



**REDCOAT TO REDCOAT:** Col. Ron Barnes, of Johnston, Commander of the Pawtuxet Rangers, shook hands with representatives from the British government and Navy – from left to right, with British Naval Commander Steven White, Commander Simon Rogers, and British Consul General for New England Dr. Peter Abbott OBE. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

## My final deadline

Longtime Sun Rise Scoops author reluctantly signs off after decades

By  
**MERI R. KENNEDY**



When I hit the send button last week to submit my weekly columns and other news/photos, I did not know it would be my final deadline. For the past 28 years, I have not missed one deadline for the Johnston Sun Rise or Cranston Herald. Not even through breast cancer.

I entered home hospice last week.

I have been suffering through a chronic illness called gastroparesis (paralyzed stomach) and have been writing from home due to my illness. Steve, my love and my photographer, works with me as a team. As I grew more ill, he added caretaker to the list.

I was being kept alive by TPN (nutrition via a line into my veins) and my body has stopped tolerating it. We have tried all we could even to the point of many surgeries and procedures, and I have lived through horrid pain and constant nausea. My stomach is no longer connected.

So, why am I telling you all this? One reason was that the weekly deadline has served as a weekly lifeline for me. I have a wonderful following over these decades and I have loved working for John Howell of Beacon Communications. We go back a long way and he has been there for me in so many ways. I asked if I could write this and he said please do, but explain the illness, which I hope I just did.

I want to thank you — all my readers and followers.

My vision is now too blurry to see the computer screen and read emails.

I have loved the Cranston area all my life and my careers in Cranston, as Chamber of Commerce Director to Reporter/Columnist for the Cranston Herald and Johnston Sun Rise.

Despite so many challenges, I have met most of my goals. I am blessed with good friends and support.

I do believe Steve will stay on as photographer in Cranston — he loves it so much and they adore him and his work. It will be good for him.

I have had the privilege of covering the good news of our community and there is so much. Some have been features that have helped others — from event shout-outs to needs for a sick child.

I have had your trust and in this crazy world; truth in journalism is so needed.

I don't know how to say goodbye, but I knew this had to be written while I still can.

Thank you for sharing your achievements with me — from Eagle Scouts to fundraisers.

I posted on Facebook because there would be no way to contact everyone. I wrote that if there is anything you want to say to me, to say it. Hundreds of comments were posted with even fun memories from childhood friends. I am glad I made that post and also received phone calls from people I have impacted and did not know.

Again, thank you Cranston, and Johnston, and to everyone who is making our community a better place to live.

I did ask John Howell if there was a Sun Rise in Heaven...he replied ... with you there most likely will be one.

**Editor's Note:** Meri modestly omitted that she is a member of the Cranston Hall of Fame. Indeed, as she writes, Meri never missed a deadline — even if it meant writing from a hospital bed. She is proud of that fact. Unfortunately, it is now our time to miss Meri.

## 'Tradition of insubordination'

Search for the HMS Gaspee shipwreck now underway

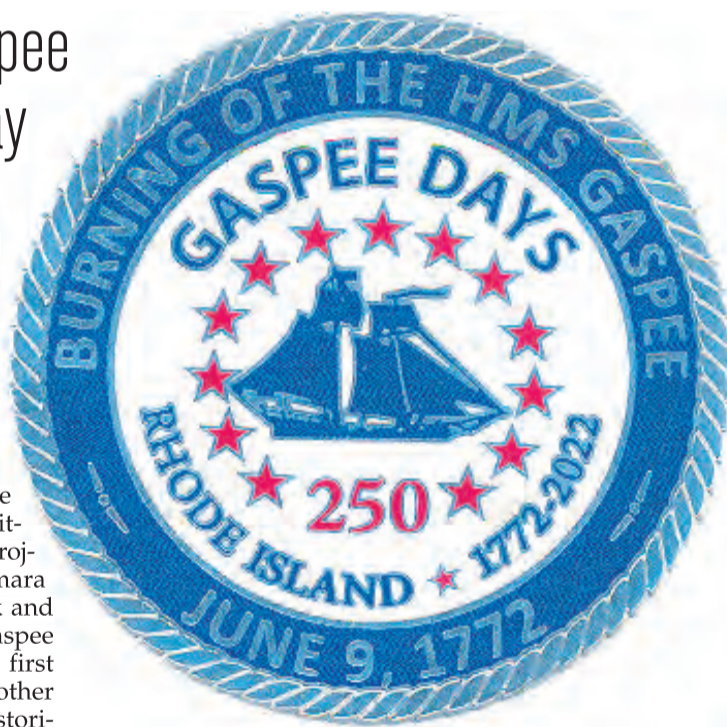
By RORY SCHULER

The sinking of the HMS Gaspee is merely a footnote in some U.S. history books.

If a small group of Rhode Island citizen scientists succeeds, a search for the British vessel's remains may help rewrite the nation's annals, and place the Namquid Point (also known as Gaspee Point) explosion on the first page of the first chapter of the American story.

"We have an important announcement to make here today, on behalf of the Gaspee Days Committee and the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project (RIMAP)," said state Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (a Democrat representing District 19 in Warwick and Cranston). "It is time for Rhode Island and the Gaspee Affair to reclaim its place in history — in the first chapter of American history, not as a footnote to other minor events that seem to have captivated our historians."

McNamara hosted an event at the Aspray Boat-house in Pawtuxet Village Tuesday morning, announcing the underwater search for the ship that



**CHALLENGE COIN:** Col. Barnes presented a challenge coin to the visiting British brass. If Barnes challenges them to show the coin while out for drinks, and they can't, the tab's on the Brits. If he challenges they produce the coin, drinks are on the Pawtuxet Rangers.

GASPEE - PAGE 11



**THE SEARCHERS:** From left to right, Dr. Kathy Abbass, British Naval Commanders Steven White and Simon Rogers, Dr. Peter Abbott, state Rep. Joseph M. McNamara, the Pawtuxet Rangers, and Gaspee Days Committee board member Roger Hudson prepare for Tuesday morning's announcement at the Aspray Boathouse in Pawtuxet Village.



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**PROUDLY PINNED:** Dillon Martufi pins a gold badge on his father, Michael Martufi, during his promotion to the rank of sergeant.

# JPD promotes Martufi to sergeant

The Johnston Police Department promoted Officer Michael Martufi to the rank of sergeant during a ceremony held on Wednesday, April 20.

Mayor Joseph Polisena and Chief Joseph Razza oversaw the promotion at the department's headquarters. Family and friends were in attendance, as well as fellow officers from the department.

"It is with great pride that I am able to promote Michael Martufi to the rank of sergeant as his promotion is well deserved," said Chief Razza. "Sergeant Martufi is a dedicated officer who has a lot to offer in his new supervisory role and I know that he will excel in this position."

Sgt. Martufi began his career with the Woonsocket Police Department in 2007. There, he served with distinction as a field training officer and a member of the special response team. He earned the American Legion Award for solving a serial arson case.

Martufi also participated in narcotics work with the Westerly Police Department. He spent three months undercover as a high school student, tasked with locating the supplier of illicit drugs being distributed to children, which resulted in several arrests.

In 2013, Sgt. Martufi transferred to the Johnston Police Department, with aspirations to serve the community from which he grew up. With the department, he has served as a field training officer, special response team operator and team leader, earning department commendations for his performance.

Sgt. Martufi holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Rhode Island College, a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice Studies from Boston University and is currently working towards a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Wake Forest University. Martufi also wrote a text book, "Professional Writing for the Criminal Justice System," in 2017.

During the ceremony, Martufi's gold sergeant's badge was pinned on by his "best bud," his son, Dillon. Sgt. Martufi is the son of Captain Michael Martufi, Sr. (ret.) and Karen Martufi, and is engaged to be married to his fiancé, Anai Bernabeu Merino, later this year.



**PROMOTED:** Sgt. Michael Martufi is joined by Mayor Joseph Polisena and Chief Joseph Razza during his promotional ceremony held at police department headquarters. (Submitted photos)

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# Little Angels have ‘Muffins with Mom’

There was a rather unique pre-Mother’s Day Party last week at Little Angel’s Academy located at 415 Central Ave. in Johnston. Administrator Karen Esposito said the messages from the pre-schoolers were precious and included special phrases like “My mommy is the greatest because she takes care of me” or “she reads to me until I fall asleep” and “she gives me hugs and kisses.” Those were just a few wishes kids had for their mighty mom. Moreover, the event was called “Muffins with Mom” and there were smiles aplenty inside the well-appointed facility.



**MINI MUFFINS:** Pre-schoolers, from left to right, Matthew Bianca, Layla Sayeh, Olivia Deady, Alexis Driggers, Emalie Deady, Elise Ranaldi, Giovanna Calcagni and Antonio Bibby, were just some of the youngsters who enjoyed “Muffins with Mom” last week. (Submitted photos)



**THANK YOU:** Giovanna Calcagni said, “My mommy is the greatest because she bakes with me.”



**DOUBLE TROUBLE:** Twins Olivia and Emalie Deady pose for a photo with their mom.



**FOR YOU:** Anthony Bibby poses for a photo with his mom.

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**A BIG THANK YOU:** Above, JHS Student Council members Jackson Troxell, Rebecca Clements, Janet Clements, Charlene Hohlmaier and Sophia Ribezzo enjoyed serving a wide variety of foods to faculty members, administrators and staffers during last week's Teacher Appreciation Luncheon. Below, teachers Kerry Murphy, Debra Smyth and Mike Harwood join Principal Dr. Donna Pennachia with the plates of "fantastic foods" they selected from a display of 22 homemade items during last week's Teacher Appreciation Luncheon. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

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**PROUD PANTHERS:** Among those Student Council members who helped make JHS' Teacher Appreciation Week super special are, from left; Trinity Blondin, Alessandra Pesare, Raylin Santos, Josephine Olagundoye, Charles Curci, Tala Laflamme and Advisor/Organizer Greg Russo.

# Showing gratitude for our teachers

By PETE FONTAINE

There were some extraordinary and super special servings of hospitality — as well as respect and love — last week at Johnston High School.

It was an ageless terrific tradition known as Teacher Appreciation Week, which concluded with a lavish luncheon that included everything from specially made pizza and variety of salads to calzones, chicken wings, stuffed shells, eggplant parmigiana, chicken Marsala, baked macaroni and desserts such as cookies, brownies, cupcakes and s'mores amid a setting of colorful table coverings and fresh floral centerpieces.

A host of department heads, teachers, faculty and staff enjoyed a total of 22 homemade dishes that were served by members of the Rebecca Clements led Student Council.

Perhaps teachers Stacy Landi, Lou DiMaio and Emilia Ruggiero said it best about Friday's luscious luncheon that was held inside the Janice D. Mele Memorial Library under the leadership of Greg Russo — a.k.a. Mr. JHS for all Season and Reasons — who chairs Johnston's Science Department.

"The kids did a great job," said Landi while musing: "We should do this every day!"

DiMaio, who is a faculty member/track coach, noted: "I've got all my carbs for today; this (luncheon) is extra special."

Ruggiero, who is the faculty advisor for the JHS chapters of the National and Rhode Island Honor Societies who later last Thursday hosted and emceed the annual Honor Society induction ceremony, said: "Great event, great food, great time ... GREAT students."

There was much more fantastic food throughout the week, which concluded with coffee and pastries sponsored by the Chemistry Club and in addition teachers had a Dress Down Day that included having their cars washed and vacuumed by members of the Student Council led by officers Rebecca and Janet Clements, Charlie Curci and Melanie Capraro who organized the production line.

As the cars were being washed, JHS Music Department heads Ron Lamouruex, Matt Gingras and Oliver Reed sent members of the band and chorus to deliver beautiful candles to teachers.

Likewise, the week closed out with a raffle of a movie basket that was donated by Academic Decathlon teachers Deb Smyth and Kerry Murphy and the raffle for a yearbook from Mr. Harwood and his staff.

"It was indeed a week of appreciation that left many

memories of how great our students, clubs, teams and staff, teachers and administrators are at Johnston High School," Russo emphasized. "Thank you to all who were involved."

Prior to the wonderful week on Cherry Hill, teachers received a scroll tied in the ribbons to reflect JHS' colors of Columbia blue and white along with a pen that read courtesy of the Student Council that read: "Happy Teachers Appreciation Week Johnston High School Home of the Panthers."

The scroll, meanwhile, outlined the events that each of the classes and teams and clubs had planned to commemorate the week.

As Russo explained while sampling some home baked cookies: "The week began with an amazing Bagel Bar sponsored by the Junior Class under the direction of advisor Peg Guilmete and President Josephine Olagundoye and included an assortment of bagels and toppings.

