



TOO MANY QUESTIONS: David Viens and Rhonda Brewster hold a September 2021 school photo of their son, Dillon, who died in February following what police have called an "accidental shooting." They want their questions answered. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

'What happened?'

Four months later, Dillon Viens' shooting death remains 'under investigation'

By RORY SCHULER

Rhonda Brewster can't stop thinking about her son's eyeglasses.

"His glasses were missing for about two weeks," she said, touching the rims of her own glasses.

"There's just a lot of questions," Brewster said. "A child who wears glasses like I do all the time ... He was shot in his right eye. How do his glasses come off his face? And by the time we found them, they were perfectly in tact. What

happened? Did they get into an argument?"

Dillon Viens, 16, a Johnston resident and student at William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School, died following an "accidental shooting" in a Cedar Street home on Feb. 12.

Johnston Police Chief Joseph P. Razza said the case is "still under investigation."

Razza provided a statement to the media in response to recent inquiries.

"As you may not be aware, we are working in

■ DILLON - PAGE 12

'Supreme sacrifice'

Johnston honors town's veterans lost to war

By PETE FONTAINE

A record number of Johnstonians, headed by Mayor Joseph Polisena, sent a strong statement Saturday that "the town will never – ever – forget those veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice."

From the time Parks and Recreation Director Chris Correia delivered a warm welcome to when members of the Johnston High School Chorus sang the National Anthem to when RI National Guard Sgt. Anthony Andriole played a beautiful rendition of Taps, War Memorial Park was alive with special salute to veterans past and present during the town's annual Memorial Day Ceremony.

"Welcome back after a two-year hiatus because COVID-19 forced cancellation of this ceremony the past two years," said Correia. "We thank you for coming as we honor our veterans from all branches."

Perhaps the morning's highlight came when JPD Chief Joe Razza read the names of the 42 Johnston residents who lost their lives in World War II as Deputy Chief Mark Vieira rang a brass bell in honor of each deceased service man or woman.

■ MEMORIAL - PAGE 11

IN MEMORIAL:

Above right, Johnston's Cub Scout and Boy Scout Troop 20 worked together to place more than 1,300 flags at the Highland Memorial Park Cemetery this weekend in honor of veterans who gave their lives for their country. For more photos from the scouting event, turn to Page 2. (Photo courtesy Susan DeAthos)

HUMBLING HONOR:

Bottom left, as JPD Chief Joseph Razza reads the individual names of the 42 Johnston residents who were killed in action during World War II, Korean and Vietnam wars, Deputy Chief Mark Vieira rings the brass bell in their honor. Bottom right, Steven Gianfrocco (left), Treasurer-Quartermaster for the Kelley-Gazzerro VFW Post 2812 and Commander David Lage had the honor of placing a wreath on the flagpole during Saturday's Memorial Day Ceremony in Johnston. Turn to Page 3 for more photos. (Photos courtesy Ron Cece)





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FLAGS FOR THE LOST: Johnston's Cub Scout and Boy Scout Troop 20 worked together to place more than 1,300 flags at the Highland Memorial Park Cemetery this weekend in honor of veterans who gave their lives for their country. (Photos courtesy Susan DeAthos)



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TALENTED TROUPE: These seven members of the highly-acclaimed/award-winning JHS chorus, had the honor of singing the National Anthem at the start of Sunday's Memorial Day ceremony. The group includes: Sam Cambranes, Destinee Costa, Landon Costello, Juliana Pires, Trinity Blondin, Eilyana Negron and Madison DaCosta.



MAYOR'S MESSAGE:

At left, in keeping with tradition, Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena delivered the keynote address during Sunday's annual Memorial Day Ceremony. (Photos courtesy Ron Cece)

PERFECT PRESENTATION:

At right, the Johnston Police Color Guard consisting of Major Thomas Dolan, Lt. Steve Guilmette, Det. Brian Lofferdi and Patrolman Chuck Psiopoulos played an important part in Sunday's Memorial Day ceremony.



SUPER SOUND: Rhode Island Army National Guard Sgt. Anthony Andriole delivered a beautiful rendition of Taps to close out the Johnston Memorial Day Ceremony.

