can think of few more worthy causes at a time where quality education and support for those who have given so much of themselves for so long need a helping hand. Tangible political power is needed to provide that assistance, and it is encouraging to see a commitment to those endeavors coming from one of the most powerful leaders in the state.

The same can be said for a commitment to establishing a pathway to all renewable energy by 2030. Is it an attainable goal? Maybe, and maybe not. But setting that goal and a path to get there is the only place to start, and it should be recognized.

Although they were not expanded upon in detail, the Senate Presidents pledge to make affordable child care a priority, as well as affordable housing, should also be noted. We find it hard to separate childcare and affordable housing from other elements of our infrastructure that gain more widespread approval. How can an economy function to its best potential when parents can't work due to being unable to afford a place to leave their child? How can an economy expect to succeed when so many find themselves out of doors, or spending 75 percent of their income on overpriced rent?

Nothing that the Senate President has addressed as a goal are new concepts, and many have been fighting for these priorities long before Mr. Ruggerio penned his letter, but we have to hope for our own sake that his voluntary release of these legislative priorities is indicative that our state leaders are committed to making these lofty goals an actual reality, not in the distant future, but as soon as possible.

Sweetie, did you find a place to get the Covid test you need?



Yup. I can either take the appointment they gave me, or I can just wait in line at one of the walk-ins. Either way gets me tested by early April.



GUEST POETRY

The thief's wake

By Bob Houghtaling

The line outside the funeral home
Had many standing on their feet
Far out past the parking lot
And to a nearby street.

Folks had come from miles away
In respectful grief -
Paying homage to this dangerous man
Most knew as a thief.

As the parade inched toward the casket
People chatted along the way -
While some didn't know him
All had much to say.

He annoyed them during his lifetime
By living a life of crime
Stealing oh so many things
But never taking a dime.

They spoke of his activities
And things he wished to steal-
Many loved him for it
Because nothing was more real.

He never took their purses
Or absconded with fine jewels
In fact no law was broken
The thief simply broke the rules.

What did he take then
And why are they all here?
The thief stole so much more
Than things we think are dear.

After hours of shuffling
At a glacial pace
All of those with patience
Saw the calm thief's face.

He rested with a smile
Within a simple box-
Giving off the countenance
Of a wise old fox.

And everyone who witnessed
His slumber so sublime-
Now finally understood
Twas they that took to crime.

Theirs was of indifference
His was of belief-
The things they all worshipped
Brought little or no relief.

His crime was of meaning

And trying to steal the hearts
Of those who had forgotten
That which keeps us apart.

The masses labeled him a reprobate
But was them who broke the law
For having no time for the sickly
Lonely and the poor.

Our thief tried to steal moments
Getting people to reflect-
Forgotten while still breathing
He now earned great respect.

Friends then stood before him
Hoping he's not gone.
Staring at his quietness
It's puerility we must mourn.

Many would next say a prayer
Asking if he'd forgive
Something he had no power for-
They simply had to live.

With our eyes closed tightly
In that solemn air
Came forth a heavenly message-
"Steal time to simply care

Steal time for a neighbor
Steal time to lend a hand
Steal time to feed the hungry
Steal time for your fellow man."

In silence we reflected
On words without a sound-
Spoken from a soulful place
With powerful resound.

On the funeral Sunday
A lesson it was taught
Without official charges
The thief still should be caught.

Soon the gathering departed
But something else was revealed-
That man's need for each other
Cannot be concealed.

The line long since dwindled
But imbedded is the belief
That the world was a better place
For the presence of the thief.

A longtime contributor to Beacon Communications publications, Robert Houghtaling is the Director, Substance Abuse Prevention/Mental Health for the Town of East Greenwich.



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ZOOM IN: The Johnston Town Council met on Monday night and broadcast its meeting online via Zoom.

Ocean State public meetings bounce back to Zoom

By ALEX MALM
and
RORY SCHULER

Johnston has shifted back to some virtual meetings following a shift in state policy connected to the recent skyrocketing COVID infection rates.

This week's Johnston Town Council meeting took place both in person and online, via Zoom. The Johnston School Committee met virtually on Tuesday.

"I hope everybody is having a safe winter and had a good New Year," Johnston School Committee member Joseph Rotella, who represents District 4, said during Tuesday night's meeting. "I look forward to hopefully having these meetings back in person, having everybody be healthy and back in schools."

For weeks Ocean State elected officials on social media and in Warwick City Council chambers have expressed their concerns about not having the option to meet remotely during the pandemic.

Those calling for it got their wish last week when Gov. Dan McKee signed an executive order which will allow elected officials and members of the public to participate remotely during public meetings.

Under the current Open Meeting Act legislation, all members of public bodies must be in person in order to participate. The executive order allows for that provision to be relaxed until at least Feb. 4.

"It's about damn time," said Cranston Citywide Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli.

Renzulli became vocal about allowing meetings to take place remotely after she had to miss her first committee meetings as a council member in December following her 12-year-old son testing positive for Covid and not being able to find childcare because of it.

"I'm not sure what took so long to make it happen as cases have been surging for over a month, but I'm happy the Open Meetings Act has been relaxed by Executive Order, to allow for expanded virtual meetings," said Renzulli.

For months public bodies had the ability to meet remotely through a previous executive order similar to the one signed by McKee. That order expired on July 23.

Before the executive order expired there was a push at the General Assembly to pass legislation on the behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Business Regulations which would've allowed remote meetings to occur until July 1, 2023.

That legislation didn't get voted on.

One of those who spoke publicly in support for the option of remote meetings was Warwick Ward 2 Councilor Jeremy Rix, using his councilor comments during the Jan. 3 meeting to make his point known.

"Several folks in Ward 2, both before and after the Omicron variant emerged, have requested that the City Council meetings be available through Zoom," Rix said at the Jan. 3 meeting. "Almost everyone around here has Internet access and we know from before that we can make it work. Having to physically attend meetings, which can last for hours into the evening, can be a significant barrier for public participation. Regardless of whether people have to fear catching a dangerous disease or not, I support keeping greater public access to City Council meetings."

With the temporary rule in place allowing remote meetings Cranston doesn't plan on wasting time, as it is expected to begin remote meetings for the City Council starting Thursday.

"I'm pleased that the Governor signed the executive order to allow virtual meetings during the current Covid surge," said Cranston City Council President Chris Paplauskas. "Starting with this Thursday's committee meetings the City Council will go all virtual. I will be monitoring closely the Covid numbers and continue to adjust how the meetings will be conducted moving forward in the safest way possible. In Cranston we made the necessary upgrades in technology to offer either full virtual meetings or a hybrid meetings format."

Warwick City Council President Steve McAllister said that he hasn't made a decision on whether or not they will be moving to full remote meetings.

"The Governor's (executive order) gives us a couple different options. I am working with the council solicitor on the details," said McAllister. "If the Covid numbers continue to spike we may have the Jan. 19 meeting be a full remote meeting. But no final decision has been made yet."

Asked when the time limit would be for the Council to make a decision on whether or not they will meet remotely, McAllister said "Attorney Walsh is looking into that, but most likely just 48 hours before the meeting when the agenda gets posted on the SOS website. But we will make a decision before then just so everyone can plan."

We're All Ears

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Questions? Comments? Story ideas? Let us know how we're doing.



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Sun Rise Scoops

By Meri R. Kennedy

Johnston Senior Center offers services

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

Reminder from Parks & Rec

Just a reminder of some of the rules and regulations at Johnston Memorial Park. There are no dogs allowed in the park or walking tracks. Dogs are allowed in the nature trail across the street from our parking lot; No smoking or tobacco use, No bikes, scooters, skateboard, etc. are allowed on the walking track that surrounds the pond. They may be used on the center path of the park. Please do not feed the ducks, birds, or any wildlife.

Please keep the park clean by using the available trash barrels, Absolutely no alcoholic beverages on town property. No vehicles allowed in the park; No swimming or boating in the pond; No open flames or charcoal grills. Gas grills are permitted; Fireplace use is prohibited, For your safety, please do not climb trees or fences; The park closes at 10 p.m. Recreation Department organized activities may continue; No overnight parking; No foul language or loud music; Field use is by permit only.

Also, please be mindful of parking. Please display a handicap placard if you park in a handicap space. The area behind the office is reserved for employees. If you have any questions, please call 401-272-3460.

The restrooms at Johnston Memorial Park are now closed for the Winter will reopen in the Spring.

Johnston Senior Center has plenty of activities coming up

Johnston Senior Center Updates. Activities and classes are being held daily. On Mondays, Walk away the pounds, Aerobics & Boot Camp, Arts &

Crafts and Hi Lo Jack.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays will be Walk Away the Pounds and on Wednesdays they offer Quilting, Zumba and Fit and Strong as well as Poker and Hi Lo Jack. Thursdays there will be Mar Jong, Boot Camp and Yoga and on Fridays Line Dancing and Chair Yoga.

Paint & Wine Night with Lorraine will take place on Jan. 26 at 6 p.m. The cost is \$20 per person.

Space is limited so call the center to register for this event. 401-944-3343. A Valentine Party and Luncheon will be on Feb. 14.

NAMI-RI:

Registration open for Free Virtual Family-To-Family Course

The Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness is now accepting registration for their winter 2022 virtual Family-to-Family course. This is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program, which means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

NAMI-Rhode Island's Family-to-Family course is taught by trained family members who have lived experience with a loved one, and includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises.