Tuesday also included a number of treats like Del's Lemonade from the Sophomore Class that Russo called "a novel idea" by advisor Tia Forgetta and Stephanie Galasso and officers while Coach Joe Acciardo's football and baseball teams provided the famous pizza chips.

Anna Hebert and the Mock Trial Team had cookies and a message that "Thanks for making one smart cookie" that Russo called "a really nice idea from advisor Emilia Ruggiero and President Glorianna Crichlow."

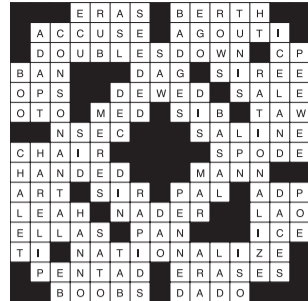
Wednesday was kicked off in the library where the Principal Dr. Donna Pennachia, Mrs. Volante and Brian Bordieri put on a fabulous spread of omelets, muffins, cakes and breakfast pastries as well as juices to show appreciation to their staffs.

Likewise when teachers went to their in-school mailboxes they found Brewed Awakenings gift cards from the sophomore class which was organized by advisors Deb Smyth and Mike Harwood and Class President Allesandara Pesare.

Also, the JHS football/basketball cheerleaders — along with advisors Dina Melise and Dionna Gadjowski — placed bags of nicely packaged candy in teacher's mailboxes as yet another "awesome act of kindness, caring and thanks."

Finally, the Class of 2022, under the direction of President Charlene Hohlmaier and advisors Lisa Freslone and Natasha Zito had baskets from Edible Arrangements placed in each teacher's room Friday to close out the wonderful week.

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 by Rochelle Rhodes, D.M.D. and David McFarland, D.D.S.  
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### SPECIAL SERVINGS:

JHS faculty members Terri Florio, Kassie Kerms, Tim Stahl, Alberta Procaccini and Pat Cardillo show off their plates of "fantastic foods" they enjoyed during last week's luncheon.



# JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL Q3 HONOR ROLL

<b>High Honors</b> Mohammed Abaherah Melissa Aguilar Aliza Almonte Lucas Anderson Benjamin Annicelli Allison Benoit Kevin Biscelli Trinity Blondin Logan Brennan Emily Buddenhagen Macenzie Buddenhagen Tyler Buote Dariana Carrascoza Vincent Chan Sofia China Janet Clements Elise Connors Albion Cortesi Jazmin Cuello-Pineda Timothy Davis Antonio DeFalco Courtney Dias Alexia DiLorenzo Adrianna Dinucci Jullia Droukas Willson El Hage Alexia Evangelista Gezzelle Fernandez Cameron Ferrara Maya Ferreira Victor Fragoso Amanda Giron Caballero Serenity Gonzalez Jonathan Guilmette Mackenzie Hanna Shannon Hartley Lauren Hill Charlene Hohlmaier Emma Homenick Aliyah Hunt Dineishka Hunt Mineishka Hunt Emily Iannuccilli Kyle Iannuccillo Siera Jeetan Emily Klein Hannah Klein Fujiy Kue Brenton Lang Savhanna Larivee Nina Lautieri Jaylin Loeum Dylan Lussier Cassie Magnone Neko Mahony Chelsea Maranhao Samantha Marcotte Logan Martins Peyton McClish Ava Melo Carlos Monteiro Dylan Moore Neriah Nhar-Matko Brendon Norris Janelle Nunez Ayomide Olagundoye Lilian Oliva Garcia Gianna Orozco Ava Palma Alyssa Pascale Emily Patenaude Nicole Patenaude Noelle Patenaude Joshua Philbrick Genesis Pineda Candace Raposo Tyler Renaud Dylan Robbins Yandery Rodriguez Steffi Rotella Phoenix Russell Lexianna Santos Raylin Santos	Kasem Sasa Ryan Schino Makayla Scuncio Joseph Silvia Aiden Soto Carl Taglianetti Luke Taglianetti Jayden Testa Joseph Thomas Cameron Tum Jacqueline Urizar Djocaelle Volcy Patrick Waldron Nathen Zalisk Catrina Zinni <b>Total High Honors: 98</b>	Athena Sin Christian Sonner Marlon Soto Sheyla Soto Shylah Soto Branden Testa Abraham Tillett Cameron Vanstone Joseph Vento Danielle Warren Austin Wheeler Victoria Winsor <b>Total 1st Honors: 77</b>	Balla Marone Liliana Martinez Ayden Martins Dylan Martins Joseph Matteo Cameron Mattson Maylin McAteer Alicia McCoy Hailee McDaniel Milana Melvin Gabriela Mercado Jiana Mitsoulis Ashley Morales Jonathan Morris Mia Mowry Jacob Muller Hector Munoz-Lopez Davian Nunez Elijah Odhiambo Jeremy Ovalles David Pagliarini Lexie Palma Gregory Panarello Gabiella Pascale Loren Pastore Alessandra Pesare Daniel Peterson Allan Pineda Juliana Pires Emily Pistocco Emily Placella Xavier Pol Matthew Ponte Kaylee Poole Taylor Powell Skyla Prata Catherine Privitera Kenneth Privitera Danny Quinn Donavin Quinones Christopher Ragosta Isabella Ragosta Joshua Ramos-Ortiz Sydney Raposo Alexis Rattray Michelle Recinos Noella Remington Nicholas Rianna Sophia Ribezzo Alan Rietwijk Anthony Rini Denise Robinson Gianna Robinson Jahaziel Rodriguez Justin Rogala Janzel Roquez Diana Rosales Abigail Salas Miguel Santamaria Romero Jaselle Santos Shanna Scopelliti Vena Seyon Kimberly Sibilis Jonathan Simpson Kenneth Smith Jake Souvannavong Brandon Souza Jacob Spinella Ryan St. Lawrence Ariana Stoepker Michael Stone Emmerson Sylvia Parker Sylvia Xavier Thomas Alejandra Torres Morales Ariana Torres Morales Lena Torti Bobbi'Sue Trahan Jared Trotter Jackson Troxell Dariel Urena Jeremy Urena Kaylee Vanstone Anghelina Vejarano	Victoria Venditelli Nicolas Viau Cameron Walker Jordan (Fae) Weston Dominic Whitten <b>Total 2nd Honors: 157</b>
	<b>1st Honors</b> Joseph Acciaro Amelia Akkaoui David Allan Benjamin Bejnar Gianna Brodeur Brooklin Califano Michael Cepeda Henri Chan Michael Chavier Matthew Clements Rebecca Clements Phillip Costantini Glorianna Crichlow Giuseppe Cucinotta Charles Curci Carprece Daigle Arianna Dandy Kelly Dargy Enaijah De La Cruz Alyson DelaRoca Michael Dilorio Samson D'Uva Landon Faucher Jennelle Fernandez Makaila Fosu Riley Guenette Jasmin Guerrero James Guilmette Carlos Gutierrez DeLeon Gianna Halliwell Nicholas Harrington Malikai Hopp Rachel Ixcotoyac Vanessa Javery Faith Khang Ava Khoury Lucio La Terra Bellina Talia Laflamme Christopher LaPlante Thadeus Leomensah Katelyn Loffler Ariana Medeiros Jeremy Melise Manee Men Jaylen Molina Karissa Morales Eliyahna Negrón Sebastian Orozco Dean Paris Preston Penn Caroline Pesenecker Jaqueline Pinto Lopez Shannon Pistocco Jenna Poland Hunter Remington Noe Reyes-Estrada Gianna Ricci Danielson Rivas Lana Salamone Derek Salvatore Celeste Santanelli Selina Santanelli Jesse Santillan Andrew Sia Shane Simeone	<b>2nd Honors</b> Anthony Abbruzzi Michael Abbruzzi Ferlandi Aguilar Lopez Logan Hayden Akins Saad Alam Aubree Allen Emily Anderson Willow Andrews Alana Aucone Jenna Aucone Nicki Aucone Kalina Bonetti Mark Brouwer Hailey Brown Sadie Bun Victoria Butler Gerson Cabrera Samuel Cambranes Georgiana Cardullo Michael Carlino Kylie Caroselli Kayla Carpentier Jacob Carr Ryan Carvalho Joseph Centeno-Gonzalez Dylan Cerio Raymond Cimino Christopher Civetti Elyssa Collins Haley Connors Evan Correia Juliana Correia Anthony Corsinetti Elliot Cortesi Yohani Cortez Kathleen DeLeon Tyler Diodati Lauren Dixon Briana Dominique James Estrada Regan Estrella Caitlin Fasteson Alex Fedorchuk Emily Feinstein Dominique Ferrazzano Zachary Ferry Nicholas Flanagan Joseph Forte Robert Franchini Ayberson Garcia Cruz Anthony Gawlik Robert Graham Felix Guilloty Caleb Guimaraes Zachary Hanna Susana Huevo Ariana Iasimone Jada Irons Michelina Irons Marcel Johnson Goncalves Karen Lastor Rojas Noah Lavergne Joseph Lopez Tavares Isabella Maggiacomo Channosophonn Mam Gabiella Manchester Samantha Marcotte Michael Marfeo	<b>3rd Honors</b> Santiago Aguilar Abigail Andres Ryan Audino Gustavo Barrozo Sean Beliveau Jack Bremer Annabella Brennan Hannah Calabro Kyle D'Alessandro Keyari Dandy Armando DeCosta Chantal DeJesus David Delfino Devin DelSanto Sophia DiBiase Anthony DiBiasio Linda Echeverria Summer Evans Steven Finegan John Ford Elijah Foss Roman-De Furtado Joshua Galeas Hannah Gervais Wally Hassan Logan Hemstreet Dharian Jaquez Castillo Christian Jeetan Noah Jemery Ashley Lainez Natareno Gavin Lapan-Brayall Jared Lee Amari LeFebvre Eric Luna Santiago Luna Nicholas Lyon Mouhamadou Marone Keimara Matos Aidan McGarry Isabella Mejia Malvin Melicio Alexander Melillo Evan Melvin Benjamin Monahan Andrea Muriel Addison Neil Connor Niles Mia (Ryo) Nilsson Jose Noriega Edgar Pacheco-Ortiz James Pastore Abigail Patnaude Iris Perez Michael Perugino Alexander Quesada Malakai Quinones Raleigh Richard Johan Rodas Cruz Katie Rodriguez Jayanah Rollins Jenifer Sajbin Estrada Lilianna Salois Christian Sarmiento Melissa Sauret Nathaniel Smith Matthew Sou Chantal Torres NeAri Vasquez Nicholas Villani Michael Vita William Vizcaino Dezarae (Kai) Waterman Nicholas Williams <b>Total 3rd Honors: 73</b>	

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# Opinion

## EDITORIAL

### An educational balancing act

Designing a curricula that is the right combination of challenging, engaging, and well-rounded is far from an easy task for those at the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). Regardless, it is RIDE's responsibility to do so in a way that also does not over-encumber school districts at the local level.

We find our state at such a difficult crossroads right now, where the state is in the midst of updating its high school graduation requirements to better provide young adults with an advanced 21st-century education, while local districts shout to hit the brakes and calculate the exact implications that update will have on their day-to-day operations.

It is no secret that school districts face big challenges every year when it comes to balancing a budget. Stories throughout the region crop up every new year about a school extracurricular at risk of being cut, or a beloved teacher at risk of being let go because their program is being trimmed due to lack of enrollment. These stories are an unfortunate reality of our property tax-based funding system for public schools, but they are problems we must face and try to solve nonetheless.

In this situation, the state's new regulations remain mostly the same aside from an increased emphasis on teaching kids foreign languages. Under the proposed graduation requirements, students will need two credits of the same foreign language to graduate. This is already the standard in Massachusetts. Considering that the number of Spanish-speaking people in America grew by nearly 25 percent in the past decade — up to 62.1 million people in 2020 according to Pew — we would argue this is a very wise, forward-thinking decision. Being able to understand and speak the basics of a different language is one of the most valuable skills a young professional can possess going into the increasingly multicultural workforce today.

Of course, aspirational vision and what is realistic are two different things entirely. RIDE officials should be prepared to demonstrate an ability to attract world language teachers to the state before committing to such a requirement. Districts have shown real apprehension at the ability to hire and pay foreign language teachers amid existing shoestring budgets, and that is a worthy concern.

At the same time, assuming that students simply might "not be interested" in a foreign language — as has been levied — is lazy logic, and honestly not good enough. Students may not be interested in a lot of educational topics, but this does not make their value any less important. Foreign language knowledge will only become more important as our country becomes more diverse, and the state must prepare for that reality to remain competitive with its regional peers.