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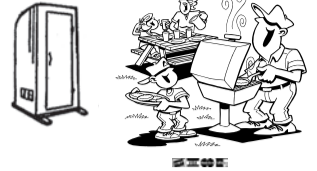
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER

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49					50				51	52	53	54	55
56					57				58				
59					60					61			
62					63						64		

CLUES ACROSS

1. Orator's podium
5. UK-Netherlands gas pipeline
8. Partner to "oohs"
12. African antelope
14. Indigenous Thai person
15. Monetary unit of Angola
16. Becomes less intense
18. Insurance mascot
19. Tech hub ___ Alto
20. Actress Tomei
21. Airborne (abbr.)
22. Type of smart watch
23. Natives
26. Incompetent person
30. Rare Hawaiian geese
31. Unspoken relationships
32. Passports and licenses are two
33. Claw
34. Status quo
39. Mimic
42. Fur-lined cloak
44. Ancient foreigner
46. In an angry way
47. Ill-intentioned
49. Monetary unit of Serbia

CLUES DOWN

1. Used by gymnasts
2. "Luther" actor Idris
3. Broad volcanic crater
4. Not for
5. Blur
6. Tots
7. Acted leisurely
8. About the Alps
9. Gets out of bed
10. Town in "The Iliad"
11. Welsh given name
13. Remove salt
17. Calvary sword

CLUES ACROSS

24. Mental disorder concerning body odor (abbr.)
25. Keeps a house cozy
26. Ballplayer's accessory
27. Southwestern Russian city
28. Pro sports league
29. Congress investigative body (abbr.)
35. Stop standing
36. Utilize
37. Sign language
38. Famed ESPN broadcaster Bob
40. Being of central importance
41. Ruin environment
42. Dessert dish
43. Sea eagles
44. Fertilized
45. Jerry's friend Benes
47. Indian river
48. Pass into a specified state or condition
49. Nocturnal rodent
52. A way to travel
53. Iron-containing compound
54. Ancient Greek City
55. NFL signal caller Matt



HANDS ON: Above and below, Lauren Vernancio, owner of Knighthawk Auto in Chepachet, offered Ferri Middle School's eighth grade students an opportunity for hands-on experience. (Photos courtesy Jamie-Lynn DelSignore)

Get a job!

Ferri Middle School hosts Career Day

Students at the Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School recently celebrated Career Day, by hosting members of the community. Professions varying from a television weatherman to a local auto mechanic, shared details from their day at work with young students considering a variety of careers.

The students were visited by Superintendent of Johnston Schools Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr., Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena, Cardi's Manager Billy Petitto (a former Ferri Middle School student), Chris Corsinetti from Hartford Pavement (a Johnston High graduate), Lauren Vernancio, owner of Knighthawk Auto, Channel 10 Meteorologist Anthony Macari (a former FMS student), Radio Personality Barbi Jo (a former FMS student) and owner of Mastery Martial Arts Anthony Pezzillo.



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UNDER THE HOOD:

At right, Lauren Vernancio, owner of Knighthawk Auto in Chepachet, offered Ferri Middle School's eighth grade students a chance to look under the hood and get a feel for auto mechanics as a possible career path. (Photos courtesy Jamie-Lynn DelSignore)



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Watch Your MOUTH



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

COCONUT OIL FOR DENTAL HEALTH

Many people are aware of the benefits of coconut oil when it comes to healthy hair and skin and controlling body weight and cholesterol. Coconut oil can also improve dental health. Coconut oil has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for nearly 4,000 years for its power as a natural antibiotic with immune-boosting capabilities. The fatty acids in coconut oil give it antibacterial properties that can clean and whiten teeth, protect gums, reduce bad breath, and improve overall oral health. The process of "oil pulling"—swishing coconut oil around inside the mouth—is reported to remove bacteria that causes tooth decay and bad breath. Oil pulling produces a cleansing effect, reducing adhesion of plaque and bacteria to teeth.

We have lots of good ideas on how to help keep your mouth a healthy one. At DENTAL ARTS GROUP, we strongly believe that one of the most important services we render our patients is a plan for preventive care. Along with daily brushing and flossing, one crucial tool to your good dental health is regular professional care. Located at 1136 Hartford Ave., Johnston, we have office hours by appointment. Please call us at 401-521-3661. Office hours are Monday-Thursday 8a.m. to 4p.m.; Friday 8a.m. to 12p.m.

P.S. Coconut oil metabolites (substances necessary for metabolism) have been shown to prevent resistance organisms from forming in the mouth and other parts of the body.

www.dentalartsgroupri.com



CAREER FRONT COMING: Below, Channel 10 Meteorologist Anthony Macari, a former Ferri Middle School student, poses for a photo with K. Saul, K. Boyajian, and C. Fleming. Above, Macari talks to students.

"HYSTERICALLY FUNNY!" -Wrwk. Beacon

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2. APR: The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) reflects the estimated total cost of the loan, including origination fees (SOI), accruing interest, and the effect of capitalized interest. Interest begins accruing after each loan disbursement. Rate shown includes the 0.25% interest rate reduction for using the auto-pay feature. If monthly payment is calculated to be less than \$50 per month for full term, lowest payment is \$50 per month with term reduced.
3. RHODE ISLAND ADVANTAGE: applies to any Rhode Island Students attending school in any state or Non-Rhode Island Students attending a school in Rhode Island who select an Immediate or Deferred Repayment loan.