For more information on the Family-to-Family curriculum and registration requirements, visit namirhodeisland.org or call 401-331-3060 or email beth@namirhodeisland.org.

New Donation Center for Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island (BBBSRI) has opened a new Donation Drop-Off Center at 993 Oaklawn Ave. on Dec.1. BBBSRI's main headquarters has been located on Pontiac Ave. for 12 years. With its headquarters moved to Providence this November, BBBSRI had to find a new

location for its Cranston Drop Off Center.

Residents are encouraged to drop off bagged clothing and textiles at the new location, 993 Oaklawn Avenue (next to Gasbarro's Liquor Store plaza) Monday - Saturday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. The location is staffed with an attendant during these hours. During off-hours, residents can conveniently drop bagged items into one of BBBSRI's green donation bins located in the parking lot.

BBBSRI makes donating easy. In addition to our Donation Center, residents can also schedule a free curbside pick-up at their home or drop their bagged cloth in bins throughout the state. Visit BigsRI.org/DonateRI to schedule your pick-up online or find your nearest bin.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island creates and supports one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. If you are interested in mentoring a child, donating to support our program, hosting a clothing drive, hosting a clothing fundraiser for your school or group, or more, visit www.BigsRI.org, call (401) 921-2434, or email events@BigsRI.org.

Tour the Johnston Historical Society

Just a reminder that Tuesdays, 6 to 8 p.m. are open hours at the Johnston Historical Society. Tour the museum! Tour the Elijah Angell House! Ask all the questions you ever wanted to ask about Johnston history! All are welcome!

Contact the Johnston Historical Society at 231-3380 or at johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com, www.johnstonhistorical.org or www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical.

Bingo is back

Bingo games have returned to the Johnston Senior Center. At 2 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays, Johnston Senior Center members can try their luck on the Bingo cards again.

During the pandemic, the games had ceased, and were badly missed. Last week, a successful Dress-Down fundraiser resulted

in free Del's Lemonade for participants.

The Return of Saturday Drop-In Crafts at Mohr Library

This week, the Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library will resume Saturday hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Do some crafts in the library or take some home with you. They are located at 1 Memorial Ave. in Johnston.

Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness Meditation will be held at the Warwick Center for the Arts, 3259 Post Rd. in Warwick on the first and third Mondays of each month. It is free and open to the public.

Their mindfulness meditation is led by Paulette Miller. The sessions offer a westernized, secular version of Vipassana, also known as insight, open-hearted, and analytic meditation. Sessions often include guided breathing meditation, movement meditation, loving-kindness meditation, and music meditation. The meditation exercises are guided and no experience is necessary.

For further information: www.warwickcfa.org or 401-737-0010.

Friends of the Mohr Public Library

Friends of the Mohr Public Library is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation dedicated to Mohr Library.

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

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

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

RI Housing offers loans

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

due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are struggling to make their mortgage payments.

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

Be Kind RI

Be Kind RI is a new program that connects volunteers to their neighbors across RI through text alerts to coordinate food deliveries from grocery stores and food pantries. To sign up go to www.BeKindRI.org. Volunteers must be 18 or older and undergo our background check.

Be Kind RI is open to those in RI experiencing COVID-19 risk factors including seniors 65+, anyone with underlying health conditions, those in quarantine or isolation, anyone experiencing a lack of childcare, and those who would otherwise experience difficulty in obtaining food. For assistance signing up, call 877-958-8785.

Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library

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

News from the Mohr Memorial Library

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

Johnston Community Library Book Club

Children ages 8 to 10 can meet online, by invitation,

Thursdays at 3 p.m. to hear readings and discuss books with library trustee and volunteer Denese Carpenter.

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

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

Help make a house a home

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

Did you know?

The song that's traditionally sung at midnight on New Year's Eve is called Auld Lang Syne. Its title means "times gone by."

While the song is an old Scottish tune, a Canadian bandleader named Guy Lombardo is responsible for making it a New Year's tradition. He performed the song at midnight at a New Year's Eve party in New York City in 1929 and it was eventually broadcast on the radio and TV stations around North America for the holiday.

Even though it's become the go-to song every New Year's Eve, very few people actually know its words! (Source: January Fun Facts).

CONTACT MERI: Send items or questions to 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

TOWN OF JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, January 27th, 2022 at 6:30PM
Johnston Senior Center
1291 Hartford Ave.
Johnston, RI 02919

Because of COVID-19 and the current executive order, the Zoning Board will adhere to the following procedures:

- The applicant must advise the Zoning Office 24 hours in advance of all individuals attending on the applicant's behalf. The attendee's name and phone number will be required.

- All applications are scheduled for a specific time. All parties are advised that the hearing for a specific case may start later than advertised but in no situation will the application be heard prior to the time posted. If you arrive prior to the case being called,

you must wait in your car or outside the senior center and remain socially distant.

- No one will be admitted to the Senior Center until the specific case, for which they are attending the meeting, is called.

- All individuals, upon entering the senior center must register, giving name, address and phone number. Staff will screen all who enter the meeting.

- A face mask must be worn at all times. When a person is recognized to speak, the individual, upon arriving at the podium, may remove the mask to speak to the board. The mask must be put back on before walking away from the podium.

- All individuals must maintain the minimum of six (6) foot social distancing.

- No furniture may be moved by an attendee.

Additionally, the general public may be permitted subject to conditions listed above and subject to maximum allowable space per Executive Order 20-58. Updated: EXECUTIVE ORDER 22-01. Anyone may participate in the meeting electronically as follows:

Via Computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89225681046?pwd=S3gXRENQSnZYNDRI1NWoybDR3dGp-6dz09>

Via Telephone: Or One tap mobile :
US: +13017158592,89225681046#,,,829613# or +13126266799,89225681046#,,,829613#
Or Telephone: Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646

558 8656 or +1 253 215 8782

Meeting ID: 892 2568 1046
Passcode: 829613

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

New Business
File 2022-1 - Petition of Melissa Korsak, Applicant for Forest Hill Drive, AP 39 Lot 256, zoned R-15. The petitioner is seeking a Dimensional Variance for a Proposed Single-Family Dwelling.

File 2022-2 - Petition of Johnston Asphalt LLC, Applicant for 100 Allendale Avenue, AP 36 Lot 77, zoned Industrial. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit Section 340-75 for Installation of Two

Hot Mix Asphalt Storage Silos.

NOTE: If a Case has not been called for a hearing by 10:30 p.m., the Board, at its discretion, may continue the Case to a subsequent or a special meeting.

The Zoning Board Agenda and Minutes are available for review at ClerkBase on the Town's web page or Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Building Office, 100 Irons Avenue, Johnston.

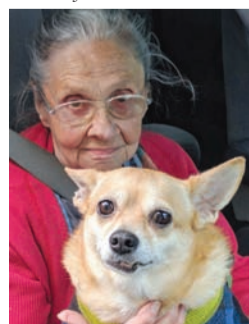
Per order of the Zoning Board of Review
Thomas Lopardo, Chairman

NOTE: New items that have not been called for a hearing by 10:30 p.m. may be rescheduled for a subsequent or a special meeting at the discretion of the Board.

1/13, 1/20, 1/27/22

♥Margarete H. Hosemann♥

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JANUARY 14



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Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island is a health plan that contracts with both Medicare and Rhode Island Medicaid to provide the benefits of both programs to enrollees.

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island ©2021

H9576_PrintAd2022 Approved 10/8/2021

Providence Restaurant Weeks

By DON FOWLER

Providence Restaurant Weeks will run from January 9-22, with some great luncheon and dinner specials featuring three-course house specialties.

Restaurants from Northern to Southern Rhode Island are participating, including two from Cranston and two from Warwick.

Legal Sea Foods in Garden City has a luncheon special for \$15 and dinner special, including a seafood mixed grill for \$30.

Also participating is Chapel Grille,

across the road in Chapel View.

Tavalo Wine Bar and Tuscan Grill at 2099 Post Rd. in Warwick has luncheon and inner specials (\$29.95)

Also participating is one of our favorites, Iron Works.

Now is a good time to travel south to the Matunuck Oyster Bar where they have a \$35.95 special that includes two appetizers and anything on the menu (Lobster and steak extra).

Go on line at Providence Restaurant Weeks for a complete listing, which includes menus.

See it at the

with Joyce & Don Fowler

Movies



NETFLIX

BLACK MIRROR

If you were a fan of the old Twilight Zone series, you'll like these short episodes that stretch the imagination and often step into a new dimension.

There are three episodes spread over five seasons. Like Twilight Zone, some are five star and others will leave you confused.

Some of them are R rated, including one about London's Prime Minister who is pressured into performing an obscene act on TV in order to save the princess from kidnappers.

LIVING WITH YOURSELF

Paul Rudd plays Miles, a poor soul whose marriage and job have hit rock bottom, causing serious self image problems.

A co-worker suggests a visit to a spa where he is cloned into Miles 2, a suave, sophisticated winner.

By simply donning glasses, rumpling his hair and slouching, Rudd succeeds in

creating two characters. Clever camera work puts them side by side, as they fight for their wife's attention.

Who will win her affection and how will this comedy end?

It's a clever idea, even if it gets a bit silly. Miles 1 certainly doesn't look like the sexiest man on earth.

AMAZON PRIME

Amazon Prime has a couple of George Carlin concerts, one that he performed at age 70.