At the same time, local districts' concerns over a dearth of available teachers is a legitimate one that the state should help alleviate before these requirements become set in stone.

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## LETTERS

### 'Not one penny goes toward lowering taxes'

I recently read in the Johnston Sun Rise what Joe Polisena Jr. stated regarding running for mayor ("Joe Polisena Jr. announces bid for mayor," May 5 edition). However, not one word was mentioned regarding cost effective government or the concerns parents have regarding the insanity that's being taught in public education.

Every year as our town brings in new industries and multiple housing complexes, that increase our town's revenues, not one penny goes toward lowering taxes? Lifelong Democratic Johnston Taxpayers need to realize the Elephant in the room is the unions that have taken control of our state and local governments and Johnston is no exception. When you read through the contracts and realize the endless unwarranted inflationary and unsustainable provisions there are endless ways to greatly reduce local taxes.

As our roads and infrastructure continues to crumple beneath us the first thing we need to do is put the breaks on via reducing the endless provisions i.e. consolidate the 20 annual

Sick Days and 3 Personal Days to one week. Reduce Longevity Bonuses, that average town workers \$3,200 annually, with a one week bonus. Our town provides a \$250,000 accidental death policy for all employees yet we also provide life insurance policies that range from \$35,000 to \$75,000 that should be nixed. In addition, police receive a \$500 bonus for every firearm issued to them if they score an 80 at the firing range annually which should be a requirement period. As for the 15 paid holidays approximately ninety percent of the workforce is non union in which most workers receive only 7. Vacations that range from 5 to 8 weeks should be capped at 4 weeks only.

When you include the Cadillac of healthcare for just pennies on the dollar, early retirements, Severance Packages that are in the tens of thousands of dollars, how pensions are calculated and continued paid healthcare upon retirement, that is now approximately \$7 million annually and climbing etc. The need to privatize our various departments in-

cluding regionalizing our services is long overdue.

If our town was to develop a database that would enable residents to log on and see for themselves the endless provisions and resulting costs, as we don't even televise our council or school committee meetings, they would be in shock.

As for the profound concerns most parents have with now-days public education private education is approximately \$3,000 less as religious education is approximately half the cost, when you combine kindergarten through grade 12, in which vouchers/school choice is a must.

In closing, the unions of our town and the democratic party are one in the same. If we give Republicans the chance to serve our town Johnston Taxpayers, especially those on limited incomes, will have a peace of mind they never thought possible as savings would be astronomical.

**Peter A. Filippi III**  
Johnston  
(Proud Republican indeed)

### At least one elected official missed in solar guest op

Just for clarity, I wanted mention as I read the article about the solar in last week's Sun Rise (Letters to the Editor, Page 9, "The residents worked diligently as a team," by Town Council Member Robert J. Civetti, May 5 edition). I did at the request of my constituents attend the last two zoning meetings.

Also, I have been corresponding to many that had emailed me about the project. I also signed onto legisla-

tion that is currently pending in the house, H7531. (As I did see Councilman Civetti stated the lack of elected officials present.)

Thank you, and stay well.

**State Rep. Deb Fellela**  
Representing District 43, Johnston





# JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

## NO CONTACT VIOLATION

Around 10:30 p.m., March 3, Johnston Police Officer Thomas Santurri was dispatched to a Johnston home to disperse an unwanted visitor. The reporting party told police that Enrique Peralta, of 90 Rosedale St., Apt. 3, Providence, should be "dispersed from the residence."

Communications personnel then advised Santurri that Peralta had two active No Contact Orders in place with the caller, and that the reporting caller was the "protected party." Santurri also learned that Peralta had three outstanding Superior Court bench warrants for failing to appear at arraignment; and two Sixth District Court bench warrants for failing to appear at Technical Violations hearings.

Peralta was taken into custody and transported to Johnston Police Headquarters, where he was processed and held pending arraignment. He was charged with two additional counts of Violation of No Contact Order (third or subsequent offense).

## REVOKED LICENSE

Around 11 a.m., March 4, while on a fixed post along Plainfield Street, Johnston Police Officer Nick J. Bordieri observed a brown Jeep Grand Cherokee traveling west with no inspection sticker affixed to the front windshield. Bordieri initiated a vehicle stop.

The driver was identified as Tyrone L. Walker, of 11 Victoria Mount St., Apt. 2, Johnston.

"Tyrone advised he had a suspended RI driver's license," Bordieri wrote in the incident report.

A criminal history check on Walker revealed he had three prior convictions for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Walker was cuffed, secured in the back of a cruiser and transported back to Johnston Police Headquarters to be processed. He was released with a District Court summons for Driving with Suspended / Revoked / Cancelled License (third or subsequent offense, a misdemeanor).

A passenger in the car showed Bordieri proof that the vehicle had been purchased the

day before (March 3), so a citation was not issued for the inspection sticker. The passenger had a current RI driver's license and drove the car from the scene.

## BENCH WARRANT

At 10:20 p.m., March 6, Johnston Police were dispatched to the Bel-Air Motel, 2154 Hartford Ave., to investigate a report of an "ongoing neighbor dispute."

Upon arrival, police spoke to a woman on the scene who told police "they had an argument about loud music." A background check revealed the woman, Stephanie M. Malek, of 50 Randall St., Apt. 8D, Johnston, had an active bench warrant for Driving with a Suspended/Revoked License.

Malek was arrested and transported to Johnston Police Headquarters, where she was processed and later transported to ACI Women's Intake.

## DUI DRUGS

Around 1:34 p.m., April 23, Johnston Police Officer David K. Chen responded to 2100 Hartford Ave. for the report of a motor vehicle crash with possible injuries.

"I then immediately checked on the operator of vehicle (No.) 1 and realized that the operator of vehicle (No.) 1 did not speak fluent English, but I was able to understand his statements spoken in Mandarin Chinese," Chen wrote in the incident report.

Chen identified the driver as Hon Wah Hee, of 1012 39<sup>th</sup> St., Apt. 3C, Brooklyn, New York.

Hee allegedly told Chen, "I really don't know what happened," according to the incident report. Hee told police he had not had any alcohol to drink that day.

"Hee appeared to be excited and also had difficulty answering my questions in Mandarin Chinese," Chen wrote. "Hee was falling in and out of consciousness. As I continued to speak with Hee regarding the accident, I noticed that he displayed droopy eyelids, bloodshot watery eyes, slurred speech and white substance around his left nostril."

Chen advised Hee that the vehicle would be towed due to it being inoperable, and police would be conducting "an inventory

search of the vehicle, per department policy, for any items of significance, to include illegal narcotics."

"Hee advised me that his center console had a red envelope containing narcotics," Chen wrote. "The envelope contained three individually wrapped bags containing a white, powdery substance weighing in at 1.8 grams (combined) were placed" in evidence.

"The suspected narcotics were not field tested for officer safety reasons," Chen wrote. "I had reasonable suspicion that Hee had been operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of narcotics. I then requested Hee to submit to a series of Standard Field Sobriety (SFST's) to which he refused."

Hee was charged with DUI (BAC unknown; a misdemeanor) and Refusal to Submit to a Chemical Test. Hee was later released with a Third District Court summons to appear for arraignment on May 2.

## SHOPLIFTING

Around 4:40 p.m., April 25, Johnston Police responded to a Johnston store to investigate a report of shoplifting. Upon arrival, Johnston Police Officer Richard J. Varan took a fixed post in the parking lot until a loss prevention employee at the store informed dispatch personnel that a female suspect was exiting the store through the garden exit, while being followed by an employee.

Police took the suspect — Lynn A. Turner, 27 Starr St., Johnston — into custody without incident. Turner allegedly had a pink tote bag over her shoulder and was pushing a carriage with a child car seat in it. A child's blanket covered the car seat.

Police said they found two packages of 250-feet of wire (valued at \$248) in the child car seat. Police said they found the following items in the tote bag: two 20 amp all-in-one breakers (valued at \$118.96), three 15 amp all-in-one breakers (valued at \$178.44), three 15 amp one pole breakers (valued at \$151.65), and a 15 amp breaker (valued at \$54.56).

Turner was later transported to Johnston Police Headquarters, processed and held pending arraignment

on charges of Shoplifting (Felony), Willful Trespass and Conspiracy. Police wrote in the report that Turner has a criminal background including seven charges.

Turner was charged as an alleged "Habitual Offender."

Police also arrested Jalise Marte, of 130 Jewett St., Providence, at the scene.

A Johnston Police Detective told Varan that he observed "a suspicious female waiting in the parking lot." The detective approached the woman and identified her as Marte, and after speaking to her, discovered "she was an involved participant with Lynn Turner."

Marte was charged with Conspiracy (a misdemeanor) and released with a Third District Court summons. Police noted in the report that Marte has a criminal background "consisting of (3) charges."

## SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION VIOLATION

Around 8:15 a.m., April 26, Johnston Police were dispatched to the rear parking lot of Silvio's Restaurant, 133 Greenville Ave., for a well-being check of a man in a black pick-up truck.

Upon arrival, Johnston Police Officer Matthew C. Rado spoke to the driver, Robert Hogan, of 26 Becker Ave., Johnston. A background check revealed Hogan had an active Johnston Police warrant for Sex Offender Registration Violation. Rado placed Hogan under arrest and transported him back to the station. His truck was towed from the scene.

Hogan was processed and transported to Third District Court for arraignment.

Hogan was arraigned before Honorable Associate Judge Christine S. Jabour on a felony charge of Sexual Offender Registration Violation and released on \$5,000 personal recognizance.

## DUTY TO STOP AFTER CRASH

Around 3:47 p.m., April 27, Johnston Police Officer Robert H. Cardoza was dispatched to the Aldi's parking lot, 100 Stone Hill Drive, to check on a suspect vehicle following a motor vehicle crash involving another vehicle.

"While I was in route

to the aforementioned address dispatch informed me that the operator had been described as an older white male with gray hair and a beard," Cardoza wrote. "Upon entering the property, I located a male fitting the description."

As he approached the suspect, Cardoza asked him for identification. The driver — identified as Eric M. Pavao, of 2880 Hartford Ave., Apt. 127, Johnston — handed Cardoza a Rhode Island driver's permit.

Cardoza asked Pavao where he was going.

"I'm walking back to the Sky View," he allegedly told police, according to the incident report.

"I stated that the Sky View was a long distance from this location and I asked if he had a vehicle," Cardoza wrote. "At that time, Mr. Pavao spontaneously stated, 'I have a car but I crashed it into a lady's car. I know I hit her but I freaked out.'"

Pavao was taken into custody and transported to headquarters without incident, processed allowed to use the phone, and placed in a cell pending arraignment.

Pavao was charged with Duty to Stop-Accident Resulting-Damage to Attended Vehicles.

"Mr. Pavao has five (5) charges on his RI BCI," according to Cardoza's report.

## FORGERY

Around 3:06 p.m., April 27, Johnston Police responded to a local business to investigate the report of a person "attempting to pass a fraudulent check."

Johnston Police Officer Richard J. Varan spotted the male suspect as he pulled into the business's parking lot. He tried to confront the man but he ran. Another Johnston police officer was able to detain the suspect nearby. The man was identified as Jeremy A. Garcia, 35 Covell St., Apt. 1, Providence.

An employee at the business, a bank, told police that Garcia approached her teller window and presented a check for the sum of \$3,620.43 in an attempt to cash it, according to the incident report written by Varan. Garcia allegedly presented a Rhode Island driver's license and a U.S. Passport as forms of identification.

The bank employee checked with the company, on which the check had been drafted, and was asked to verify the signature. The bank employee was then notified that the company had no record of that check, and that the company's checks were "in fact green in color which does not match the check attempted to be cashed."

Garcia was arrested at the scene and charged with Forgery and Counterfeiting in General (felony), Obtaining Property by False Pretenses/Personation (felony), and Conspiracy (felony). He was transported to the Johnston Police Headquarters, processed and held pending arraignment.

Garcia was later arraigned and released on \$5,000 surety with a Sixth District Court date to appear on July 27.

## POSSESSION

At 5:52 a.m. on April 28, Cranston Police arrested Earl Sanford, 43, of 180 Federal Way, Apt. 302, Johnston, on a Cranston Police Department arrest warrant for possession of I-V (first offense) at Cumberland Farms on Cranston Street. Sanford awaited arraignment.