At Johnston's ECC, 'kindness is contagious'

By PETE FONTAINE

The message "Kindness is Contagious" was everywhere inside Linda Greco's well-decorated Early Childhood Center classroom.

Those words were prominently displayed on a huge hand-painted mural that stretched across the entire front wall of the Johnston all-day kindergarten room, which was filled to capacity with 50 proud parents, grandparents, family members, Principal Kerri Autiello and Superintendent of Johnston Public Schools Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr.

For inside of 45 minutes or so, the children's talents were showcased in a student-made video, a book that is being printed by a famous publishing company that will soon be in the hands of the ECC students, authors and illustrators.

Moreover, the ECC classroom was filled with just about every act of kindness from another handmade wall-hanging that featured an ageless adage that read "Little seeds grow up to be beautiful flowers" while another poster read: "This is your time to shine."

As Greco told the parents: "The children in my class have been learning about kindness, what it means and how to share it. I tell them that kindness begins with them and we can spread it to one another and make the world a better place — one step at a time."

The presentation also featured the children each sharing a kindness

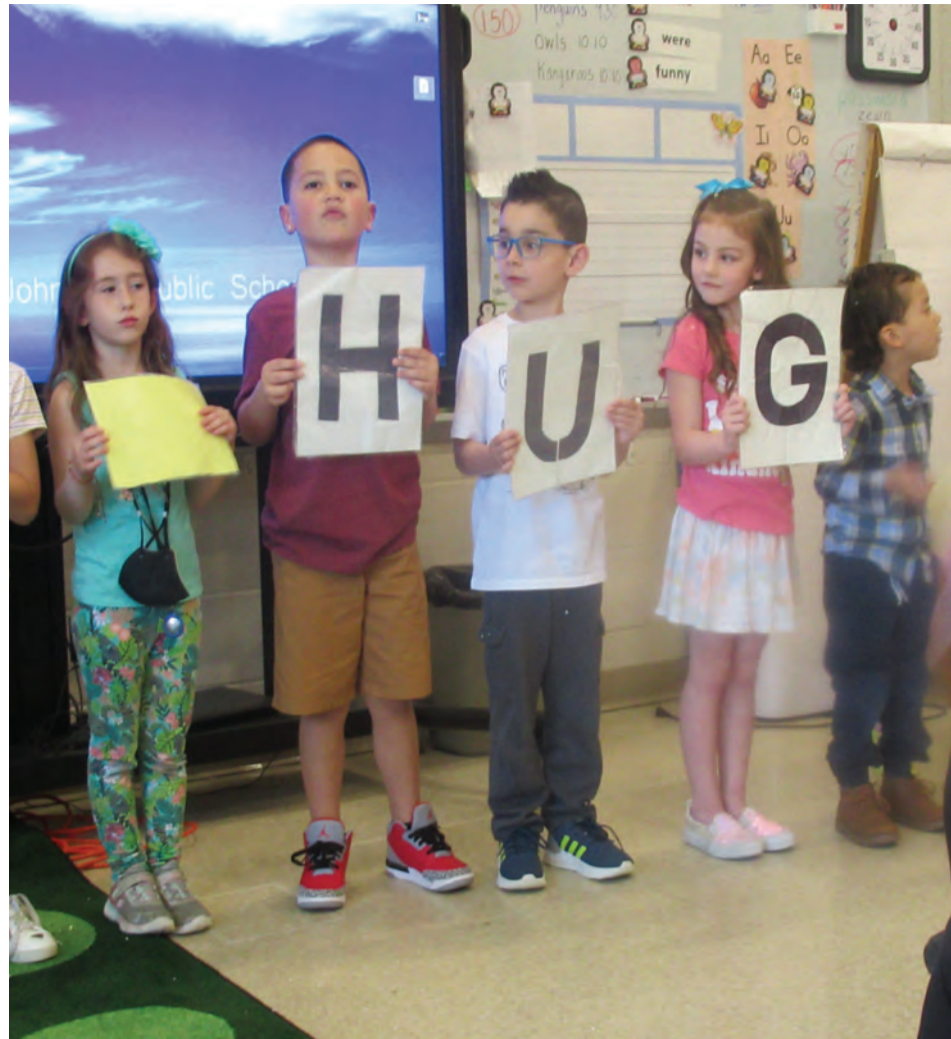
quote that met with applause from everyone inside the jam-packed classroom and later received rave reviews when students sang a song titled "H-U-G-S" as Isabella Pacitto, Matteo Carl, Anthony Pezzillo and Aria Pratt held handmade placards that spelled the song's title.