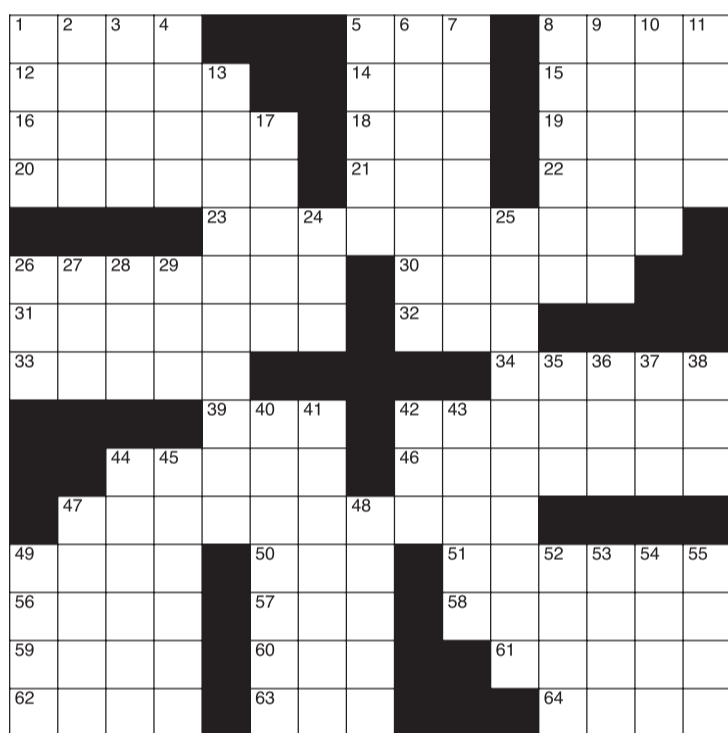
We remember Carlin from his appearances at the Warwick Musical Theatre, where he pushed the envelope with the routine about certain words you can't say on television.

Times have changed, as the comedian uses one particular word as a noun, verb, adjective and adverb in just about every sentence.

He has also grown more bitter, political, and downright mean as he takes shots at particular people and the human race in general.

Be warned.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



CLUES ACROSS

1. Requests
5. Calendar month
8. Invests in little enterprises
12. Bird sound
14. S. American plant cultivated for tubers
15. Car
16. Bullfighter
18. Hill (Celtic)
19. Strong criticism
20. Detector
21. When you hope to get there
22. Having the skill to do something
23. Legendary MLB broadcaster
26. Vulcanite
30. C. Asian mountain range
31. In a way, healed
32. Midway between east and southeast
33. Small appendages of insects
34. ___ Greene, "Bonanza" actor
39. A place to bathe
42. Postal worker accessory
44. Classical music
46. A way of wrecking

CLUES DOWN

1. What a thespian does
2. Footwear
3. Adjust spacing between
4. Witnesses
5. Who shows excessive fondness
6. Distinct form of a plant
7. National capital
8. Hunting expedition
9. Related to medulla oblongata
10. European country

11. Cola
13. Excluded from use or mention
17. Speak
24. Bloodshot
25. Make better
26. Keyboard key
27. Type of degree
28. Paddle
29. Peacock network
35. Not young
36. Baseball stat
37. One's grandmother
38. Breakfast food
40. Bathroom features
41. Disease-causing bacterium
42. NY ballplayer
43. Got up
44. Prophet
45. Part of the mouth
47. Unnatural
48. Acronym for brain science study
49. Three are famous
52. Languages spoken in Patagonia
53. Freedom from difficulty
54. Widely used OS
55. Many people pay it

Search in 1937 finds missing Johnston man

JOHNSTON - For five days, police officers and over 50 members of the Civilian Conservation Corps had been searching the woods of Johnston for 68-year-old Michael Sacco.

Born in Italy on Aug. 12, 1869, Sacco had come to America in 1912 with his wife, Gabriela (Pinto) and their children; Peter, who was born in 1905 and Clara, who was born in 1909.

Sacco found work as a track man on the steam railroad and he and Gabriela went on to have three more children. Angelina was born in 1914, Lucia was born in 1915 and Salvatore was born in 1917. However, great joy dissolved into great heartache more than once. Lucia and Salvatore both died as infants in 1917. Gabriela died the following year on Oct. 11 at the age of 35.

Sacco raised his three remaining children alone there in his house on Simmonsville Avenue. But tragedy was not over. His son Peter died at the age of 17 on Sept. 9, 1922, leaving just 14-year-old Clara and 8-year-old Angelina as his only remaining family.

The girls obtained jobs in a worsted mill and continued living with their father until they married. Clara had wed Anthony Tomao. On March 1, 1937, she died at the age of 28. The emotional torture was more than

Back in the Day



by KELLY SULLIVAN

Sacco could handle. His wife and all but one of his many children were now gone. On July 30, of that year, he left his home and never returned.

Those who knew Sacco and the depression he had been struggling with for months were extremely concerned for his well-being. Without success, dozens of men searched for him for days.

Finally, on Aug. 5, one of the searchers spotted him hiding under the bushes which grew at the back part of his property. Weak and physically exhausted, he had gone without food for six days. His mental condition was also concerning. When approached by the searchers, he kept repeating, "They're after me! Don't let them get me!"

Sacco went to live with his remaining child, Angelina and her husband Michael Linni. The following year, Angelina would give birth to a daughter whom she named Claire. She later had another daughter, Maureen.

It is hoped that seeing his family grow once more allowed Sacco some peace. He died at the age of 88 on June 22, 1957 and was buried in Saint Ann Cemetery in Cranston.

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

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Lost Dog Street Band (PHOTO CREDIT: Melissa Payne)

Lost Dog Street Band brings an organic sound to the Strand

By ROB DUGUAY

Whether you want to call it folk, country, bluegrass or Americana, one fact with this kind of music is that there needs to be genuity behind it. Any appreciator of the genre can see an imitator stick out like a bad stain and they also can tell whether a song is real or just spatting nonsense. There isn't a more real way for a band to start out than by busking on the sidewalks of various cities and that's the story behind the Lost Dog Street Band out of Nashville. Since those meager beginnings during the start of the 2010s, the act has been very much in demand and they'll be performing at The Strand Ballroom & Theatre on 79 Washington Street in Providence on January 26th at 8pm. Charlotte, North Carolina fiddler Matt Heckler will be starting things off.

Ahead of the show, I had a talk with guitarist & vocalist Benjamin Tod about a new album the band is putting out, his experience with crowdfunding, how he doesn't understand how five piece bands can afford to exist and what he hopes people take from the upcoming album after it comes out.

Rob Duguay: On January 21st, Lost Dog Street Band will be releasing their sixth album Glory and it's being viewed as a return to the band's days when they were hopping trains and busking to get by. What made you want to get back to that raw feeling and vision with this album?

Benjamin Tod: In the three previous albums we had pedal steel and drums on occasionally, so I felt that it was a good time to strip it all down, take the drums out and take the pedal steel out. While performing live, we've never had pedal steel and it was more of us going back to our roots and having a sound that you probably would have heard on the street at some point from the past decade or more when we were playing there. The original sort of archetype for this album was Steve Earle's album Train A Comin', so we got back to production, started getting really focused on the mixing aspect and getting things really good and tight. I'm really happy with it.

RD: From listening to the single "Until I Recoup (Glory I)" it sounds really good so I'm excited to hear the rest of it. Where was the album recorded and did you handle all the production yourselves?

BT: I've self-produced every album that I've ever done thus far and it was recorded in Nashville at Anti-Corporate Music Inc. Headquarters. My good friend Dan Emery who is my manager and who runs my distribution and also my sound engineer, we've been friends since I was 14 and he kind of raised me, helped out

with the making of it.

RD: Did you do any crowdfunding for the album like you've done with previous releases or did you do something different? What in your opinion makes crowdfunding work for independent artists these days?

BT: I did not do any crowdfunding for this album and I think we are kind of past that phase. The last one I did crowdfunding for was my solo album Heart Of Gold Is Hard To Find and that was really more or less set up as a pre-order type of thing. Essentially, the prices were set at what they would typically be set at. In fact, I think they were set a little bit cheaper as a pre-order, it was a couple bucks less than retail. Then I had exclusive items like prints of the original handwritten pages that I wrote a lot of songs on and there were some test presses available through that so it was more or less kind of like an option of specialty items and a pre-order.

Before that, it was extremely important to our development. It was a way for us to fund albums when we didn't have a legitimate means to do it without a larger label. I think that's kind of what's opening up in general for independent artists to be able to fund directly through their fan base and be able to afford the production and recording of an album.

RD: With you on guitar & vocals, your wife Ashley Mae on vocals & fiddle and Jeff Loops on bass, do you feel that your lineup is more utilitarian and economical without having the need for other members and instruments to capture the sound you're looking for?

BT: If I could fit them in the bus and I could afford it, who knows what I would do? It takes a special kind of magic to get a group of people together that can maintain sanity throughout a tour and also be able to pay, feed and make money yourself. I don't know how other bands do it, I'm friends with hundreds of artists, coast to coast contemporaries, above me and below me and they have five piece bands. I don't know how you afford to feed, travel and get put up for the night every night and be able to make a profit yourself. It's a mystery to me so it is very much utilitarian if anything.

RD: I can totally see that. What do you want people to take from Glory while listening to it after it comes out?

BT: Well, I try to make music that helps people be better at being themselves. That's what I strive for, I also view my music as a prescription for my own insanity and it turns out to be a prescription for other people's insanity. The idea is always on an individual basis, I want to create music that helps people be better within their own life.