## LEGAL NOTICES

**JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
Thursday, May 26th, 2022  
at 6:30 PM  
Johnston Senior Center  
1291 Hartford Avenue

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Review will hold its monthly meeting on May 26, 2022 at 6:30 pm, at Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Avenue. All persons interested in the following proposals are requested to be present at this time. The assembly facilities are accessible to the handicapped. Persons requiring special accommodations shall call the Zoning Office at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting (401) 231-4000 ext 4117. Persons utilizing TDD equipment may contact the Town through "Relay Rhode Island" at 1-800-745-6675. The agenda for the evening will be as follows, subject to change:

**New Business**  
**File 2022-10 – Petition of David & Ashley Cournoyer**, Applicant for 23 Mulberry Circle, AP 48 Lot 131, zoned R-20. The petitioner is seeking a Dimensional Variance Section 340 for a proposed 20x24 Addition.

**File 2022-11 – Petition of William Vigeant Revocable Trust of 2019**, Applicant for 25 Armento Street, AP 35 Lot 77, zoned R-15. The petitioner is seeking a Use Variance Section 340 for a proposed Landscaping Business and Storage.

**File 2021-07 – Justice Realty, LLC**. Applicant seeks to vest extra time to start construction on a variance granted last year.

**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 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



# Sun Rise Scoops

**By Meri R. Kennedy**

## Neighborhood Watch

The 2022 season of Johnston's Neighborhood Watch has officially kicked off. This Neighborhood Watch brings together residents who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together with members of the police department. The program pairs residents with Johnston Police officers in an effort to open up communication, meet other neighbors and create partnerships that help build community resiliency. According to the Johnston Police Department, "We appreciate everyone who came out and walked with us."

## Pasta Dinner Benefits Homeless

The St. Mary's Feast Society will hold a special pasta and meatball dinner to benefit the family, created around MAE Organization For The Homeless' signature meal, pasta and meat sauce. The event will be held from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. on May 14. Tickets are \$25 per person and a table of 10 is \$200. Tickets are available at the Feast Society located on Phenix Avenue in Cranston.

Bring your family for a hearty pasta dinner complete with garlic bread, salad and dessert! They will have Italian music, a photo booth and awesome raffles!

## 'Bridging the Gaps' Conference May 25

NAMI Rhode Island is the local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization.

NAMI-RI's Bridging the Gaps Annual Conference brings together heroes and allies in the mental health community. Discuss the issues side-by-side with peers, family members, mental health professionals, advocates, legislators, volunteers, and friends. This year, the Bridging the Gaps conference will be held virtually on May 25.

Register today! NAMI Members attend for free. \$10 for non-members. For more information on Mental Health awareness Month and/or to register for the upcoming Bridging the Gaps Conference, please visit [www.namirhodeisland.org/btg/](http://www.namirhodeisland.org/btg/), call NAMI-RI at (401) 331-3060 or email [beth@namirhodeisland.org](mailto:beth@namirhodeisland.org).

## 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 the 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 al-

lowed 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. 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.

## URI Music Department and Notable Works' Spring 2022 Concert

This event will take place in URI's Recital Hall within the Fine Arts Center on May 15 at 3 p.m. and features the American Band, Directed by Brian Cardany. The American Band will be honored at this event by the RI Music Hall of Fame. The main focus of this event is to illustrate how Rhode Island is dealing with the climate crisis, highlighting revitalization efforts in our communities, as well as practicing current outreach strategies to connect to a wider and more diverse workforce, while broaching the question: "What can each of us do to work together to help build a more sustainable future?" This performance is free and open to the public; however, donations for Notable Works will be graciously accepted. CDC State Covid-19 guidelines will be followed. Complimentary refreshments will be provided following the concert. For more information, please call 401-874-2431 or visit [www.uri.edu/music/events](http://www.uri.edu/music/events) or [notableworks.org](http://notableworks.org).

## Rhode Island Senior Softball League

The Rhode Island Senior Softball League, who has over 350 players on 20 teams, is currently seeking players ages 50 and over for the upcoming season.

The season will run from the beginning of May until the end of September, including playoffs, and no games will be scheduled on July 4. Games are played on Sunday, double headers.

Masks and/or pitcher's screen will be mandatory, and the league will use the same 11 fields as it did last season. Fields are located in East Providence, Cranston, Johnston, Woonsocket, North Kingston, Barrington and Western Cranston.

Visit [www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=riseniorsoftball](http://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=riseniorsoftball) for more information. Please fill out player inquiry form, the commissioner will contact you.

## Consider donating blood

The Rhode Island Blood Center is in need of blood donations. Individuals wishing to donate must book an appointment at the donation center; walk-ins are only accepted if safe distancing allows at the person's time of arrival.

Nearby areas to donate include The Shops at Greenwood, which is located at 615 Greenwich Ave., in Warwick. Sign up by visiting [www.ribc.org](http://www.ribc.org).

## Apple Fest Scheduled

The 34th Annual Apple Festival has been scheduled for: Saturday, Sept. 10 and Sunday, Sept. 11 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., both days.

The event will be held at the Johnston Memorial Park - 1583 Hartford Ave. in Johnston. Register: [members.nri-chamber.com/.../the-34th-annual-apple](http://members.nri-chamber.com/.../the-34th-annual-apple)

## 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.

## Johnston Senior Center back in full force

At the Johnston Senior Center, all exercise classes have resumed, and new classes have been added too. Call the center for information.

## Mohr Library events

Fridays at 5 p.m., the library has a craft and discussion program for adults who love young adult books, books which often feature young protagonists finding their place in the world. The first book to be discussed is "Vassa in the Night," which reimagines a slavic folktale in modern-day Brooklyn.

The Rhode Island Tree Council is offering their Tree Stewardship classes at the library Thursday nights from 6-8 during May, plus Saturday, June 4, from 10 to noon, to plant a tree on the library's lawn. There is a charge of \$50 for members and library cardholders. Register with

the Rhode Island Tree Council at 401-764-5885 or at [www.ritree.org](http://www.ritree.org).

For teens, there is a Dungeons & Dragons group meeting each week. Call or email to leave your contact information for Emilie.

For middle-school and high-school-age kids, there are things to do almost every day after school.

Storytime for ages 2 to 5 began May 4 at 10:30 a.m. Call to register.

During all hours, the Children's Library has scavenger hunts, I Spy games and craft kits to do in the library or take home.

Every day, we offer help with computers and technology, either on the spot, by offering to schedule one-on-one sessions, or by trying to find the right class for you.

Through June, Providence Public Library will send one of their specialists to Mohr Library for one-on-one "Digital Navigation" help, by appointment Fridays between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Speak

with one of the librarians.

Mohr Library offers public wifi and computer use, printing and copying at a small charge, faxing at \$1 per page, free scanning, and free notary when available. Contact us to print from your device or from home.

The book drop is available to return books from any Rhode Island public library or to donate like-new books. The Friends' Book Sale is ongoing whenever we are open.

Email [info@mohrlibrary.org](mailto:info@mohrlibrary.org) or call 231-4980.

## 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).

## 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](mailto:johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com), [www.johnstonhistorical.org](http://www.johnstonhistorical.org) or [www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical](http://www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical).

**Editor's Note:** Send submissions to [rorys@rhodybeat.com](mailto:rorys@rhodybeat.com). Email today to see your news in our Johnston Sun Rise Scoops column. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.



**Celebrating  
30 years serving  
more than 8,000  
Rhode Island families.**

Come aboard, meet our crew and explore how Anchor Bay communities help older people stay connected and enjoy smoother sailing in later life.

**SAIL AWAY WITH ANCHOR BAY  
OPEN HOUSE**

**SATURDAY, MAY 21 | 2 TO 4 PM**

**3 EXCITING "PORTS OF CALL"**

**ANCHOR BAY AT GREENWICH** *France*  
945 Main Street | East Greenwich

**ANCHOR BAY AT EAST PROVIDENCE** *Japan*  
1440 Wampanoag Trail | East Providence

**ANCHOR BAY AT POCASSET** *Italy*  
12 Old Pocasset Lane | Johnston

**RSVP AT 401.885.3334**



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## Obituaries

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

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

*- Thank you*





**FIRST FORUM:** The first public forum featuring candidates for governor was hosted by the Rhode Island Public Expenditures Council last Thursday at the Crowne Plaza. The forum consisted of five Democrats and one Republican, and was moderated by Stephanie Machado from WPRI. (Sun Rise photo by Alex Malm)

# Candidates make pitch for governor's office

By ALEX MALM

Last Thursday the Crowne Plaza was the site for the first public forum featuring candidates for governor hosted by the Rhode Island Public Expenditures Council. The forum, consisting of five Democrats and Ashley Kalus the lone Republican, was moderated by Stephanie Machado from WPRI 12. Here's how the candidates stood on key issues raised during the forum:

## American Rescue Plan Act funds

One of the biggest questions facing the state right now is how to spend the \$1.24 billion in ARPA funds that the state currently has.

Kalus said that the state has a once in a lifetime opportunity to "hit the reset button in Rhode Island."

The number one issue that she would want to tackle with the funds is education.

"I am not interested in one-time fixes or unfunded commitments in programs. We need to invest in education, competitiveness and housing," said Kalus.

Community activist Dr. Luis Daniel Munoz said that he thinks it's more important now more than ever that the state prioritizes healthcare.

"We need to invest heavily in community health infrastructure," said Munoz.

Munoz said that the state needs to create a sustainable healthcare system which includes allocating funds to a free community health "hub" across the five counties.

"By doing that we need to take an active step as a state to ensure that we are controlling the procurement process so that price controls are set," said Munoz.

Former CVS executive Helena Foulkes said that she has a detailed plan on how to spend the funds on her website and said that she proposed spending \$500 million on education.

Some of the specifics for the funds would go towards summer learning, before and after school learning and to make sure every school in the state has a guidance counselor.

"I have a host of things I like to see," said Foulkes.

Foulkes said that she recruited many people to work at CVS who lived in Massachusetts to take advantage of their public school system.

"I think it is both a moral duty we have for our kids and a huge economic opportunity," said Foulkes.

Former Secretary of State Matt Brown said housing was his top pri-

ority with the funds. "We have a situation in this state where most people, everyone except the very rich, are struggling to afford housing," said Brown.

Brown said that everyone wants to be able to put a roof over their family's heads but it is difficult currently in Rhode Island.

"For a lot of people that's a huge struggle right now," said Brown.

Brown said specifically he would put funds towards building 10,000 "truly affordable homes."

Brown said he would also propose capping rent increases at four percent per year.

Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea said that she thinks housing is very important and is one of the areas she would use the funds.

"We have to use it in a way that is long lasting," said Gorbea.

Gorbea said that stable housing would also help with education because it would allow students to stay in the same schools instead of moving often.

"Housing is absolutely foundational for improving our quality of life and being able to invest in an infrastructure that has an impact beyond just today," said Gorbea.

Gov. Dan McKee said that when he was preparing the budget and collecting suggestions from people he said that the funds couldn't be for a program that needed to be funded in the future and wanted to focus on increasing people's incomes and helping the economy.

McKee said that a 10 year working document was created that deals with education, the economy and healthcare to name a few.

"The economy is central to the issue but housing is about economy, education is about economy, child-care is about economy, jobs and good paying jobs are about the economy," said McKee.

## Inflation

On inflation Brown said that the cost of basic needs continues to go up which is compounded by the current inflation problem.

"I'm not talking about the luxuries, I'm talking about housing, I'm talking about healthcare the basic things people need have gone up hundreds of percent while wages have stayed essentially the same," said Brown.

Brown said that the state needs to raise the minimum wage to \$19 an hour.

Gorbea who proposed temporarily suspending the gas tax said that

when the inflation problem first started people were feeling it at the gas pump.

"It was really about speaking to people's pain," said Gorbea.

Gorbea said she personally knows people who weren't filling their gas tanks in hopes of prices going down by the end of the week.

Gorbea also said that they need to increase manufacturing in the state to help with the supply chain issues.

"We should be doubling down on manufacturing in our state," said Gorbea.

Foulkes said that she proposed a one time \$500 middle class tax cut for anyone making under \$100,000 a year. She said she would use part of the surplus to fund it. Foulkes argued that it is a better option than suspending the gas tax because not everyone has a car.

"I think it's a better proposal than a gas tax cut," said Foulkes.

McKee said that his administration is trying to help small businesses with the over \$600 million surplus.

"It's a matter of being smart about how we use the surplus dollars," said McKee.

McKee also pointed to the elimination of the car tax as helping people and businesses.

"That's a major pivotal play," said McKee.

Kalus agreed with suspending the gas tax.

"Inflation is hurting working families," said Kalus.

Kalus also said that the state needs to look at long term solutions for inflation.