"The children showed up each and every day showing respect, responsibility and were always ready and eager to learn," Greco explained. "The first part of the school year was difficult; battling COVID and the students had to wear masks and remain six feet apart and were not allowed to sit on the rug as most children have been during morning meetings."

Suddenly, a smile appeared on Greco's face when she emphasized: "The class did it with ease; the coronavirus couldn't keep us down. We were always uplifted through it all and made it our mission to spread kindness and not the virus."

The program concluded with students being granted early dismissal, but not before everyone enjoyed different flavors of pizza from Catanzaro's of Cranston and parents photographed their favorite student with their teacher via cell phones.

"Today was extra special," were comments from people like Lorie DeVito, former long-time president of the once-famous and former Manton Seniors who came to support her grandson Anthon Pezzillo.



PERFECT PLACARDS: As Isabella Pacitto holds a sign she made showing the title of the class theme song "HUGS," students Matteo Pari, Anthony Pezzillo and Aria Pratt made individual letters for last week's classic kindness celebration.



GRECO'S GRAND GROUP: ECC Teacher Linda Greco stands behind her all-day kindergarten class that put on an extraordinary event for upwards of 50 people, including proud parents, grandparents, friends and family members.



GRAM'S GUY: Lorie DeVito, former president of the once highly-active Manton Seniors hugs her grandson Anthony Pezzillo during last week's Kindness celebration. They were joined by teacher/organizer Linda Greco.

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LEGAL NOTICES

TOWN OF JOHNSTON OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR

COLLECTOR'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE FOR TAXES DUE AND UNPAID

Johnston Municipal Court
1600 Atwood Avenue
Johnston, RI 02919
June 23, 2022

The undersigned, Finance Director/Collector of the Town of Johnston, hereby gives notice that he will sell at public auction to the highest bidder at the Johnston Municipal Court, 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, Rhode Island 02919, on Thursday, June 23, 2022 at 10:00 a.m., the various parcels of real estate or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the taxes which constitute a lien thereon set forth in the original advertisement of May 26, 2022 in THE SUNRISE of that date to which reference is hereby made

Property upon which taxes have been paid since the advertisement first appeared, will not, of course, be included in the sale.

Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 44-9-19, if the real estate in which you have a substantial interest is purchased by the Town of Johnston and has not been assigned, you may redeem the real estate by paying or tendering to the Treasurer of the Town of Johnston the sum for which the real estate was purchased, plus a ten percent (10%) penalty of the purchase price if redeemed within six (6) months after the date of the sale. Beginning with the seventh (7th) month forward, an additional one percent (1%) of the purchase price for each succeeding month will be added, together with all charges lawfully added for intervening taxes plus interest thereon at a rate of one percent (1%) per month and expenses assessed after the Collector's Sale.

Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 44-9-21, if the real estate in which you have a substantial interest is purchased by someone other than the Town of Johnston, you may redeem the real estate by paying or tendering to the purchaser or his or her legal representatives, assigns or to the person or persons to whom assignment of the tax title has been made by the Town of Johnston, or the Treasurer, the original sum and any intervening taxes having been paid to the municipality plus interest thereon at a rate of one percent (1%) per month and costs, plus a penalty as provided in Rhode Island General Laws Section 44-9-19, or in the case of an assignee of a tax title from the Town of Johnston, the amount stated in the instrument of assignment, plus the above-mentioned penalty.

The right of redemption may be exercised only by those entitled to notice of the Sale pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 44-9-10 and Section 44-9-11, and may be exercised at any time prior to the entry of Final Judgment in an action to foreclose the right of redemption filed pursuant to Rhode Island General Law Section 44-9-25. You are encouraged to review Rhode Island General Laws pertaining to tax sales and/or consult with an attorney concerning your rights.

Joseph Chiodo
Finance Collector/Director
6/2, 6/9, 6/16/22

Office of the Town Clerk
Town of Johnston
1385 Hartford Avenue
Johnston, Rhode Island 02919
(401) 351-6618

Notice is given pursuant to Rhode Island General Law § 3-5-17 that the Johnston Town Council, sitting as the Liquor Licensing Commission under Title 3 Chapter 5 of the Rhode

Island General Laws of 1956, as amended, shall hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, June 13th, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Johnston Municipal Court Building, 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider the following application for the expansion of an existing liquor license.

Applicant: Peter A. Matteo, President
Business Name: 101 Bar & Grill, Inc. d/b/a Bar 101
Current Location: 1478 Atwood Avenue, Units 103 & 104
Expansion to now include: 1478 Atwood Avenue, Suite 105, Johnston, RI 02919
License Type: Class BV Full - Liquor License Expansion

Remonstrants are entitled to be heard before the granting of the license.