Attention Rhode Island Licensed Electricians

You owe it to yourself to not let another year pass by without speaking with IBEW Local 99 about your future

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If your boss has told you joining the Union is a bad idea for you... no worries, just insist they compensate you with the wages and benefits you are clearly worth, or come talk to Local 99 when you have decided to live better.

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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local  Adoptable  Loveable



Photo credit: Bootsberry Photo

Hux

Just look at this handsome boy, he can't wait to find his forever home! Maybe Hux is just the boy you've been looking for, he truly wants to be your best friend! Hux is in search of a low key, quiet adult home where he will get lots of love and snuggles. His dream home would also include a fenced in yard so he can fun and play freely! He is a young Boxer/Terrier mix only about 45lbs and he's very smart too! Oh and he loves the ladies, so if you are a single woman looking for love then you need to meet Hux! He is available for adoption at Save One Soul Rescue, please contact them via email info@sosarl.org or call 401-206-0727 to find out how you can meet Hux!

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New menus equal higher prices

By DON FOWLER

After spending over two months without an appetite, thanks to a great doctor and the wonders of modern medicine, my taste buds and desire to eat finally returned.

Because of a significant rise in my potassium levels, there are certain foods I cannot eat at this point in my recovery.

I made a list of my favorite foods and compared it with the foods I can not have. Ironically, they are a perfect match: Potatoes. Tomatoes. Coffee. Bananas. Alcohol. And other foods high in potassium.

The good news is that there are still foods low in potassium, like most fruits, vegetables, meats, and fish.

I'm even getting used to green tea. And I'm gaining weight.

RETURNING TO RESTAURANTS

Returning to dining out has been a culture shock.

The first thing I noticed was brand new menus.

The reason became obvious.

The price of dining out has risen significantly.

Blame Covid. Blame the lack of enough help. Blame the distribution system.

One of my favorite restaurants had a number of \$9.99 specials. Their new shiny menu. Lists my meatloaf now at \$14.95. Quite a jump.

Remember when fast food French fries were a buck? Not anymore.

Joyce and I used to dine out for about \$20. Then it went to \$30.

Now we are lucky to get away with under \$50 for a meal in a family type restaurant.

We keep a folder with our favorite take-out restaurant menus. They are rapidly being replaced with new ones listing across-the-board higher prices.

HOLD THE DESSERT

There are ways to cut costs when dining out.

- Skip the drinks. Order water.
- Some restaurants won't bring bread or rolls unless you ask for the. Ask for them.

- Check out the "smaller plates" or senior meals. They are usually adequate, especially at the restaurants that include a soup or salad.

- Ask for a box to bring home uneaten food. Take the rolls; they throw them away. We usually have enough for another meal.

- Skip dessert and appetizers.

In most restaurants these days waitpersons are doing double duty, waiting on more than their share of tables, and dealing with unsympathetic, demanding customers.

We noticed a sign on a restaurant door that actually asked their customers to be understanding of any delays in service, explaining that it was not the servers' fault.

Be generous when tipping.

Dining out is one of the true pleasures in life, and Rhode Island is blessed with some of the finest restaurants in the state.

Let us do all we can to keep them in business.

The midnight bathroom break

I had fitful sleep attempts last week. I fell asleep fine, but woke up at regular intervals every hour and then lay there with dizzying thoughts racing in my head. My mouth was dry and my breath caught in my throat. A headache plagued the back of my eyes, my arthritic joints throbbed and my leg muscles were throbbing. The Tylenol PM obviously was not doing its job.

Because sleep eluded me, exhaustion ruled my body. I was crabby and miserable, bordering on depression while researching "lack of sleep" on the Internet.

It was noted that if a person does not get enough sleep, the immune system could be disrupted with less resistance to illnesses. During these COVID times, the opposite needs to be true. I needed to get more sleep!

Studies have shown that people sleeping less than seven hours a day have a greater tendency to gain weight and a much higher incidence of obesity. Additionally, if a person misses out on deep sleep, there is an increased risk of diabetes whereby the lack of sleep changes the way the body processes glucose. This change in the way the body produces this energy can have a direct effect on the person's energy level during the day.

It was reported that sleep deprived people can have reduced levels of leptin, the chemical that makes a person feel full. Add that to the increased levels of ghrelin, the hunger stimulating hormone, and an eating machine that is never satisfied is born. (Yes! That is my excuse!)

Sleep deprivation that goes on for a long time appears to be associated with an increase in heart rate and blood pressure and higher levels of chemicals that can cause inflammation. This can put extra strain on the heart and greater pain in those arthritic areas.

Yikes! The side effects of poor sleep could be devastating and a likely excuse as to why I am in the shape that I am in. However, as I was struggling with on

Life Matters



with LINDA PETERSEN

again off again sleep, my dry mouth was especially troubling. It felt as though I had hiked through a long desert and desperately needed a drink of water. Thinking about it, I DID need a drink of water...my mouth was parched! I finally got up out of bed and hungrily gulped down two full glasses of water. After lying back down in my comfy bed, warm comforter covering me, and pillow enveloping my tired head, sleep finally enveloped me. All I needed was to drink more water!

Always curious, I researched the effects of lack of water. Sure enough, it was associated with a reduced quality of slumber. I semi-scientifically deduced that my poor sleep was associated with a lack of water that can also cause headaches, joint pain and muscle aches.

I had previously learned many life lessons. On this occasion, I learned that if I drink enough water, my sleep deprivation could be a thing of the past. With this enlightenment came thoughts of ways to accomplish this.

Research showed that the basic "eight cups of water a day" is a good starting point. Because this would not include water that can be found in fruits and vegetables such as lettuce, celery, cabbage, watermelon and cantaloupes that would be considered bonus water in my eyes, this is the rule I am going to use. My very large cup of morning tea contains at least 16 ounces of water. At work, we have a water cooler that, YES, keeps water cool! If I drink one eight ounce cup every hour, that should suffice. Or, in addition to my morning tea, if I drink 16 ounces of water at three meals a day, and another big glass of water before bedtime, my daily intake would be met. I can be creative and "mix it up", and can even put a drinking water ap on my phone for extra fun!

My sleep-deprived nights will be a thing of the past, with the exception of having to get up to go to the bathroom because of all of the water that I drank...



BLACK SEA BASS: Mitch Wilsie with a 5.28 pound black sea bass. Black sea bass harvest limits for 2022 are being reduced by 28 percent in Mass, Rhode Island and other coastal states. (Submitted photo)

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ANSWER TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE:

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Anglers request regulation options

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

About a month ago anglers expressed concern for the status of three species (black sea bass, summer flounder and tautog) managed by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and/or the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

2022 fishing regulation measures approved for Massachusetts and Rhode Island (as well as other coastal states) included a 28 percent black sea bass Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) reduction coastwide; a 33 percent reduction in scup; and up to a 18.5 percent liberalization of the RHL for summer flounder. All of these actions will result in Massachusetts and Rhode Island fishing regulation changes for 2022.

In Rhode Island saltwater fishing regulation options were discussed at a Department of Environmental Management Marine Fisheries public workshop held on Jan. 4. The purpose of the meeting was to review stock status, 2021 regulations and proposed 2022 regulation options. Species covered at the workshop included bluefish, black sea bass, striped bass, scup, tautog, summer flounder and shortfin mako sharks. A number of commercial regulation options were also discussed.

About ten in person and twenty online participants spoke at the meeting. Highlights of the meeting included angler proposals or regulation options on black sea bass, tautog and summer flounder.

Proposals put forth at the meeting include one for summer flounder that would allow for one 16-inch fish (the regulation is now a minimum size of 19 inches with a six fish/person/day limit). So the proposal is to allow one of these fish to be a minimum size of 16 inches. Special provision shore areas would be included, perhaps allow two fish at this size to be taken from special provision areas. Rich Hittinger, 1st vice president of the RI Saltwater Anglers Association, said, "With an enhanced recreation harvest limit coastwide allowing anglers to take one smaller fish may actually help the spawning stock, as larger fish are generally female, so odds are that a 16-inch fish is more likely to be male."

In regard to black sea bass, Greg Vespe, executive director of RISAA, said, "We are advocating for a May 28 start to the season, just as the spring tautog season ends. Once the water in our Bays warm in late June and July keeper size black sea bass (minimum size is 15 inches) leave for deeper, cooler water and shore and Bay anglers have difficulty catching keeper black sea bass. We support a three fish limit throughout the season, starting on May 28 and running as long as it can with three fish, if we can enhance the bag limit to four fish in the fall that would be great too." The 2021 black sea bass season did not start until June 24 with a three fish limit that increased to seven fish on Sept. 7.

Proposal for tautog were also discussed at the meeting. The species stock status is good, however, anglers at the meeting and a contingent of charter captains, fear that we are not doing enough to protect larger females with great spawning potential. The option proposed was to institute a regulation that would allow just one "trophy fish" over 21 inches to be taken and reduce the bag limit in the fall season to four fish/person/day from five fish. The idea in both cases it to reduce the number of females that are begin harvested.

Details on regulation options will be put forth on these and other species at a Feb. 7 public hearing. The regulations will then move forward to the Marine Fisheries Council scheduled to meet in February for their opinion and then onto Terrance Gray, Acting Director of DEM for his final decisions on 2022 fishing regulations.

Visit www.dem.ri.gov for information on regulation options once they are posted for the February 4 public hearing.

CARES Act funds for fish

Sounds farfetched that the CARES Act would include funds for fish, but it does and we have Senators Markey and Warren as well as Congressmen Keating and Moulton from Massachusetts to thank.