"We need to have a better business environment. It's the only long term way we can deal with this issue," said Kalus.

Munoz said "It's not just inflation, it's mismanagement. It's a misallocation of priorities."

"I believe we need a supplemental wage program," said Munoz.

## Roe V Wade

The forum was just a few days after a draft of a Supreme Court ruling that would strike down Roe V Wade was leaked.

Machado asked the candidates if they thought that abortions should be covered under the Medicaid program and for state employees health insurance plans.

Gorbea agreed. "Rights that can't be accessed are not rights," said Gorbea.

McKee said he also supports it and would sign legislation if it reaches his desk protecting a woman's right

to choice.

Kalus said that she is pro life and said that the right to an abortion is codified in state law.

She also talked about how it was a personal decision for her including having struggles with IVF.

"Life is a personal issue," said Kalus.

Kalus said that the state shouldn't expand it any further.

Munoz said, "Women always have autonomy over their health."

Munoz also said that reproductive rights are a human right.

"No one should ever threaten that," said Munoz.

Asked about it, Foulkes said, "Absolutely."

"I don't think that your insurance should allow us to decide," said Foulkes.

Brown said that is a "crisis."

"It is a personal crisis for people across the country right now," said Brown.

Brown said that the Equality in Abortion Coverage Act needs to be passed right away.

"It's not a real right if people can't afford it," said Brown.

Brown also said "I will not endorse and will not accept the endorsement of any elected official who is opposed to codifying Roe versus Wade."

## Minimum wage

On the issue of minimum wage Foulkes said, "I would accelerate the move to 15."

Gorbea said she agreed that they need to get to \$15 an hour as a state.

Kalus said that the state is on a path for a \$15 an hour minimum wage and that they should not deviate from it.

McKee said that, "Fifteen dollars an hour is a good start but that's not enough money for people to actually earn a living."

McKee said that the state needs ways to raise incomes.

Munoz said, "our goal should be \$25 however long it takes."

## Supporting the nominee

All the Democratic candidates at the forum said "yes" to the question of supporting the Democratic nominee for governor if they don't win the primary.

Aside from Kalus who is Republican and would be supporting her own candidacy, Munoz said he would "as long as they're consistent with the values we represent on this stage by the time we get there."

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# Gaspee

(Continued from page 1)

Rhode Island colonists set aflame exactly two and a half centuries ago, helping to spark the American Revolutionary War several years later in 1776 (preceding the Boston Tea Party on Dec. 16, 1773, by more than a year).

"It was in fact the flame that started freedom burning," McNamara said. "And we plan on this 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to put it where it belongs, in the first chapter. It is my pleasure to inform you that we have started the process to search for the Gaspee."

McNamara introduced Gov. Dan McKee, "one of the greatest Gaspee enthusiasts in our state."

"Sometimes you get left out of the history," McKee joked. "I've experienced that once or twice. That's why we're here. To make sure history gets corrected."

McKee pledged to make Gaspee Day part of a new Ocean State destination marketing initiative.

"We know that this story is worth sharing throughout the country and to all Rhode Islanders," McKee said. "Burning of the Gaspee, June 10 ... 250 years (ago) ... You might as well start somewhere, so we'll start with the 250<sup>th</sup> year to make this a national event. And recognition that Rhode Island played a role ... before the event that happened up in Boston, Rhode Island was ... declaring its independence in its way."

The governor pitched a marketing initiative, starting as tourists enter the state at Rhode Island T. F. Green International Airport, and highlighting Warwick's annual Gaspee celebration.

"We want to make Rhode Island a destination state," McKee said. "We want people to put Rhode Island on their bucket list ... Probably the first time in the history of the state we're going to have destination marketing through our airport, which is an access point for us in this state ... We're going to make destination marketing part of our economic make-up, and for this day, the Gaspee Day, that's going to be part of that effort. So the work that you're doing here, not only (is it) pride in your community, in Pawtuxet Village here, but it's also pride in Rhode Island. And what happens that's good in Rhode Island, is good for everybody, all 39 cities and towns, and the people who live in those communities."

In 2014, McNamara helped put together a team of Warwick volunteers to start archaeology fieldwork on Gaspee Point, the site of the Gaspee sinking. RIMAP trained volunteers, and over six years the organization led "Not the Gaspee" field studies to distinguish discovered sea floor wreckage deposited by centuries of colonial sea-faring.

"In 2014, I sought out one of the world's most prestigious marine archaeologists, Dr. Kathy Abbas, brought her down to Gaspee Point, and we have spent the past six years surveying wrecks that are not the Gaspee," McNamara said. "However, what we found was a pride in our cultural history. These ships, these wrecks, are not as important as the

Gaspee, but they are a major attribute to our state and our country."

In 2021, RIMAP performed a remote sensing survey in the waters off Gaspee Point.

"Last year we started the search for the Gaspee with a survey of the Gaspee Point area to get context, and then in September we raised some money and did a ground-penetrating search of that area," McNamara explained. "We believed that there was enough sites of interest to move forward to the next phase. However, the next phase — that is scientifically written out, using the best science and technology possible — had a price attached to it."

A long list of donors stepped up to help launch the official search for the Gaspee, raising enough to cover the more than \$30,000 estimated tab for an initial search exploration.

"It's a volunteer organization led by an expert, but we had to raise some money," McNamara said. "And I am pleased to announce today, that thanks to the generosity of private Rhode Islanders and company, we have raised the \$32,000 necessary to proceed to find the HMS Gaspee 250 years later."

"If we do find something Joe, we're going to need a lot more money," Abbas said to McNamara.

Abbas, RIMAP's Principal Investigator, will lead the search.

This year's Gaspee Days will conclude June 12 (the Gaspee Days Parade will be held Saturday, June 11). Abbas said the public will have multiple opportunities to participate in the search for the Gaspee.

On Tuesday morning, RIMAP members distributed a fact sheet describing the scope of work proposed for the Gaspee Point shipwreck search.

RIMAP and the Gaspee volunteers plan to "ground-truth and document" two targets identified by last year's sonar survey.

"One target appears to be a later vessel and the second target may be where earlier archaeologists had worked to find the Gaspee," according to RIMAP. "These assumptions need to be confirmed."

Using Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) next-generation equipment, further remote sensing surveys of the study area will help locate more targets.

The group plans to "combine wet and dry archaeological techniques with GPS around Gaspee Point, then from the tide line to the trees, and also selected in-shore areas.

After revolution-minded colonists lit the Gaspee, the ship exploded. Parts of her may be scattered over a large swath of the Providence River and its shoreline.

Ultimately, the band of searchers hopes to "collect permit-approved cultural materials for study" and "determine presence or absence of major cultural materials at Gaspee Point," according to RIMAP.

"I have to tell you right up front, we can't promise success," Abbas said. "That's what politicians will tell you ... Is there anything there, or is there not? So at the end of this, if we have to come



**DRY TOAST:** Johnston Sun Rise, Warwick Beacon and Cranston Herald Publisher John Howell delivered a toast while the crowd sipped cider. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

back and say, 'Well, there wasn't anything there,' at least that's a positive contribution to the scientific process that we have. I suspect we will be able to find something, but I can't tell you what it will be."

British Consul General for New England, Dr. Peter Abbott OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire), attended Tuesday's boathouse event with British Naval Commanders Simon Rogers and Steven White, of Her Majesty's Royal Navy.

"I like to joke that being the British Consul in New England means you have to have some pretty broad shoulders," Abbott joked. "I get invited to events to commemorate the Boston Massacre. I get invited to events to commemorate Evacuation Day. But I think what really takes the biscuit is to be invited to an event to commemorate the burning of a British ship."

The crowd erupted in obstinate colonial chuckles.

"There is something that sort of gets me childishly excited about the prospects of a shipwreck," Abbott confessed. "There is something that stirs the imagination about the idea of finding a ship that's been sunk and has been under the waves for many many years."

As a child, Abbott visited the Mary Rose, which was King Henry VIII's flagship.

"It sank off the coast of England in 1545, and it was raised from the seabed in 1982 and it still has to be kept wet to prevent the timbers from rotting," Abbott recalled. "So if a ship that sank in 1545 can be raised up, I have no doubt, if you find the Gaspee, it will be possible to raise it up as well. If you have the money to do so, I think it's quite an expensive endeavor."

Abbott admitted the British ship's incineration deserves a pivotal place in volumes of American history.

"It is, of course, the Gaspee is a huge historical significance," Abbott said. "The first act of hostility in the War for Independence ... And the burning of the Gaspee established a tradition of insubordination in Rhode Island, which continued of course when you were the first colony to declare independence from

Great Britain on the Fourth of May, 1776."

Abbot ended with a warning for the descendants of rebels in the crowd, including Henry Brown, relative of John Brown, the colonist who helped lead the Gaspee scorching.

"I will close here just by saying that I think the King's bounty is still in effect on the heads of those responsible for the burning of the Gaspee," Abbott concluded. "So just be careful."

McNamara refused the light dose of tongue-in-cheek intimidation.

"Wow," he responded with sarcasm. "Fifty pounds sterling. We know that ... King George III took this very seriously because he sent four ships over with boxes that had handwritten warrants and rewards for information leading to (those responsible) for the burning of the Gaspee."

As champagne flutes full of sparkling cider were distributed to the crowd gathered in the packed boathouse, McNamara introduced Warwick Beacon and Cranston Herald Publisher John Howell, who delivered a toast.

"Let us all raise our glasses in a toast to our friends from across the pond who like parents tolerated the impertinent actions of their child who willfully burned the vessel of their protector thereby setting an example for their siblings to do likewise," Howell said, lifting his glass. "Justly, such adolescent behavior bore consequences. But those times are now behind us and events that have followed have forged yet stronger bonds. As we set out to retrieve what we might of the Gaspee, rest assured we will treat it with reverence and promise not to play with matches again."

Commander of the Pawtuxet Rangers, Ron Barnes, lead the flock in a "cheer of enduring friendship."

McNamara had a gift for the visiting British dignitaries.

"The colonists have just passed down this rumor that there was a vandalism incident on the docks of Boston and that there's a shortage of the beverage that we both hold dear," he said, handing a small gift bag to Abbott. "So I have for you a box of American tea."

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**KING ME:** The Semi King Court posing for a photo together. From left to right, Armani Arias, Kevin Biscelli, Jacob Carr, Steven Finegan and James Pastore. (Submitted photos)

# The 'Glitz and the Glam' of the Sophomore Semi

By Raylin Santos  
 Special to the Sun Rise

The Sophomore Semi for the Class of 2024 was held on Thursday, April 14, at Twelve Acres in Smithfield. The event was held outside, on the pavilion, where students engaged in various yard games. Once the sun set, the party was taken inside, where the students enjoyed a barbecue-style buffet. The DJ for the night was Joey Acciaro, a senior at the high school. The Semi Court consisted of queen nominations Aubree Allen, Jiana Mitsoulis, Alessandra Pesare and Ash Torres. The King Semi court consisted of Armani Arias, Kevin Biscelli, Jacob Carr and James Pastore. Much to the crowd's delight, Steven Finegan and Hannah Lavergne were announced as the King and Queen, respectively.

*Editor's Note: Raylin Santos serves as the Sophomore Class Student Council Representative. The Johnston Sun Rise strives to regularly publish stories submitted by members of the Johnston High School Student Council.*



**FUTURE QUEEN:** The Semi Queen Court posing for a photo together. From left to right, Ash Torres, Alessandra Pesare, Jiana Mitsoulis, Hannah Lavergne and Aubree Allen.



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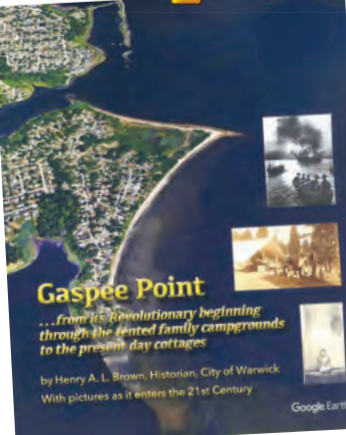
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**NEW ROYALTY:** Semi King & Queen, Steven Finegan & Hannah Lavergne pose for a photo after their big win.



# spotlight ON BUSINESS

## The Preserve at Briarcliffe

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By JENNIFER COATES

There is nothing in the world quite like sharing a meal with friends and loved ones. Sitting around a table, filling your stomachs with nourishing food and filling your soul with the company of those you hold closest to your hearts. Eating together can be one of the most restorative and gratifying experiences in the day.