Per Order:
Johnston Town Council
Robert V. Russo, Council President

Individuals requesting interpreter service for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two hours in advance of the meeting date.

5/26, 6/2/22

PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Tuesday June 7th, 2022; 6:00 P.M.
Johnston Senior Center
1291 Hartford Ave.
Johnston, RI 02919

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- III. OLD BUSINESS

PB 22-21 – Balletto Condominiums – Public Meeting on a Preliminary Plan for a proposed 13 residential unit Major Land Development. Public Hearing was closed on May 3rd, 2022. Located at 280-282 Simonsville Avenue AP 25 Lot 5 - Zoned: Planned Development. Applicant: Gary Balletto.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

PB 22-17 - Flash Car Wash – Public Hearing on a Preliminary Plan for a proposed car wash Major Land Development. Located at 1705 Hartford Avenue AP 53/80 Lots 281 & 282. Zoned B-2. Applicant: VP Development.

PB 22-26 – Seasons Corner Market – Public Hearing on a Site Plan Review located at 521 & 525 Killingly Street AP 13 Lots 397 & formerly 485 – Zoned B-2. Applicant: Colbea Enterprises, LLC.

PB 22-27 – 15 Industrial Lane – Public Meeting on a Concept Plan of a Major Land Development for a proposed indoor storage facility for business vehicles and equipment. Located at 15 Industrial Lane AP 53 Lot 208. Zoned I. Applicant: Joseph Parrillo.

PB 22- 28 – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council and Master Plan Review of a Major Land Development on the request for a Zone Change from B-3 to B-2 located on Hartford Avenue AP 54 Lot 97. Applicant: Hartford Realty Holdings, LLC.

PB 22-29 – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the request of relinquishment of control of the George C. Calef School. Located at 7 Waveland Street AP 15 Lot 70.

PB 22-31 – Proposed DPW Building – Public Meeting on a Master

Plan for the development of a storage garage located at 100 Irons Avenue AP 34 Lot 530. Zoned I. Applicant: Town of Johnston.

PB 22-32 – Proposed Fire Department Building – Public Meeting on a Master Plan for the development of a storage garage located at 1520 Atwood Avenue AP 53 Lot 178. Zoned B-2. Applicant: Town of Johnston.

PB 22-33 – Proposed Police Department Building – Public Meeting on a Master Plan for the development of a storage garage located at 1651 Atwood Avenue AP 47 Lot 9. Zoned R-20. Applicant: Town of Johnston.

PB 22-34 – Meadowlands Subdivision – Public Meeting on a Preliminary Plan for a proposed 1-lot subdivision. Located on Central Avenue AP 43/4 Lot 93. Zoned

R-40. Applicant Meadowlands Investments, LLC.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT & SPECIAL ITEMS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

- The Planning Board Agenda and Minutes are available for review at ClerkBase on the Town's web page or Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Planning Office, 100 Irons Avenue, Johnston.
- Items not heard by 9:30 p.m. may be continued to the next Regular Meeting or a special meeting at the discretion of the Board.
- Facilities are handicap accessible. Interpreter services may be requested from TTD (401) 792-9642 at least 72 hours in advance.

5/19, 5/26, 6/2/22



Town of Johnston Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 45-24-53 that the Johnston Town Council will hold a Public Hearing Monday, June 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Johnston Municipal Court, located at 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider proposed **Ordinance 2022-9 (formerly 2022-CP-50)** to amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Official Zoning Map, as summarized here.