In May 2020, the Massachusetts lawmakers were successful when the USDA announced that it would include \$20 million of Atlantic Haddock.

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Dr. Guy R. Nicastri, FACS, board certified in general surgery, has more than 30 years of experience, most recently was with Care New England, and has a special focus on breast surgery, surgical oncology and minimally invasive surgery. A graduate of Boston College, he received both his medical degree and his masters of Science in Physiology from Georgetown University School of Medicine. He is also an Associate Professor of Surgery and family Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. He has offices in Cranston at 401-943-8824 and Johnston at 401-521-6080.

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How to account for a rising cost of living

METRO

Cost of living is a significant component of financial planning. The cost of living may dictate where people live and work, and a high cost of living can influence how individuals spend their free time.

Data from Statistics Canada indicates that consumer prices rose 4.1 percent and 5.3 percent in August 2021 in Canada and the United States, respectively. As Canadians headed to the polls in late September, a survey from Abacus Data found that 38 percent felt reducing their cost of living was a key factor affecting their vote. Similarly, a 2020 survey from TD Ameritrade found that 47 percent of Americans feel that cost of living is the biggest threat to their financial security and long-term investments. It's worth noting that the survey was conducted prior to the pandemic. Since the onset of the pandemic, cost of living has increased considerably.

Though the fight against a rising cost of living can feel like an uphill battle, individuals can take steps to prepare for such increases.

- Apply lessons learned during the pandemic. A recent Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. government and Eurostat data found that roughly 9.6 million workers in the United States lost their jobs in the first three quarters of 2020. That period coincides with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. When forced to confront sudden and unexpected job losses, millions of in-



dividuals learned how to get by on less income. Cost-saving measures adopted during the pandemic can be continued or reimplemented, helping individuals to combat higher energy costs and other rising expenses.

- Look for a new job or fresh income

streams. A rising cost of living is a concern for people from all walks of life, but it may be especially concerning for retirees or individuals with costs like childcare that can be hard to pare back. In such instances, individuals can look for new a job or fresh

income streams. According to the Q3 2021 CNBC | Momentive Small Business Survey, 50 percent of small business owners say it's gotten harder to find qualified people to hire compared to a year ago. And nearly one-third of survey respondents indicate they have open roles they have not been able to fill for at least three months. Individuals can explore local employment opportunities in an effort to find a new, more lucrative job that can help them combat a rising cost of living. Others who want to remain in their jobs can look for part-time work to supplement their existing income.

- Consider relocating. The pandemic forced many companies to transition from in office working to remote working overnight. That trial by fire could have lasting results. A 2020 survey of 317 Chief Financial Officers and leaders in the finance industry found that 74 percent will move at least 5 percent of their previously on-site workforce to permanently remote positions after the pandemic ends. The survey, conducted by Gartner, Inc., also found that nearly one-quarter of respondents will move at least 20 percent of their on-site workers to permanently remote positions. That could make it possible for millions of working professionals to relocate to regions with a lower cost of living than their current towns or cities.

The cost of living might be on the rise. But individuals can combat that increase in various ways. MM21C515



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Now is the time to make money moves to set yourself up for a prosperous new year



Jeffrey H. Massey
 Certified Financial Planner™
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As we start the year 2022, now is a great time to either start or revisit a strategy about your financial planning. This does not have to be a highly complex plan but a plan nonetheless. Let's start with some basics and work our way up to a nice plan that you can structure on your own. Of course, working with a financial professional should always be considered as they should have the experience to not just guide you in the right direction, but to kindly challenge some of your thoughts and ideas towards your saving and investment goals.

Set New Goals and Make a Plan

- Resolutions rarely last. Rather than setting lofty self-promises you might not reach, instead set realistic financial goals for yourself. Once you set an annual goal, break it down to a dollar amount per paycheck.
- Simply stating you want to save more or spend less isn't specific enough.
- Make your financial goals specific and measurable, set deadlines, track your progress, and hold yourself accountable.
- If making a budget or saving for retirement feels overwhelming, ask for help! Sit down with a financial professional to review your goals.

Rebalance Your Portfolio

- As 2021 ended, the S&P 500 was up over 25% and since January of 2019, stocks were up over 77%! If you haven't rebalanced, chances are your investments could be overweight, meaning you could be taking on more risk than you might be comfortable with.
- Your investments should be diversified and have appropriate risk for your age. Theoretically, the younger you are, the more risk you can take when saving for retirement. As you get closer to retirement, your risk level should come down. (Source: Forbes) (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kristinmckenna/2021/12/01/heres-why-it-might-be-a-good-time-to-rebalance-your-portfolio/?sh=ad36fcb49bfe>, n.d.)

• If your account balance is down because of decisions you made during market volatility, now might be a great time to convert a traditional IRA or 401(k) to a Roth IRA.

• You will pay taxes on the money you convert, but you can withdraw your money tax-free in retirement. There are two rules: you must be

over 59 ½ years of age and the Roth IRA must have been in place for 5 tax years. If you open a Roth IRA prior to the tax filing deadline of April 15, 2022, and designate that deposit for 2021, assuming you qualify to do that, your actual start date for that Roth account goes back to January 1, 2021!

- A financial professional can work with you to rebalance your portfolio and hold you accountable to your plan when your emotions take over.

Maximize Your Retirement Savings

- The hardships of COVID-19 have left a lasting impression on how people view their finances. A recent study found Americans are 15 times more likely to build their emergency funds and savings due to the pandemic. (Source: Yahoo!) (<https://news.yahoo.com/americans-are-saving-more-because-emergencies-are-on-the-brain-175808179.html>, n.d.)

- Making contributions to your retirement fund every month is a good start, however, the real key to building wealth is maxing out your accounts - or at least coming as close as you can.

- You can contribute up to \$20,500 in your 401(k) in 2022 (up from \$19,500 in 2021) and up to \$6,000 in your IRA. Those 50 and older can add an extra \$6,500 to their 401(k) and an additional \$1,000 to an IRA. (Source: IRS) (<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/401k-contribution-limit-increases-to-19500-for-2020-catch-up-limit-rises-to-6500>, n.d.)

- The contributions you make to your pre-tax 401(k) account reduce your taxable income for the year.

- By increasing your contributions, you will be taking home less money, but you will be paying less in taxes and saving more for your future! Actually, saving pre-tax money MAY NOT be the best idea for your personal circumstance, so please meet with a professional advisor that has a tax-focus relative to your investment plan.

Plan for Taxes

- Tax planning is a year-round process and is necessary if you want to hold onto more of your nest egg. You can learn more about these and other planning strategies on our website, [masseyandassociates.com](https://www.masseyandassociates.com).

- Many tax saving ideas are specific to the calendar year, January 1st to December 31st. However, Traditional and Roth IRA contributions can be made prior to the tax filing deadline of April 15th, for the prior tax year. Determine if a pre-tax savings strategy is best or if post-tax (Roth contribution) is better. Again, work with a qualified financial advisor that has a tax focus on investment planning.
- Charitable deductions are allowed

up to \$300 for a single tax filer or \$600 for a married couple filing jointly. This is above the line, so, even if you don't itemize, you are allowed to deduct these charitable contributions.

- Another thought for charitable contributions, is to donate highly appreciated stocks. By doing this, you take the full market value as your deduction, not just the original amount invested. This is likely better than selling the stock, paying the capital gain, then making a cash donation.

At Massey and Associates, Inc., our retirement planning process is precise and thorough. Once we get to know our clients' goals and current situation, we're able to create a plan to help them make their dream retirement a reality. Reach out to one of our advisors if you have any questions.

Make this a Successful, Healthy and Happy New Year!

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spotlight ON BUSINESS

Atwood Florist

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By JENNIFER COATES

The busy holiday season has come and gone, and the gray winter doldrums have set in everywhere EXCEPT in the bright and cheerful shop of Atwood Florist on Atwood Avenue. This sunny floral shop is home to flowers, flowers, and more flowers ~ colorful flowers that bring sunshine to every space and lighten every room. John Dick, the florist/owner of this longtime landmark in the city, brings color back to this otherwise monochromatic time of year!

Atwood Florist has been home to breath-taking and customized flower arrangements for over 20 years. Throughout those years, John has earned a reputation of dependability, originality, creativity, and expediency. He knows how to arrange flowers so that they come alive!

John loves to use traditional flowers such as the ever-

popular roses and mums, but he has also introduced his customers to new seasonal varieties. His eye for color and proportion and shape make his arrangements both timeless and contemporary at the same time. His primary job is to cater to his many customers, and to make his signature arrangements perfect for any occasion. John's work has been a part of every milestone moment, from births and proms to weddings and birthdays to funerals and collations ~ and everything in between.

One of the things that sets John's work apart from his competitors is the close attention he plays to the recipient or subject of each of his arrangements. Recently, John was able to make some custom floral arrangements for a deceased police officer ~ the flowers were designed in the exact shape and color combination of the sergeant's patch. Such a special tribute to this local hero.

In addition to this unique piece, John has created personalized arrangements to honor a loved one's pets ~ no detail was left undone. Each funeral piece was made with respect and reverence. Florists like John Dick are just hard to come by. He happens to be one of the rare ones.

On happier occasions, if you want to bring an informal token of love, affection or thanks to someone in your life, then why not pick up a "Love Bunch"? Available for less than \$10.00, these small bouquets are a sweet and meaningful gesture.