For the residents of The Preserve at Briarcliffe, gathering around the table at mealtimes is just this kind of culinary experience ~ restorative and gratifying ~ but one that holds a whole new level of importance. Those meals are not just an opportunity to be physically fed, indeed, they are equally as essential to the social-emotional wellbeing of these residents. Connecting with newfound neighbors when immediate family members can't always be there. Staving off the loneliness and isolation that so many seniors experience when living alone. Engaging in conversation and dialogue when so much time is spent by oneself.

The staff at this Supportive Independent and Assisted-Living residence in the city of Johnston have taken every measure to make mealtime at The Preserve a time to look forward to, to set the clock to, to plan for every day. These daily preparations may begin in the kitchen but they extend well beyond there to the residence's comfortable and inviting dining spaces. Bathed in natural light, the main dining area, "Benjamin's", is elegant but not stuffy; welcoming, refined and intentional.

In addition, there is also a private dining room for intimate gatherings or "Jack's Hideaway", The Preserve's Bistro Lounge. There is even time set aside every day for Happy Hour where residents can socialize before dinner.

Residents at The Preserve enjoy three freshly prepared, chef-



Akshay Talwar, the President and CEO of The Preserve at Briarcliffe, visits with some of the residents of this state-of-the-art, catered community in Johnston as they dine in this comfortable and welcoming dining room.

inspired meals a day. The meals are nutritional and balanced as well as appetizing and delicious. The menu is curated to provide ample options that are both heart-healthy and "brain-healthy". As an example, one weekend, the menu selections included Potato Leek Soup and a Garden Spring Salad followed by a Picnic Pork Sandwich, Chicken Parmesan or Wild Salmon (and this was just Saturday!) Sundays' offerings included Vegetable Orzo Soup and Athens Salad along with Spring Chicken, Pork Schnitzel and Stuffed Sole. This is five-star fine dining at its best!

For those who are "creatures of habit", the chef at The

Preserve has created an "Always Available" menu which offers such classics as Chicken with vegetables, Salmon, Cod or Haddock, Eggs served any style, Crispy Salads, an assortment of sandwiches ~ and cheeseburgers! There is always something for every discerning palate here at The Preserve.

If you or a loved one is seeking this level of care, now is the time to schedule your in-person tour of The Preserve, located at 49 Old Pocasset Road in Johnston. Give them a call at 401-944-2450 or visit their informative website at [www.briarclifferi.com](http://www.briarclifferi.com). You might even come at a mealtime to see first-hand how the residents enjoy life at The Preserve.

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# Sports



LAY DOWN A BUNT: Johnston's Alexia DiLorenzo drops a bunt last week. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)



FIRST GOAL: Cranston native Damian Rivera after scoring his first career goal. (Photo courtesy of New England Revolution communications)

## Rivera scores first MLS goal

By ALEX SPONSELLER

Cranston native Damian Rivera had himself quite the Major League Soccer debut recently, scoring his first goal, on his first shot, during his first start. The goal also came in the first minute of action against DC United.

The 19-year-old standout grew up in Cranston and was a longtime member of the Revolution Academy, which develops local players from the youth level. He was then signed to the Revolution II team in 2019 and would finally work his way into the big league lineup this year.

"Coming into the game, I think that I was prepared, a little nervous. The chance came quick in the first minute and I took a touch, shot it and it went in. I was very excited, celebrated with my teammates and was happy to score that quick," said Rivera.

Rivera was excited to make an impact and to see his hard work rising up the ranks pay off.

"From the start I have been working hard. I have been waiting for a chance on the field and I finally got that in the DC game. I got the start and (made the most) of the opportunity and hope to take that with me moving forward," said Rivera, who also feels that his improvements in his strength and conditioning have helped him blossom as a player since signing in 2019. "The biggest thing for me was defensively and transition. That comes with being fit. My reaction in transition when we lose the ball or win the ball."

As a lifelong New Englander and avid Revolution fan, Rivera was thrilled to live his dream and to play for his hometown team.

"Even in the game, that first goal gave me confidence and I think that I will use that momentum into the next game and go from there. It's great, the Revolution was my hometown club, I used to go to the games when I was little and to be playing for them is a dream come true," Rivera said.

## Panthers grinding in DII playoff hunt

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Johnston softball team sits at 5-5 this spring season and is looking to earn a Division II playoff spot this spring.

The Panthers took on East Greenwich on Monday

and fell 11-7 to the Avengers. The Panthers trailed early but would put together a four-run 5th inning to take a 5-4 lead. However, East Greenwich would win the game in the seventh inning.

PANTHERS - PAGE 16

## JMCE holds 15th annual golf tourney for Hasbro

By PETE FONTAINE

Saturday's weather was certainly not the least bit conducive for playing golf, especially since Connecticut National Golf Club is located high on a hill in Putnam, Ct.

Amid a brisk breeze which resulted in a wind chill factor as if temps were in the 30's, a total of 160 players - 40 foursomes - as well as many volunteers showed up for the 15th annual Johnston Memorial Cancer Events Golf Tournament that's held to benefit the Oncology-Hematology Units at Hasbro Children's Hospital.



FAMILIAR FACES: Like most of the 40-foursomes who teed it up in the 15th annual JMCE Memorial Golf Tournament, David Civetti, John Mello, and John Simao have played in at least the past 10 tournaments. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



**JMCE**  
(Cont. from page 14)

The day, which featured the JMCE's always-awesome lunch and included chowder, pasta fagioli, as well as the famed charcoal grilled sausage and pepper sandwiches, wieners on the run and a hamburger with cheese if you wanted it, again set several records.

Perhaps the most impressive fact was that at least 90 percent of the foursomes have played in the past 10 straight tournaments and the 2022 edition had an all-time total of nearly 200 business and memorial tee signs that will further boost the day's net profit.

Moreover, Chairman Vin LaFazia issued a heartfelt "Thank You" to each and every player – as well as host Connecticut National Golf Club – for the unmatched loyalty that continued Saturday during what a host of golfers referred to as "the respect and loyalty people have in an effort to provide care for children who are battling cancer."

As LaFazia and other members of the close knit group of friends that make up the JMCE noted: "We are ever so grateful for the support shown to us, even in these cold and windy conditions. We did not have one no-show."

Which speaks volumes about the organizing committee that has raised over \$300,000 for Hasbro Children's Hospital since the tournament's inception back when the JMCE hosted the once highly-successful Campfires for Cancer inside Johnston War Memorial Park.

There were a host of winners Saturday – the most important being the children's cancer units at Hasbro Hospital – however, the day's net profit will not be available until all expenses are paid in full.

Meanwhile, Lisa and Chris Adler accepted the award for winning the Co-ed Division title while Jack Greenhalgh and Kod Greenhalgh's team won the Open Division.

Thus, the day's winners were veteran players like Cal Calabro of Goodfellas Motorcycle Club, whose team included Nicky Cardillo, Tom Cabana and Adolf Piccoli, who took home the 2022 Senior Division crown.

Dave Morse had the men's longest drive while Michy Nanni won the longest drive and closest to the pin in the Women's Division. Michael Tuorto had closest to the pin among men and Dan Ford captured top honors among seniors in the longest drive category.

One of the JMCE's committee members – Ernie DeAngelis – won closest to the pin in the senior's category.

One of the day's highlights was provided by the award-winning Swing Juice of Pawtucket, which was represented by Marketing Manager Logan Bettencourt, Tyler Maxwell and Jeremy Montrod at Saturday's JMC golf go round.

After he had greeted and later thanked the 160-player field, LaFazia said "Thank you again for coming, we'll see everyone in May, 2023."



**LADIES LINK:** Laurie Young, Valerie Money and Cathy Masemino were among the many players who were dressed for cold weather garb to play in Saturday's 15th annual JMCE Memorial Golf Tournament at Connecticut National Golf Club in Putnam, Ct.

**SPECIAL SPONSOR:** Logan Bettencourt, popular marketing manager for Swing Juice apparel, Tyler Maxwell and Jeremy Montrod held a special raffle Saturday.



**GREAT GRUB:** In keeping with tradition, the always awesome luncheon included the JMCE's famed sausage and pepper sandwiches that players like Jack "B", Chandler Pierce and Bob Christie enjoyed prior to tee off Saturday.



**SUPER SIGN:** JMCE board members Ruth and Leah Furia and Linda LaFazia are all smiles while standing behind the banner that tells it all about the beneficiary of the highly-acclaimed golf tourney.



**SUPER SUPPORTERS:** Justin Moniz and Mike Tuorto were among the 160-player field that set another JMCE record Saturday.

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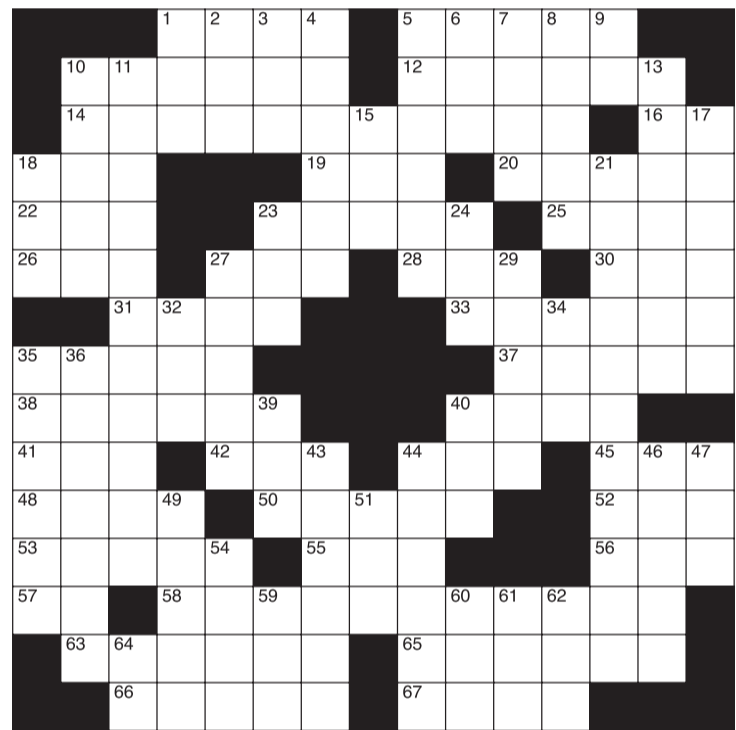
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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Amounts of time
5. A ship's place at a wharf
10. Point a finger at
12. Large, burrowing rodent
14. Raises the stakes
16. Measure of illumination
18. Cast out
19. One who is staid
20. A word used for emphasis
22. Military missions
23. Wet with rain
25. Selling at specially reduced prices
26. Word element meaning ear
27. \_\_\_ student,
28. Blood relation
30. Make into leather
31. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
33. Containing salt
35. A seat
37. A type of fine pottery
38. You're caught red-\_\_!
40. "Heat" director Michael
41. Expression of creative skill
42. Title of respect
44. Crony

**CLUES DOWN**

45. Payroll experts
48. Actress Remini
50. Famed consumer advocate
52. Indigenous Thai person
53. Fitzgerald and Baker are two
55. Cooking tool
56. Decorate a cake with frosting
57. The seventh note of a major scale
58. Transfer from private to state ownership
63. A set of five
65. Removes
66. Foolish persons
67. Lower parts of a wall
13. An island in the north Atlantic
15. Carpenter's tool
17. Small football player
18. Ghosts say it
21. Explain through logic
23. Having ten
24. Criticize
27. Arms of the sea
29. Belonging to a bottom layer
32. \_\_\_ Caesar, comedian
34. Licensed health care pro (abbr.)
35. Swiss cottage
36. Cleft lip
39. Loud, unpleasant noise
40. Disfigure
43. Kayakers traverse them
44. Authored
46. Small freshwater fishes
47. Macabre poet
49. Carthaginian statesman
51. Principle underlying the universe
54. Common Japanese surname
59. The bill in a restaurant
60. Small constellation
61. Chap
62. Equal
64. One quintillion bytes (abbr.)

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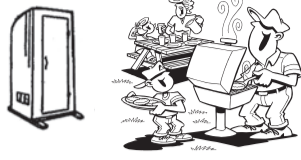
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TAKING A LEAD: Johnston's Emily Iannuccilli takes a lead off second base.



ROUNDING THIRD: Johnston's Michelina Irons rounds third.

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### ■ Panthers

(Continued from page 14)

Victoria Butler would knock in Emily Iannuccilli and Arianna Velasquez in the fifth inning, while Iannuccilli and Velasquez earned RBI of their own. Lexi DiLorenzo and Hannah Calabro scored runs in the inning.