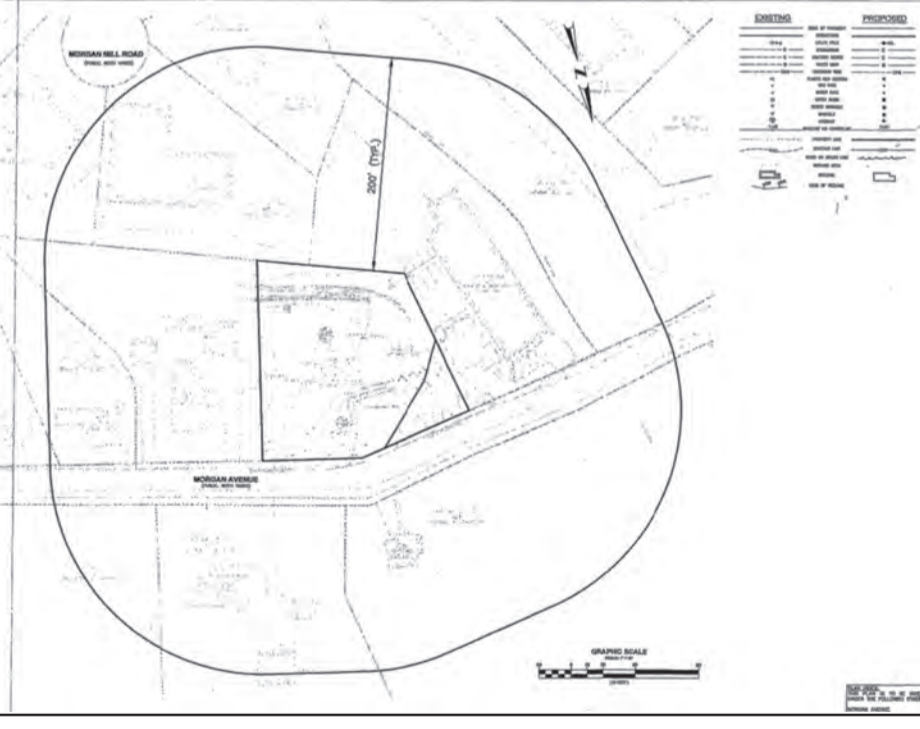
Applicant:	David & Paula Corsi
Assessor's Plat:	6
Assessor's Lots:	44
Present Classification:	R-20
Proposed Change to:	B-1
Said lot being located on:	Between 278 and 300 Morgan Avenue

The proposed Ordinance may be altered or amended prior to the close of the public hearing without further advertising, as a result of further study or because of the views expressed at the public hearing. Said proposed Ordinance is available at the office of the Town Clerk for examination. Any alteration or amendment will be presented for comment in the course of the hearing. All persons interested in the above application are requested to attend said meeting and be heard. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.

Per Order:
Robert V. Russo
Johnston Town Council

Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

5/26, 6/2, 6/9/22



Town of Johnston Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 24-6-2 that the Johnston Town Council will hold a public hearing at the Johnston Municipal Court, 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919, on **June 13, 2022 at 7:00 pm.**

The purpose of the public hearing is to consider proposed **Ordinance 2022-7 (Formerly 2021-CP-182)**, an ordinance regarding the abandonment of a portion of **Genoa Street**, located on **Assessor's Plat 5**. All persons interested in the above Ordinance may attend the hearing and be heard. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.

Per Order:
Robert V. Russo, President
Johnston Town Council

Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

5/26, 6/2, 6/9/22



Town of Johnston Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 24-6-2 that the Johnston Town Council will hold a public hearing at the Johnston Municipal Court, 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919, on **June 13, 2022 at 7:00 pm.**

The purpose of the public hearing is to consider proposed **Ordinance 2022-8 (Formerly 2021-CP-194)**, an ordinance regarding the abandonment of a portion of **Mathew Drive**, located on **Assessor's Plat 57**. All persons interested in the above Ordinance may attend the hearing and be heard. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.

Per Order:
Robert V. Russo, President
Johnston Town Council

Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

5/26, 6/2, 6/9/22



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Sun Rise Scoops

By Meri R. Kennedy

Annual Angels Giving Back Charity 5K Run/Walk

Angels Giving Back, a Rhode Island 501(c)(3) organization, dedicated to building community through giving back, will hold its annual 5k run/walk on Saturday, June 11.

Participants are welcomed to join together at 10 a.m. on June 11 at 685 Greenville Ave One Citizens Bank Way for the event. Angels Giving Back is associated with the convenience store chain Seasons Corner Market.

This charity pays tribute to Mario and Valia Coletta, founders of Colbea Enterprises and Seasons Corner Market. Their generous impact on the community and local organizations touched many lives. Angels Giving Back was formed to honor their legacy and support the charities near and dear to their hearts. 100% of the proceeds go to these three charities: the Alzheimer's Association, the PKD Foundation (Polycystic Kidney Disease), and The Tomorrow Fund.

This event is family friendly, with all ages welcome! You can pre-register online for \$35 or sign up on race day for \$50. For youth ages 12 and under, online registration is \$10. All participants will receive a moisture wicking shirt and swag bag. Finishers will receive a medal. Complimentary light snacks and drinks will be provided during/after the race.

To register for the race, visit: www.active.com/johnston-ri/running/distance-running-races/angels-giving-back-5k-2022.

Check In and on-site registration begins at 8:30 a.m. The race starts at 10 a.m. Sponsorship opportunities and donations for giveaway items are available until May 31. All sponsors will receive signage recognition and be highlighted on the event website. Individuals and/or companies that are interested may contact us by email at hello@angelsgivingback.com or visit their website angelsgivingback.com.

www.angelsgivingback.com/ for more information.