If you are looking for something a little more "long-lasting" than a floral arrangement, you will also find plenty of live plants (including the popular "dish gardens" and peace lilies) at the shop. There is really something for everyone here!

Atwood Florist is located at 1041 Atwood Avenue in Johnston. John can be reached at 401-274-7300. Visit the website at www.atwoodflorist.com or follow Atwood Florist on Facebook. They are open Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm, Saturday from 9:00am - 2:00pm and every holiday (except Christmas!) Same day delivery is guaranteed if you call by noon. Atwood Florist will deliver anywhere in the state ~ consult John for details!



Check out this beautiful, sentimental and custom-made floral arrangement made by master florist John Dick of Atwood Florist on Atwood Avenue. Plan ahead for all your flowers at Valentine's Day this year, call 401-274-7300 today!

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Sports

Our Picks



Boys Team of the Year: Football

It was an unusual year for football in Rhode Island in 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Rhode Island Interscholastic League to push the 2020 fall season to the spring's third season, which would then force teams to have to turn around quick to prepare for the normal 2021 fall slate.

Despite the moving parts and frustrations dealing with the semantics, Johnston would enjoy one of its best stretches in program history, which is why the football Panthers have been named the *Johnston Sun Rise's* Boys Team of the Year.

TEAM - PAGE 18

Boys Team Coach of the Year: Joe Acciardo

Joe Acciardo had his hands full in 2021, coaching two football seasons as well as a baseball campaign in between. Although he and his teams had a lot to handle, they would not blink as all three reached the playoffs.

For Acciardo's leadership across two sports and three seasons, he has

been named the Johnston Sun Rise's Boys Team Coach of the Year.

The football team faced a lot of adversity in the spring season. Not only was it returning from multiple down years, but it was a fairly young group still unsure of how to win in the big moments. Acciardo and his

COACH - PAGE 18



Breaking down the boys side

Last week our three publications revealed our Girls Teams of the Year as well as our Girls Team Coaches of the Year. I devoted my column toward breaking the selections down and giving my own personal insight, and I will be doing the same this week as we reveal the boys side.

Starting in Warwick, we decided to go with Bishop Hendricken football for the team and Hendricken's Jim Doyle for coach.

As for the football team, it is hard to choose against a group that won two state championships in the same calendar year. Of course, it is Hendricken, but even for the Hawks, this was a tough and impressive feat.

After seeing the 2020 fall season get bumped to the spring's third season, the Hawks never really missed a beat and were as dominant as ever. The team went undefeated and would pull off a comeback win at states to beat La Salle.

Then, on short notice and with a tremendously difficult schedule, the Hawks would reach the big game again in the fall and top the Rams who were considered the favorite.

Between COVID, schedule changes, some uncharacteristic adversity and blemishes, the Hawks stayed dialed in and would get the job done twice.

I'll admit, I am far more impressed with the fall

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPENSSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR
ALEXS@
RHODYBEAT.COM

title than the spring. The spring was a total crapshoot for every team and the Hawks' perennial stability allowed it to do its thing.

This fall though, it felt like the football gods were trying to give Hendricken a battle. The Hawks faced two out-of-state powerhouses, the typical Division I lineup, then went against the Rams who, for the first time in years, actually were the better team on paper.

Hendricken looked ordinary against the out-of-state foes, almost lost at home to Central, and was not as dominant even in the big wins. La Salle on the other hand was having arguably its best season ever.

Hendricken's poise took over at states as it edged La Salle in an epic shootout. Once again, the Hawks were simply the better team, even if it was the less talented one this time around.

Hendricken will be back in 2022 as it always is, and unfortunately for the rest

PITCH - PAGE 18

Gridiron Club honors Panther pair

By PETE FONTAINE

Add the names Hunter Remington and Ryan Schino to the list of state's best high school football players for the 2021 Rhode Island Interscholastic League season.

That fact surfaced recently during the Providence Gridiron Club's prestigious Most Valuable Players Banquet which was held inside the famed Quonset "O" Club in North Kingstown and honored what many people called "the best of the best for 2021."

Remington and Schino were cited for their outstanding performances during the Johnston High School football Panthers 2021 season as they led the Blue and White of Head Coach Joe Acciardo to a creditable 7-5 overall record that included an impressive Thanksgiving Day victory over Pilgrim High's Patriots of Warwick and a 4-4 mark in divisional play.

"Everyone in Pantherland should be proud of Hunter



PROLIFIC PANTHERS: Defensive standout Ryan Schino (left) and Hunter Remington are holding plaques they recently received during the Providence Gridiron Club's prestigious Most Valuable Players Dinner held inside the famed Quonset "O" Club in North Kingstown. (Submitted photo)

■ Coach

(Cont. from page 17)

staff stayed on course, continued to trust the process, and things came together as the Panthers reached the Division III Super Bowl.

Then, later in the fall, the Panthers had another uphill battle as they were forced to quickly adapt with Tom Zednik, as well as deal with a realignment that added teams like Pilgrim into the mix to make each game a battle.

Despite a tough start, Acciaro would once again preach patience and the Panthers forced their way back into the post-season and picked up an opening win against Middletown.

The baseball team also had a solid spring season, which was the first time the club played together since 2019 thanks to the pandemic eliminating 2020. Although Johnston was coming back from the hiatus, the team would not skip a beat as it earned the No. 2 seed and reached the playoffs.



BIG PLAY: Johnston's Joey Acciaro picks up some yards during the Thanksgiving game at Pilgrim High School in November.

■ Team

(Continued from page 17)

The Panthers were in the middle of a down stretch prior to the spring season. They missed the playoffs in consecutive seasons and had a talented lineup that for some reason just could not put it all together when it counted.

That would all change in the spring, though, as the Panthers offense took off and the defense became a force down the stretch. Johnston would beat Classical in a game for the ages in the semifinals, and would then take on Coventry in the Super Bowl in which the Oakers would get the win.

Despite the tough loss and losing its top player in Tom Zednik, the Panthers entered the fall season hungry to get back

on top. Things were shaky in the early going, but the Panthers regained their footing down the stretch and became one of the scariest teams in the division by playoff time.

Johnston would get an opening round win over Middletown in another thriller, but came up short to eventual champion Narragansett in the semis.

Johnston also pulled off an improbable upset on Thanksgiving, taking home a win over Pilgrim on the road with just two days notice to claim the Warwick Beacon Bowl.

Despite coming up short of the ultimate goal, the Panthers would turn the program around and make deep postseason runs twice in the same calendar year. Much of the same core will be returning for 2022, so Johnston appears to be going nowhere.



STRONG YEAR: Johnston players and coaches celebrate after their playoff win.

■ Pitch

(Continued from page 17)

of the state, it will be hard to give them a test like La Salle gave them in the fall.

Another team that stood out to me was the Hendricken cross country team as well as Pilgrim baseball. Pilgrim baseball reached the semis in the state's top division after pulling off an upset. By spring's end, the Pats were maybe the scariest team with its two-headed pitching monster of Jared Reminder and Kenny Rix. Shout out to those guys.

For coach, this one was quite simple. Jim Doyle led the Hawks to three state championships across three sports. I know, I know, two of the sports parallel each other and it's a private school. Private school or not, you can't deny the consistency and dominance of these three programs over the past few years, and especially 2021.

Doyle is not only the best coach in our coverage area, but you can make an argument that he is the best high school coach in the state altogether, and one of the best in the country.

In Cranston, we went with the boys hockey co-op for team and Matt Brannon for coach. Although it would be nice to spread the love, these two are hand in hand and enjoyed one of the best seasons in the program's history.

The Falcons came so close in both 2019 and 2020 but ultimately fell short in the playoffs. It would have been easy for the club to be discouraged, lose confidence. It didn't though, and although it lost a large core of seniors from the season prior, the new guys would catch on fast and complete an undefeated season and wrap up its first title since 2014.

Between the large core of seniors that moved on and the pandemic, it was an uphill battle for the Falcons. But they never wavered and were clearly the best boys team in Cranston in 2021.

As for Brannon, it was his fifth year coaching the team, and this also now gives him some clout in coaching circles. His team is officially a perennial playoff

organization and it proved that it is capable of getting the job done.

Not that people were lining up to throw stones at the team, but no one really had it on their radar prior to last season. The Falcons are once again looking like a playoff team with championship potential, so it is safe to say the formula works.

Another team that stood out was West baseball. The Falcons made the playoffs in the state's toughest division and pulled off the year's biggest upset when it eliminated Hendricken on the road in the first round.

Although the team fell the next game, it deserves a ton of credit for its run and playoff outing against the Hawks.

We then selected the Johnston football team and its coach Joe Acciaro, who also coaches baseball.

Johnston really defied the odds in the spring. The team missed out on the playoffs the two years prior and just could not pull it all together. With guys like Tom Zednik, Hunter Remington, Joey Acciaro, Ryan Schino, it was hard to believe that that group couldn't make the post-season.

However, I'm assuming it was a mix of experience and coaching, but the team finally realized its potential and reached the Super Bowl. It then turned around and made the semis in the fall.

Johnston football is back on the map thanks to this group of standouts, and a few of those key guys will be back next year as well.

As for Acciaro, football in my opinion is the toughest sport to coach. He coached this team during the hardest time to ever do it and turned things around fast. He also kept the baseball team on track after missing the entire 2020 season.

Three teams, three playoff appearances. Hard to go against Acciaro.