The Panthers fell to West Warwick 6-1 last weekend, but picked up a big 12-1

win over Cranston East last Thursday. Calabro and Steph Bruno led the Panthers at the plate. Ponaganset topped Johnston the previous game 10-9 in eight innings. Bruno and Iannuccilli each recorded RBI in the loss.

The Panthers will have a busy week and are back in action this Friday when they host Lincoln at Memorial Park and will then host Mount St. Charles on Saturday afternoon. They will then host Toll Gate on Monday.



# Where we stand at the halfway point

It's hard to believe, but we are already halfway through the spring sports regular season. Now that we have an actual sample size to work with, let's get some observations and takes to this point.

My first take has to do with Pilgrim boys lacrosse. After coming up short in the state championship last season, the team, which is made up of much of the same core as last year's group, has been on a tear.

The Pats finished last week at 10-0 and really have not been tested. Their closest game was against rival Toll Gate in the season opener, but they still ran away with a five-goal win. They really have been untouchable.

We see this all the time, a dominant team that gets a head start and become the first real title favorite. As big as these tears are, far too often do we see these teams either lose focus or get blindsided by the dark horse.

However, I think this team is winning the title this spring. It is just a special group that is head and shoulders above the competition. They have cruised past Toll Gate twice, Providence Country Day twice, Burrillville, Cranston West, and by wide margins, it hasn't been close.

So, although I am not saying the title is in the bag, it's about as close as it can be midway through the season.

Across the city, the Toll Gate girls have been on a tear of their own. After dropping their season opener, the Titans have rattled off seven consecutive wins and only Portsmouth sits above them in the standings.

The Titans fell in the championship last year and then were bumped up to Division II. You'd never realize it based on their performance, as they have fit right in and have been a force. Adeline Areson has been every bit the player that we anticipated - which is one of the best in the state.

Toll Gate has a tough test against Bay View coming up as well as a rematch against Burrillville, the Titans don't have an easy road ahead of them. However, it's hard not to be impressed with how well they have fared moving up a division.

The Division I baseball race is going to be another dogfight this season and no team has really grabbed control of it.

Hendricken is a perennial favorite and has been solid, Pilgrim followed up last year's big run and is right in the thick of things, as are both Cranston East and West.

Right now, North Kingstown and Portsmouth are atop the standings, but I really don't think that they are any better than the next few teams down the ladder. NK's pitching is elite, but I do feel like it can be hit.

Between playoff seed-

## My pitch



by  
ALEX  
SPONSELLER  
SPORTS EDITOR  
ALEXS@  
RHODYBEAT.COM

ing and what will eventually be postseason matchups, this is going to be a tight, unpredictable race the rest of the way. Any of the teams I just mentioned could conceivably take home a championship.

Then in Division II, Johnston has been excellent to this point and sits in second place overall. The Panthers schedule gets a bit tougher in the second half, so we'll see how they make out, but either way they have been impressive.

Pilgrim softball finished last week in first place in Division I with just one loss and appears to be the favorite to win it all. This team's run last year resembled the boys lacrosse squad ... it was the favorite heading into the playoffs and came up just short.

The Pats have all the tools to win ... an elite pitcher in Alyssa Twomey and a deep lineup behind her. I'm a big believer in playoff experience, and these returners got a taste of it last year at RIC. Coventry is right there

to defend its title, La Salle and Bay View are having big years ... you also can't count Cranston West out.

Like baseball, this Division I race is going to be interesting and close moving forward. Toll Gate is also hanging steady in Division II and could very well host a playoff game, while Johnston is also maintaining its spot in the playoff race.

The Johnston boys volleyball team has been our best to this point. The Panthers have just one loss and have a three-headed monster that is primed to make a run.

The team's lone loss came to first-place Lincoln, who they will take on once again in the regu-

lar season. St. Ray's is still a factor, but it seems like the Lions and Panthers are on a collision course to be the last two clubs standing.

The Pilgrim boys have also jumped out to a solid start in Division II. Although the Pats have not been the best team in Division II, they are certainly in this thing and sit in third place. Hendricken and Cranston East are each in the playoff picture in Division I, but at the end of the day, I'm not sure who is going to La Salle when it means the most. Not that I am counting the Bolts or Hawks out, or teams like Chariho and NK, but the Rams are the favorite at this point.

The Hendricken outdoor track and field team is doing what it always does ... it's winning consistently and has possible state champions in just about every event. I'm sure it will come down to the Hawks and Rams once again. On the girls side, you can never sleep on Cranston West.

Lastly, although none of our boys tennis teams appear to be ready to compete for a championship, West has held steady and should be able to make the playoffs. Who knows what will happen from there?

Let's have a great few weeks here as we get ready for the final push before the summer.

## Cod, haddock regulations unchanged for now

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Recreational measures for cod and haddock will remain unchanged for the start of the 2022 fishing year. The New England Fishery Management Council has recommended changes to recreational Gulf of Maine cod and haddock measures, and included changes to recreational Georges Bank cod measures (cod caught off Rhode Island) in Framework 63; however, regulatory actions considering those changes are still pending.

As a result, 2021 recreational and for-hire regulations for Northeast multispecies (groundfish) stocks will remain in effect. Changes recommended by the Council may be implemented later in the 2022 fishing year.

A summary of the current regulations for recreational and for-hire vessels harvesting groundfish is available online at Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) | NOAA Fisheries. However, highlights for the Gulf of Maine cod (north of Cape Cod) are a minimum size of 21 inches, one fish/person/day, September 15 - 30 and April 1 - 14 for private vessels. Charter and Party boats still have the one fish/person/day limit at 21-inch minimum, however, the season runs from September 8 - October 7 and April 1 - 14. Outside the Gulf of Maine (south of Cape Cod and off Rhode Island) the possession limit for now is still 10 fish/person/day, 21-inch minimum size with an open season all year.

The minimum size for haddock in the Gulf of Maine is a 17 inches, with a 15 fish/person/day limit, May 1 to February 28/29 and April 1 to April 30. Outside the Gulf of Maine there is no catch limit, the

season is open all year but the minimum size is 18 inches.

### Bluefin tuna retention limit adjusted

The bite for both school bluefin tuna and giants was outstanding last year. The fish were close to shore, many caught just one to two miles off Narragansett, and they were here in great abundance. With the enhanced bluefin bite (many believe it is due to warming water bringing in bait) the number of anglers targeting them has increased. Anglers must have a Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit to fish for bluefin and report their catch within 24 hours.

NOAA Fisheries is adjusting Atlantic bluefin tuna daily retention limits for recreational fishermen. The adjusted limits are effective May 6, 2022, through December 31, 2022, unless modified by later action.

The important thing to note is "unless modified" as bluefin tuna and other HMS permitted species often have retention limit changes during the season as catch data is good due to the 24 hour reporting requirement. This allows fish managers to adjust harvest limits accordingly.

The new adjusted retention limit for permitted private vessels per day/trip is two school bluefin tuna between 27 to <47 inches and one large school/small medium bluefin 47 to <73 inches. Permitted charter boats are allowed three school bluefin 27 to <47 inches and one large school/small medium bluefin 47 to <73 inches.

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## PASSION FOR PEACE & ART



**FACE TO FACE:** Justin Bibee with a Bamum mask from Cameroon, specifically the Cameroon Grasslands, made of bronze with raffia palms. This mask is part of a family of masks that perform together. It represents the male human face and symbolizes a clan ancestor. Masks such as these are performed at funeral or memorial celebrations. This mask is worn on the top of the head, while raffia palm conceals the performer's face, and a mesh veil covers the performer's body. It is one of many in his collection on display at the Warwick Public Library through May 31.

## Justin Bibee strives to share ethnographic art for its aesthetic beauty

By JOHN HOWELL

You can't help but smile at a smile. This one is wide, curling up at the corners of the mouth. You know this is a joyous smile. It's reflected in the shape of the opening for the eyes. This is a mask, yet it is too small to cover a face, even a child's face. It's the size of a saucer. What was the artist thinking? What was he or she seeking to tell us? Was it simply to get us to smile; was it like music to carry us to some inner understanding about ourselves?

Justin Bibee believes this mask – and the scores of masks and figurines he has collected from the years he served in the Peace Corps and the United Nations in Tanzania and bought from estates, thrift stores, the internet and has been gifted – have the power to break down barriers, create bonds and open communications... to foster peace. He is bent on expanding and sharing his collection of ethnographic art to raise awareness of other cultures. There are some restrictions, however.

His wife drew the line when Bibee learned of an 11-foot statue for sale in New York. Where would they put it? Renting space wasn't in the family budget. Bibee is all about showing his collection.





"When we share culture, we have the potential to change negative attitudes and stereotypes – contributing to a more peaceful world. As well, I simply want to share the art that I find so intellectually and aesthetically captivating with my community," he writes in an email following a recent interview at the Warwick Public Library. Bibee, a 2006 graduate of Cranston East who initially pursued engineering and quickly learned his passions lay elsewhere, blindly emailed libraries throughout the region inquiring whether they would host a sampling of his collection. He made it clear the library would bear no responsibility should a work be damaged or stolen. All he was seeking was an opportunity to share the power of these works. The Warwick Library was the only one to take him up on his offer. The display covers a wall and tables beyond the information desk.

It is extensive. It can't be missed. Bibee can't be overlooked either. He stands a thin six feet seven inches tall.

**Peace Corps service in Morocco**

But first, before talking about the art, some background on Bibee. After attending CCRI, he went on to earn a degree in Justice Studies from Rhode Island College and then moved to Brattleboro, Vermont, in 2013 to attend graduate school at the School for International Training (SIT) where he studied peacebuilding. As part of his master's degree, he served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco where he taught and founded Humanac, Morocco's first-ever volunteer-based human rights organization. Morocco is also where he met his wife where she taught Americans Arabic and local culture and customs.

"I remember seeing her smile my very first day in Morocco, but we didn't speak to each other until six months later when we both had training in Marrakech. There I asked her if she wanted to go for a walk, and we've been together ever since. We got married in Morocco in 2015."

In 2017, he served an internship with the United Nations in Tanzania where he worked with Burundian and Congolese refugees on financial inclusion, establishing savings groups where refugees are able to pool their money to use as small loans amongst themselves, and also connecting refugees to banks in their host country – protecting their money and contribute to the local economy. Bibee spent time in the Nyarugusu, Nduta and Mtendeli refugee camps. Nyarugusu refugee camp is the third largest refugee camp in the world. While working with refugees, he wrote his thesis and graduated from SIT in 2018 with a master's degree in peacebuilding.

On returning to Brattleboro, he worked with people experiencing homelessness and was elected to a three-year seat as the District 3 Town Meeting Member for Brattleboro. But Bibee was called away early in his term. In 2019, his human rights work took the couple to Hawaii where he worked with people living with HIV/AIDS.

After returning to Vermont in 2020, Bibee continued working with people experiencing homelessness as a statewide director for a homelessness intervention

program funded by the CARES Act.

The opportunity to return to Rhode Island came the following year when his wife was offered a job at RISD and he landed at Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island as a refugee resettlement case manager. He works with Afghan, Syrian and Cambodian refugees. Concurrently he is a PhD student at Durban University of Technology in South Africa.

**Power of art**

Art and now collecting art speaks to him. "I just love art," he said with a sweep encompassing the library display that includes a giant porcelain blue and white vase from Japan that is juxtaposed between



multiple carvings mostly of men and women. Some are rough cut; others are delicately carved including their clothing and head dresses. At the end of a table are what appear to be two ebony sticks about four feet high and smaller than a broomstick. Canes? Bibee urges a closer look. One is a male figure, the other female.

"Fertility," suggests Bibee. He said many of the pieces are centered on fertility used in ceremonial rituals. Others have ancestral significance or are tied to times of the year – the harvest, for example – and to celebrate spiritual and culturally important dates.

"I've spent most of my early human rights career living in other countries conducting fieldwork. I've lived and worked in some remote places. While on human rights missions, I've always kept my eye out in search of local art. I have spent most of my career in different countries in Africa, so I've naturally been drawn to African art. I think it was more intuition than intellect. I think this because I am instantly

captivated by ethnographic art for its aesthetic beauty. That will always be the first thing that captures my attention. Learning about the rich culture behind each piece is a privilege -- and that is the intellectual captivation," Bibee said.

Bibee understood he was fascinated by art and how it could cross political divisions, language barriers and transcend cultural biases, but it wasn't until the pandemic that he looked at his collection in a new light. It was more than a hobby, although he thinks of his collecting in those terms, it was also an entity that could be greater than a sum of its parts. It was a collection that when taken in its whole provoked insights and emotions. To use the analogy, it was a symphony with all pieces playing a part. He thought of composing that symphony and bringing it to the public. What's more, he sees the display as a means of sharing culture and building peace.