Angels Giving Back is a non-profit formed in honor and memory of Mario and Valia Coletta, the founders of Colbea Enterprises/Seasons Corner Market. This charitable organization was formed to honor their legacy and generosity. Angels Giving Back holds several events year-round from their annual 5k run to their charity golf tournament. These events help raise money to support the charities near and dear to the Coletta's hearts. For more information, visit: www.angelsgivingback.com/

Vintage Truck Show

From 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., on June 5, Rhode Island Vintage Haulers will hold a vintage truck show at Johnston Memorial Park.

Johnston Historical Society General Meetings

The next General Meeting of the Johnston Historical Society will be held at 7 p.m., June 19. The speaker will be author and historian Marty Podskoch, who will talk about his new travel book, "The Rhode Island 39 Club," that encourages people to visit all 39 towns and villages in Rhode Island.

Unless otherwise noted, all events take place at the Johnston Historical Society Museum Barn, 101 Putnam Pike, Johnston, and are free and open to the public. Events are subject to change. For more information, call 401-231-3380.

Tour the Johnston Historical Society

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

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

Annual Chowder and Clamcake Dinner

At 6 p.m., Saturday, June 25, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church at 54 Cedar Swamp Road, Smithfield, RI will hold a chowder and clamcake dinner. There will also be coleslaw and hot dogs for kids. For dessert there will be strawberry shortcake with real whipped cream.

The cost for Adults is \$15, \$8 for 5-12 years old, and under 5 eat free. Please call 232-7575 for reservations by June 13.

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."

Pre-K Lottery

The RI State Pre-K lottery is now open. This lottery will run until July 6 so you know a child who would be 4 before Spt. 1 may qualify. To apply, visit www3.ride.gov/PKL.

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 allowed in the park. No swimming or boating in the pond; No open flames or charcoal grills. Gas grills are permitted. Fireplace use is prohibited. For your safety, please do not climb trees or fences. The park closes at 10 p.m. 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.

Driving for a Cure

Please join the Cranston Country Club for the Gregory Rubino Memorial Golf Tournament on June 25. The club is "Driving for a Cure" at Cranston Country Club, and all proceeds go to benefiting the Lung Cancer Research Foundation. Spots are filling up fast so please register now to secure yours. Learn more and register at grubinomemorialgolf.com.

Johnston Senior Center offers classes & services

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

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.

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.

Walk and Talk at Rocky Point

Come join the "Rocky Point Pacers" for a walk around Rocky Point every Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 9 a.m., weather permitting. They meet at the gate on Rocky Point Avenue. Get some sunshine and burn off some holiday pounds.

Prepare RI High School Internships Program

Calling all RI public high school juniors: The 2022 PrepareRI High School Internship Program is accepting applications to participate in on-site/in-person, PAID summer experiential learning internships with local employers across the state.

This program will help you earn, learn, and connect with employers across Rhode Island. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Visit www.skillsforri.com/prepareri for more information.

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.nrri.chamber.com/.../the-34th-annual-apple.

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).

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.

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.

For more information, email info@mohrlibrary.org or call 231-4980.

Editor's Note: Send submissions to rorys@rhodybeat.com. Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and non-profit events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.



We want to hear from you!

Johnston has lots of stories and we want to help you share them

Send your stories and photos to

Rory Schuler, Editor

RoryS@rhodybeat.com

johnstonsunrise.net



submissions are not guaranteed to be published

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Marijuana legalization is a win for common sense

The signing of a recreational marijuana legalization bill is an important moment in Rhode Island's history that is worth celebrating — indicative that state legislators have finally come to their senses on an issue which has massive potential upside and creates, in our view, no more hazards than already existed in a world where marijuana was outlawed.

For far too long, opponents to recreational marijuana have relied on logically fallacious arguments to buoy their stance. They claimed it would cause

massive increases in use among youth, that car crash fatalities would skyrocket, and that it would send a dangerous and harmful message regarding an endorsement of the use of recreational drugs.

In a world where alcohol remains for sale on nearly every corner of every Main Street in the state, and cigarettes are available at every gas station and convenience store imaginable, these arguments have only become more farcical with the passing of time.

The reality is much more boring, according to data collected by the Cato Institute on states that have legalized marijuana, beginning with Colorado and Washington in 2012. While they conclude that there is not ample data yet to make any big picture predictions about the future one way or another, data that has been collected has revealed that there simply has not been a drastic change in any of the major categories — marijuana use, crime, and road accidents, specifically — as a result of marijuana legalization. The only notable exception is the amount of tax revenue that has been collected, which has exceeded expectations on the whole.