The other team and coach in mind was volleyball with coach Greta Lalli. The Panthers finished 6-1 in the spring to earn the top seed in the division, but came up short in the playoffs. Overall, it was an unexpected run and the Panthers are now a team to look out for in a few months.

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PROLIFIC PLAYERS: These two-player teams shared runner-up honors in the recent Polar Golf Tournament. They are, from left: Mike Tartaglia and Chris Adler, Mike Fogarty and Cheryl Jason and Vinny LaFazia and David Graham. (Submitted photos)

JMCE's co-ed golf tourney set for Sept. 25

By PETE FONTAINE

There was lots of excitement inside the Gloucester Country Club's spacious dining room after Judi Graham announced "this was a wonderful way to begin 2022; although we only had 26 golfers and old man weather showered us with rain and drizzle, we raised \$1,000 that will help children who are battling cancer."

Graham, who along with her husband and other GCC members like Vin and Linda LaFazia founded the unique New Year's Day tradition known as the Polar Golf Tournament, then issued congratulations to winners Chad Phillips and John Cascione.

After pausing for a moment, she announced that three twosomes – Mike Tartaglia and Chris Adler, Mike Fogarty and Cheryl Jason and Vin LaFazia and her husband David Graham, tied for runner-up honors.

The day's biggest announcement,

though, met with cheers and applause when Graham said "we'll see everyone back here when the weather will hopefully be better for the annual Co-Ed Memorial Tournament."

That event, which also benefits the Oncology-Hematology Units at Hasbro Children's Hospital will as did the Polar Golf event will be played on Sunday, Sept. 25.

Likewise, the day's excitement peaked when Vin LaFazia announced that the Johnston Memorial Cancer Events annual golf tournament that has played a major role for the non-profit raising upwards of \$300,000 in its 12-year golf history, is set for May 7 at the well-manicured Connecticut National Golf Club in Putnam, Ct.

Anyone who has either played in the JMCE's granddaddy tourney in previous years or would like to reserve a playing spot for this year should call LaFazia at (401) 233-2564.



TITLE TANDEM: Chad Phillips and John Cascione recently staked claim to the Polar Golf Tournament that benefits Hasbro Children's Hospital and on New Year's Day raised \$1,000 with a small field of only 26 generous players.

■ Gridiron

(Continued from page 17)

and Ryan," several former schoolboy standouts who attended the sold-out dinner and have ties to Johnston, offered. "The (Providence) Gridiron Club has been honoring players – including at the collegiate level -- for nearly seven decades and this is certainly an honor for both these fine young men."

Remington was one of Johnston's best receivers, but without a quarterback that could throw passes to him, things weren't going to work out all that well for the Panthers success.

Although he was reluctant at first, Remington proved to himself -- and many others -- that he could make necessary shift and play the position of quarterback with the best of them. Attest, he passed for 182 yards per game, 22 touchdowns and 2,192 passing yards during the 2021 campaign.

Thus, when statist lovers add his rushing yardage that would hike his seasonal offensive output to 2,925 yards.

"Hunter is the epitome of the team

player," a Panthers fan who attended the MVP dinner observed. "There's nothing selfish about that young man; he left his favorite position to fill a void for the good of his team."

Schino, meanwhile, is steeped with football success dating back to his early years with the Johnston Youth Football Association.

Moreover, he ranked among the Interscholastic League's best middle line-backers and led Panthers with 90 tackles.

Also, it was said time and again that his leadership and knowledge of the game -- and years of experience -- made implementing new schemes easy and as the defensive signal caller he was in charge of all movements, shifts and defensive coverages that were also key in Johnston's seven seasonal triumphs and Ryan was like having a coach on the field.

Football coaches and some officials recently remarked that "with a GPA (Grade Point Average) of 3.4 and his extensive football knowledge that Ryan (Schino) has proven to be a great recruit for playing at the next level."

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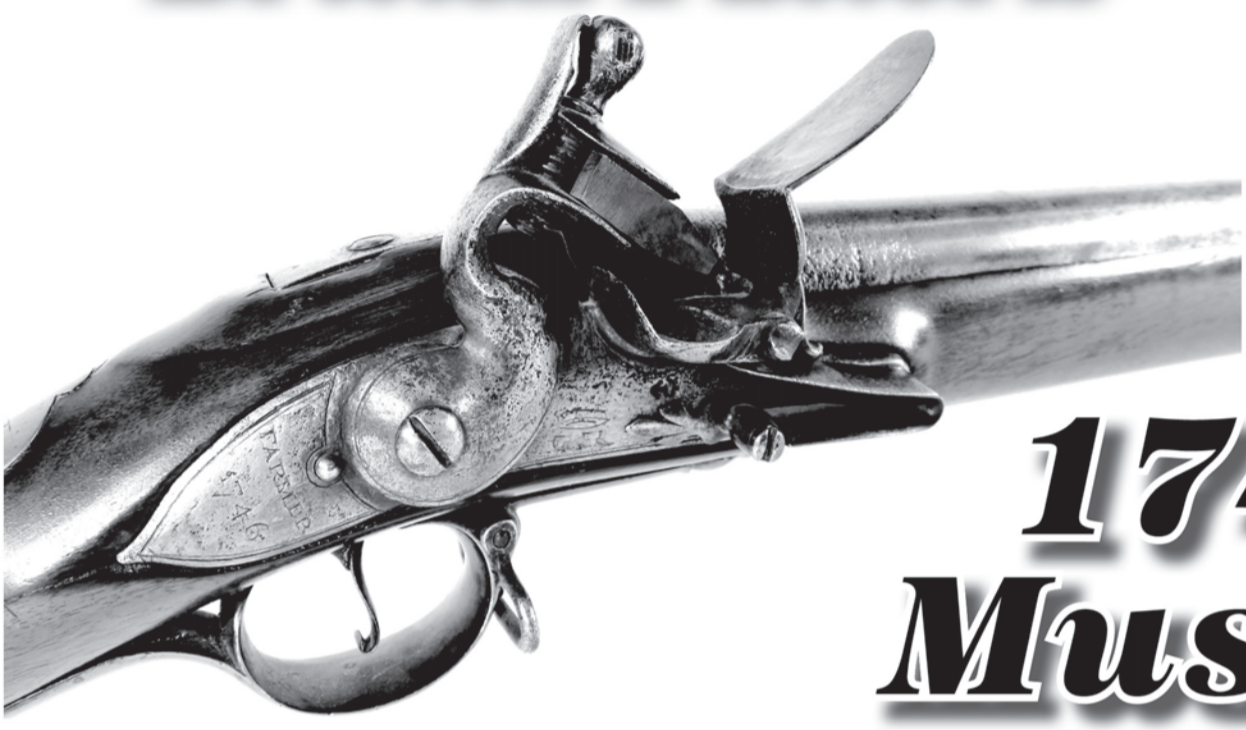
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An American-marked British Pattern



1742 Musket



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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Cranston, RI

It's no secret that I'm a fan of British land pattern muskets from the 1730s to the 1770s. The look and feel of those sturdy guns is what makes them very attractive to me. These guns have such attractive lines and one can see why they were in service with the British army as well as Provincial use for such a very long time before being replaced. They are a beefy gun and although a bit heavy they feel good in your hands. I know I have mentioned this before, but the Pattern 1742 is one of my absolute favorite weapons of the Revolutionary period. I had one a few months ago that had been cut down 4 inches to make it the same length as a Pattern 1769 and probably American-marked. Just before the holidays I picked

up another, but this one hasn't been cut down or really messed with at all.

The stock is a beautiful dark English walnut with an added sheet brass nose cap. An initial, possibly from a previous owner is carved onto the right side of the butt near the storekeeper's stamp. The brass fittings are all the standard type used on all the others of this pattern, but what makes this gun extraspecial are the numbers engraved on the brass wrist plate. British "rack numbers" are typically a number or letter over another number, like "2/21" for the second company, 21st man. On this gun it has Roman numerals "XXVI/46" which are believed to be an American method of identifying the gun to it's company and man. There are a few American/Provincial gun rolls from the period that survive that show this marking system.

The Pattern 1740 lock is marked "FARMER/1746" on the tail of the lock plate, with a crown over "GR" and a stamped crown and broad arrow government ownership mark. It shows some wear from use, but

it should after seeing some heavy service during the French and Indian War as well as the American Revolution. It has a replacement front brass ramrod pipe and an iron American-made ramrod, the wooden one probably

replaced for a sturdier rod not as prone to breaking.

This gun has also been published in two great books. The first, *The Brown Bess: An Identification Guide and Illustrated Study of Britain's Most Famous Musket*, By Erik Goldstein and Stuart Mowbray, as well as *Of Sorts For Provincials: American Weapons of the French and Indian Wars*, by Jim Mullins. Both books have great images and details of this gun as well as many others and are fantastic references.

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Thinking **big**, growing **locally**



25-acre greenhouse would grow 15 million pounds of tomatoes annually

By JOHN HOWELL

It could be a giant sculpture with its hundreds of white pillars symmetrically aligned to give passing motorists the impression of a flickering movie. But it's not.