There are also stories to each of the works. In some cases there's scant information to the works other than how Bibee acquired them and where. He is looking to document the works and if possible their provenance. Bibee is hopeful of lining up additional displays, saying he's willing to risk even losing pieces so as to share them.

"This is my addiction," he confesses. "I have a problem; I love art."

The library exhibit is on display until May 31.



**COMPARING NOTES:** Justin Bibee talks with Mary Tramonti who stopped to look at the display of masks and figurines on display at the Warwick Public Library. Tramonti, who lived in Ethiopia, compared notes on living in Africa. (Beacon Communications photos)

# ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Lynn Martin

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# COLLECTIBLES

# GI JOE



**By Travis Landry**  
*Auctioneer & Specialist*  
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As part of our theme for Military Appreciation Month, we cannot forget about our plastic soldiers. G.I. Joe was created in 1964 right here in Rhode Island by Don Levine during his tenure at Hasbro. It was not just a brand Hasbro had created at the time, but a revolutionary concept for the toy industry at large.

The "Action Figure," was a never before heard term for a toy. Prior to G.I. Joe the idea of a boy changing the clothes on a doll was ludicrous. They wouldn't do that, but an action figure, now that is something little boys would play with. G.I. Joe utilized the format of Mattel's Barbie, but instead of Summer dresses and convertible dream cars, G.I. Joe had World War II inspired uniforms, vehicles, and every war accessory you can imagine. By 1966 G.I. Joe was even headed into space with the Space Capsule play set.

The original 12" G.I. Joe toy line ran from 1964 to 1976, including an array of different figures, vehicles, and accessories. By the end of the original run Joe had become more fiction-based including *Adventure Team* and *Atomic Man* sub-lines to compete with trending toys of the time like the *Six Million Dollar Man*.

Jumping to present day, we have now lived in a world with over 50 years of G.I. Joe awesomeness. In 1982 the brand underwent a complete overhaul to build the story of *G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero*. It followed the heroic Joes fighting the evil terrorist organization Cobra. This change in story also included a change in the toys becoming 3 3/4" tall compared to the original 12". This was copying the success of Kenner's *Star Wars* line in 1978.

Regardless of whether you're an original 12" fan or cartoon nerd of the 1980's, there is no denying how important of a toy line G.I. Joe is. After three live action films, comic books, and multiple television series, there is no denying G.I. Joe is here for the long haul.

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## RETIRING in uncertain times

“Who Moved My Cheese” was a great little book about dealing with things that don’t happen the way we expected and how we adapt to them.

As we look at the world today, certainly, things are not what we expected! Who could have predicted the pandemic? The hyper volatility of the stock market? Inflation going up to the highest level, 8.5% in March, in 40 years? <https://tradingeconomics.com/usa/inflation-cpi#:~:text=US%20Inflation%20Rate%20Hits%20New%2040-Year%20High%20of,with%20gasoline%20prices%20surging%2038%25%20%2840%25%20in%20January%29>. And let’s not forget the war in Ukraine! Any one of these issues would be enough for you to reconsider your retirement date. Add all of them together and it’s no wonder people are concerned about their retirement and their very future.

If you are within the typical 5-year period just before retiring, these issues are likely causing you some angst about your decision to retire. No one would blame you, either!

Let’s look at some steps to take that may help you make a decision that won’t keep you up at night. Firstly, it is important to focus on those things in life that we can control. Just like we can’t control the weather, we can’t control the stock market or any of the other issues noted above. So, instead of getting worked up over the level of risk you have in your portfolio, why not meet with a professional to determine the actual risk you have and potential ways to mitigate that risk going forward? That is something you can control.

If you are concerned about your retirement income such as where it will come from, will it come from an uncertain asset such as stock market investments or will it be contractual with an insurance company? If you are concerned meet with a qualified advisor that can help you determine which strategy might work best for you and your particular circumstances.

There are many questions that would typically be considered when pondering your retirement date. Hopefully, these questions may better prepare you for that wonderful time when you can walk through that retirement door and enjoy the next phase of your life.

Here is a list of some questions to provoke some thoughts:

- Am I mentally prepared to leave my work life and work friends?
- Do I really know where my retirement income will come from?
- What portion of my retirement income will be guaranteed?
- What portion of my retirement income will be subject to the ups and downs of the stock market?
- Have you optimized your Social Security income benefit?
- According to the Social Security Administration, they are projecting an approximate 25% reduction of benefits starting in 2033. What is your plan to cover that projected loss of income?
- Do I have an adequate emergency fund established?
- Is my spouse up to date with the family finances?
- Have you determined your lifestyle expenses for a year? Knowing this is the first step in developing your income plan.
- If my income is stock market dependent, do I have a backup plan if there is a major drop in the stock market value? A significant stock market decline may reduce your income or require you to sell more shares of stocks to maintain the same level of income.
- Are you prepared for a “sequence of returns” risk in the market? The risk is most significant in the early stage of retirement if the stock market has a steep decline in value and you are relying on the market to produce a certain income every month.



**Jeffrey H. Massey**  
Certified Financial Planner™  
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- What if I withdraw too much from my investments? What will be the impact be in the later part of my retirement years?
- Are you prepared for major medical issues that may arise? Do you have a strong medical insurance plan?

And the list goes on! I do hope that this article will motivate you to learn more about your financial readiness for retirement. I have developed the “7 steps to Retirement Readiness” to help our clients with the daunting task of solidifying their retirement planning. These steps cover everything from your emergency fund up to your estate plan and how best to maximize your legacy to your loved ones.

I realize that planning your retirement is a tough challenge. I have written a book that covers the most important aspects of retirement planning. Reach out to us if you’d like a complimentary copy of my book. My passion is to help as many people as possible prepare for

their “golden years” in retirement.

Control what you can and adapt to the changes! Have a GREAT day!

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# Weddings

## Giana Solitro ~ Blaise Kearns

Giana Solitro and Blaise Kearns were united in marriage March 19, 2022 at Holy Ghost Church in Providence followed by a reception at Lake of Isles in North Stonington, CT.

The bride is the daughter of Anthony and Martha Solitro of Warwick. She has a Bachelor's degree from Endicott College and a Masters degree from American International College. She teaches fourth grade in Easton, MA.

The groom is the son of Kenneth Kearns and Judy Kearns of Troy, NY. He received his Bachelor's degree in finance from Endicott College and is a CFA charterholder. He is an investment analyst at Meketa Investment Group.

The bride wore an Allure bridal gown that she bought at Spark Bridal in Cranston, RI. The dress has a full tulle skirt with long lace sleeves and a sweetheart off-the-shoulder illusion neckline. The custom all-lace back was done by Almeida's Bridal Alterations on Park Ave. in Cranston. All of the lace was hand beaded with white and clear beads. She carried a large cascading bouquet with champagne porcelain spray roses, black and white anemones and red black pearl roses.

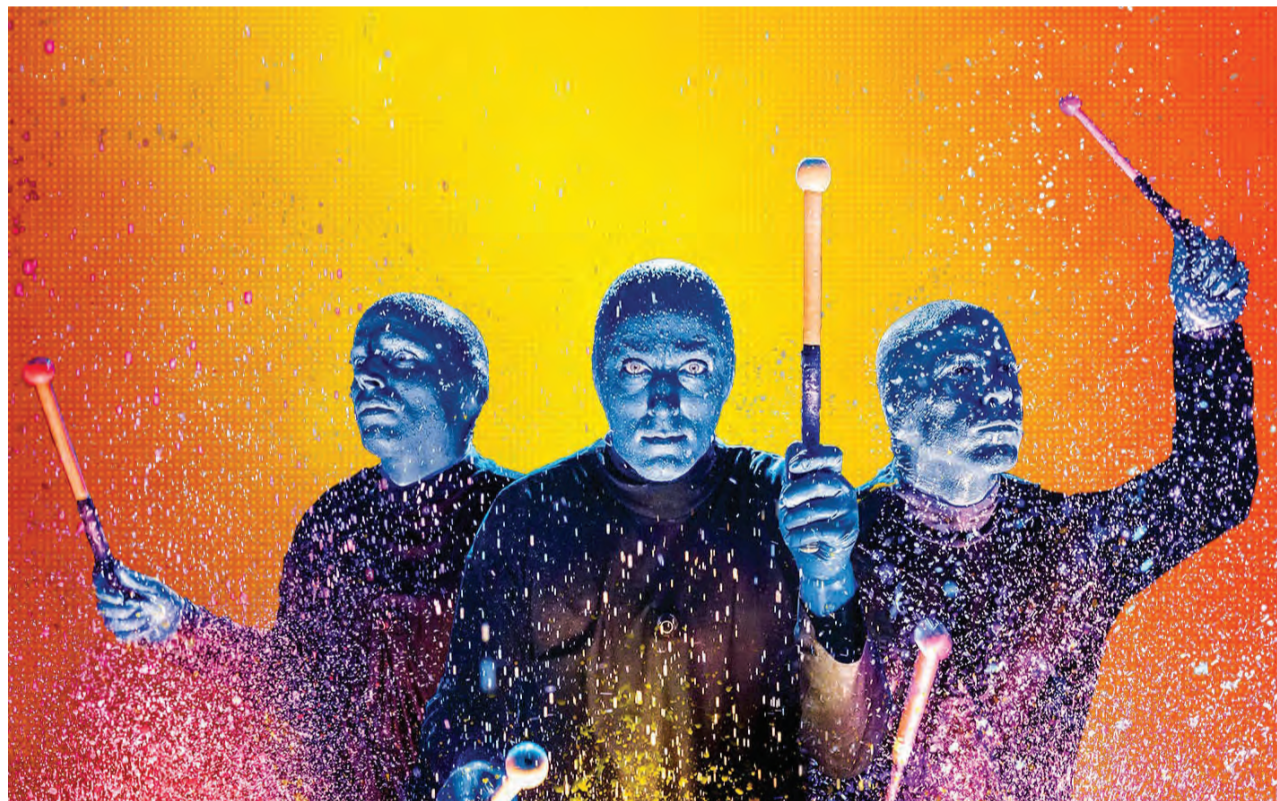
Jenna Gravel and Abigail Buehrer were matrons of honor. Kristen Solitro, Danielle Potter Dube, Brittany Potter (sister of groom), Natalie Beauparlant (sister of groom) and Paige Kearns (sister of groom) were bridesmaids, and Ella Solitro was the flower girl.

Kevin Bennett was best man. Nicholas Solitro (brother of bride), Paul Nichols, Kevin Ray, Mitchell Renfrew and Brendan Griffin were groomsmen, and the ring bearer was Jack Solitro.

The couple will be honeymooning in Greece and Italy in July. They and now reside in Mansfield, MA.



MR. & MRS. BLAISE KEARNS



Blue Man Group will be at Providence Performing Arts Center May 20-22.

# Blue Men invade Rhode Island

By DON FOWLER

They're back!

Those wild and crazy guys who paint their heads bright blue, throw toilet paper into the audience and bang on drums and plastic pipes.

And fans can't get enough of them. We first saw the Blue Man Group in Boston a couple of decades ago. I never laughed so much. Then I got home and sat down to write a review. How do I explain that they stuffed their mouths with marshmallows and Captain Crunch and used the food as projectiles.

I talked to Seattle native Corky Gainsford who has been connected to the show for the past 21 years as song writer, drummer, music director and producer.

"We take the audience on a different journey," said Gainsford.

"They relate to three weird guys on stage with a band behind them playing new music, somehow helping to explain what they are thinking."

(The Blue Men don't talk.)

"While we still do some of the original routines, much of what we do is new and some of it is improvised," Gainsford said. "For the Providence show there are seven us, all from different cities where BMG performs, so we bring a lot of different cool stuff to the performance."

Twenty-one years ago, Gainsford went for an interview for BMG at the urging of his girlfriend.

"They were looking for a drummer and guitar player," Gainsford said. "I studied music in college and was doing some event productions and writing. I was one of five they hired

from over 300 interviews. I thought it would be a short engagement, and I'm still with them."

Gainsford couldn't remember if he had been to Providence, but the chances are he has.

"I'm not sure where I am right now," Gainsford said. (Iowa). "My home base is now Vegas. It's just like living in the Northwest where it's too cold to go outside. In Vegas it's too hot."

Blue Man Group has performed before over 35 million people around the world. (The men are still blue, but the rest is all new!)

Catch them at the Providence Performing Arts Center May 20-22. If you have never seen them, you will be in for an experience like no other. If you have seen them before, I know you'll be there. I know I will!

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