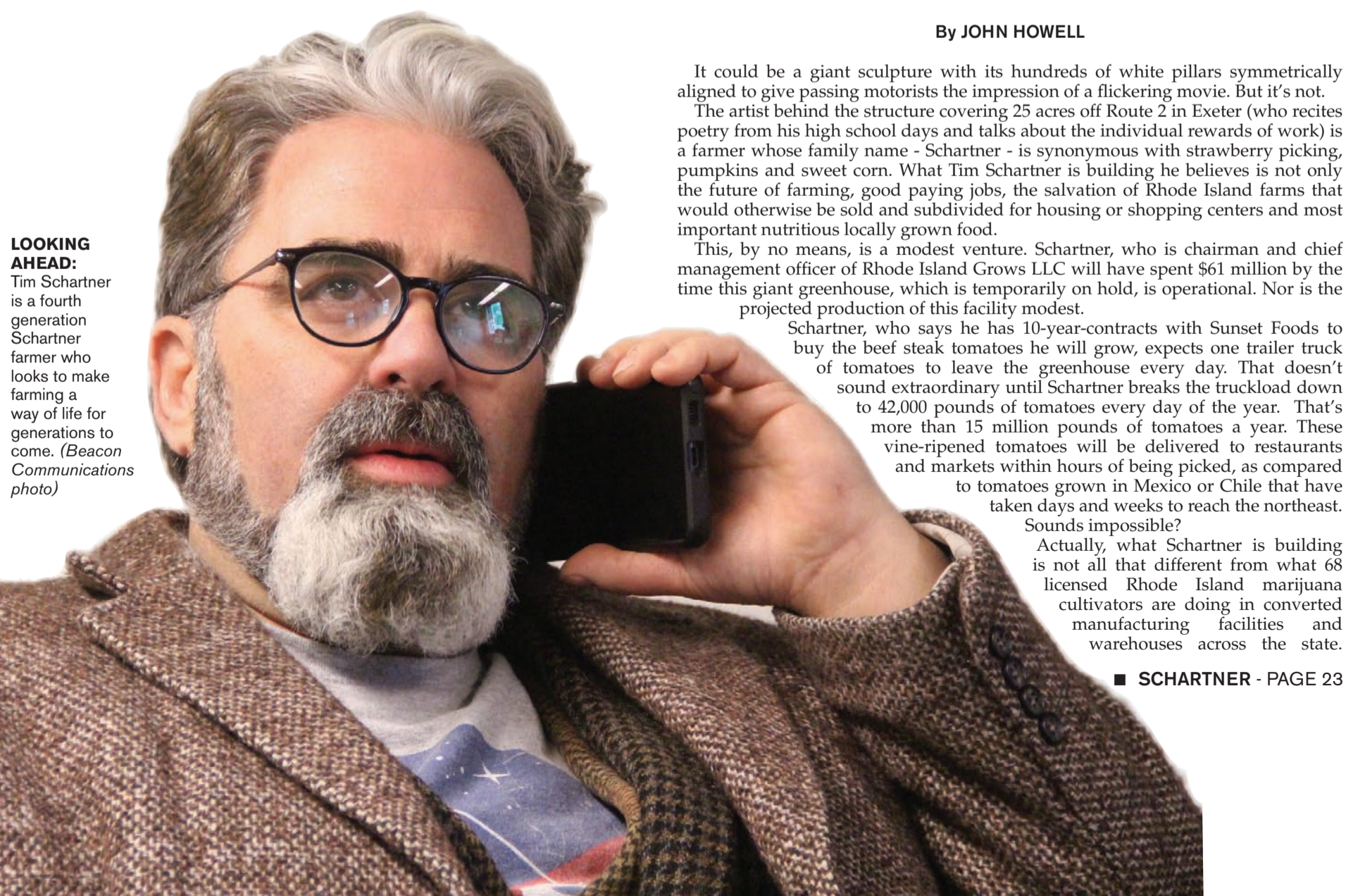
The artist behind the structure covering 25 acres off Route 2 in Exeter (who recites poetry from his high school days and talks about the individual rewards of work) is a farmer whose family name - Schartner - is synonymous with strawberry picking, pumpkins and sweet corn. What Tim Schartner is building he believes is not only the future of farming, good paying jobs, the salvation of Rhode Island farms that would otherwise be sold and subdivided for housing or shopping centers and most important nutritious locally grown food.

This, by no means, is a modest venture. Schartner, who is chairman and chief management officer of Rhode Island Grows LLC will have spent \$61 million by the time this giant greenhouse, which is temporarily on hold, is operational. Nor is the projected production of this facility modest.

Schartner, who says he has 10-year-contracts with Sunset Foods to buy the beef steak tomatoes he will grow, expects one trailer truck of tomatoes to leave the greenhouse every day. That doesn't sound extraordinary until Schartner breaks the truckload down to 42,000 pounds of tomatoes every day of the year. That's more than 15 million pounds of tomatoes a year. These vine-ripened tomatoes will be delivered to restaurants and markets within hours of being picked, as compared to tomatoes grown in Mexico or Chile that have taken days and weeks to reach the northeast. Sounds impossible?

Actually, what Schartner is building is not all that different from what 68 licensed Rhode Island marijuana cultivators are doing in converted manufacturing facilities and warehouses across the state.

■ SCHARTNER - PAGE 23



LOOKING AHEAD: Tim Schartner is a fourth generation Schartner farmer who looks to make farming a way of life for generations to come. (Beacon Communications photo)

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■ Schartner (Continued from page 21)

To maximize output and ensure consistency and quality, cultivators have harnessed technology including hydroponics in a computer-controlled environment to replicate ideal conditions for the plants.

Schartner will likewise use controlled environment agriculture (CEA) to grow organic tomatoes. As he puts it, this gigantic greenhouse will replicate July 27 - the best day of the year for farming in these parts - every day of the year. The plants will receive the precise amount of water and nutrients needed for maximum output. Water captured from the greenhouse glass roof will be channeled to a cistern, eliminating the need for wells and tapping local aquifers. The operation won't use pesticides. The greenhouse will have blackout screens that will close during the night hours to capture the artificial lighting required to create 24-hour daylight conditions. The greenhouse will have its own bee colony to pollinate the plants.

A single tomato plant, Schartner said, can live to be a year old and produce upwards of 150 pounds of fruit. Three to five tomatoes grow on the lowest branch of the plant. When those tomatoes have been harvested, the branch is cut off and the next branch becomes fruit bearing. As the vine grows, it is wrapped around itself so that the plant is never more than six feet high.

To screen the greenhouse that is already partially hidden from traffic on Route 2 by a berm, Schartner plans a barn-red facing to maintain the farm tradition of the site. A portion of the 500-foot separation from Route 2 would be used for the cultivation of vegetables and possibly strawberries.

But for all Schartner is doing to preserve Schartner's as a farm as well as advance CEA as a means for other Rhode Island farmers to continue farming, he faces town zoning official Hal Morgan.

Was the process followed?

Under state law, Schartner says, farmers are not required to obtain a change of zone to erect farm related structures on farmland. According to Schartner, the town was notified in June 2018 of the proposed greenhouse, and on October 2020 was informed clearing would start. The steel pillars were erected in June 2021. Then in October, Morgan issued a cease and desist on the basis, Schartner said, that this was a commercial, not a farm, structure.

Despite two letters from the state that back Schartner's interpretation, Morgan has not lifted the cease and desist. Morgan said he hasn't seen the letters.

Morgan said Monday the issue is process. He said he has no documentation that farms are exempt from zoning and regulations such as development plan review and building permits required by the town.

Schartner has appealed Morgan's cease and desist and is to appear before the zoning board on Jan. 13 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be on Zoom.

"It's a very simple thing; it's process," said Morgan "I follow the statutory law."

Schartner said he has teamed with URI and New England Institute of Technology to implement a state of the art curriculum, as well as using the farm as the site for field trips as part of curricula for school students. He is also big on citing the environmental benefits of the greenhouse, saying it will have a negative carbon footprint, the equivalent of taking 6,000 cars off the road.

Schartner is realist. As a resident and Exeter taxpayer, Schartner wants to resolve issues with the town as amicably and as fast as possible. A suit is an option, but he notes that could be costly and in essence he is suing himself since as a taxpayer he would be footing the bill. Putting aside the law, he argues what he is doing offers the best chance of preserving the character and tradition of farming for Exeter. The alternative is the sale of land and its development for other uses. Morgan expects the 5-member board will vote on Schartner's appeal.

Should he get the go ahead, Schartner said the greenhouse could be completed with its first crop of tomatoes growing by this July.

Schartner's vision reaches beyond the Rhode Island Grows greenhouse as big as that is.

Local wealth creation

Asked about the financing of the operation, Schartner replied in an email: "We are not connected to venture capital we have procured all the necessary contracts and capital both the long and hard way. Which insures that we can issue phantom shares to the workers (88 year-round jobs) in the greenhouse to create a better culture. I don't think this exists yet in the country. We are trying to create local wealth creation model for everyone that offset all the big boxes in our towns in siphoning our economy and culture."

With the help of the Rhode Island Foundation and the Department of Environmental Management division of agriculture, Schartner intends to approach Rhode Island farmers with a pilot CEA program.

"Once I prove it and have got this up and running and stabilize it," he said.

Is that what he hopes for? Hope is not a word Schartner applies to farming.

"This (farming) is what we do. This is what we know."

Schartner calls the greenhouse and all those tomatoes he aims to grow a "wealth creator" that harnesses multiple state resources and human effort.

"Hope is for Sunday," he said.



FROM A DISTANCE: The greenhouse is 500 feet from Route 2 and so positioned to be only partially visible from the road. This image was taken from a hill west of the structure that is also a part of the Schartner Farm.



CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT: Pillars define the framework for the 25-acre greenhouse that when completed will make every day July 27- the best day of the year to grow tomatoes.

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