This isn't really surprising. The era of alcohol prohibition remains a good reference point for the fact that human beings who want to indulge in a mind-altering substance are going to do so, regardless of laws that proclaim they should not do so. It stands to reason that, especially in a world where you can drive 20 minutes away to Massachusetts and buy marijuana legally, that the same number of Rhode Islanders who wanted to smoke weed when it was illegal, will still want to smoke weed when it is legal here. All you've done, in effect, is slightly reduce the burden for them to obtain it, and captured more money for local communities and the state as a whole in the process.

Pearl clutching over "the children," and the message they receive from marijuana being legalized is also a gross mischaracterization. Aside from the fact that the law will only sell to those above 21 years of age, younger children are increasingly aware of drug culture in our society (it has been a staple of movies and television shows aimed at their demographic for nearly 20 years), and they are simultaneously armed with more information about its potential negative consequences than ever before. The same kids who want to stay away from marijuana now will continue to avoid it whether or not the drug is legal. The same kids who have been able to easily access the drug, despite its illegality, will continue to access it — all the more reason to have proceeds from legal sales go into funding drug awareness campaigns and resources to address drug abuse.

One benefit to the legalization of marijuana that is not purely theoretical, however, is the fact that no more people will be saddled with the life-altering difficulty of having an arrest record for possessing a small amount of a drug that is, inarguably, less harmful than the aforementioned and normalized alcohol. Being able to expunge the records of those who have been wrongfully persecuted for such a crime is an enormous win for justice, particularly for minority populations who have been inordinately targeted and punished for low-level drug possession.

The concerns about police not being prepared to catch people driving stoned ignore the fact that driving while impaired has always been illegal, and will remain illegal. There is no data to back up the notion that more people will now be driving stoned than already were.



GUEST OPINION

Mental Health matters; join the movement

By Patricia Sweet
Special to the Sun Rise

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated mental health issues especially among children and students. Reports indicate that a growing number of young people under 18 years old are showing signs of isolation, depression, anxiety, and loneliness. The impact of the pandemic in combination with the shortage of behavioral health experts and other daily stressors has created a silent but insipid mental health crisis among our most vulnerable population.

On May 17, comprehensive legislation was introduced at the national level (Mental Health Matters Act (H.R.7780) to help confront this growing mental health problem. It is imperative that our state leaders, educa-

tors, health providers, parents and communities join together to address and find solutions to this escalating problem.

One group that is working diligently to enhance mental health and prevent substance misuse among school-aged children is the Southern Providence County (SPC) Regional Prevention Coalition. The Coalition is the union of concerned volunteers dedicating themselves to the betterment of the community and its residents.

The coalition advocates for change through planning, development and implementation of effective prevention strategies by raising awareness of substance use and promoting safety and wellbeing. Our community coalitions consist of the Cranston Substance Abuse Task Force, the

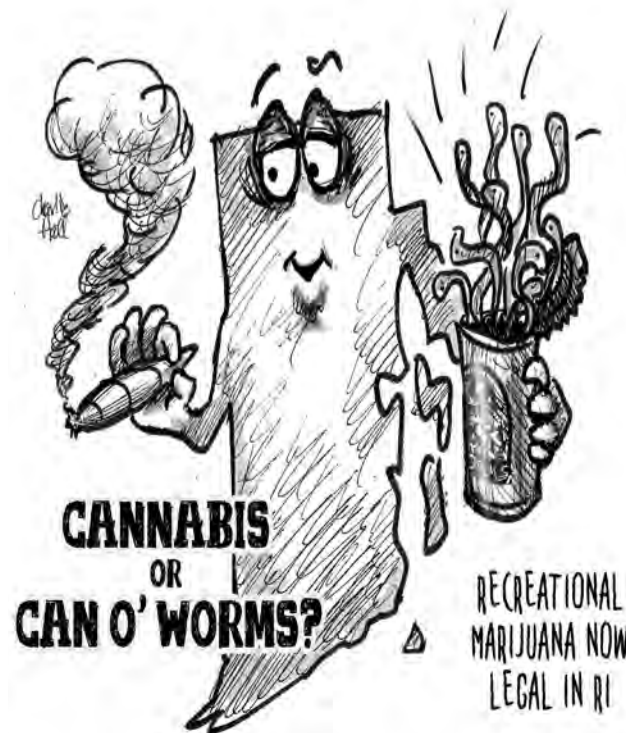
Johnston Prevention Coalition, North Providence Prevention Coalition, Scituate Prevention Partnership and the Smithfield Prevention Coalition. These coalitions are comprised of business, health, safety, education, youth and government volunteers. Municipal coordinators from each of these towns organize initiatives in schools and the community to prevent underage substance misuse and promote mental health.

The SPC Prevention Coalition in collaboration with the municipal coalitions is launching a "Mental Health Matters" campaign for all high school students in the SPC region. "Mental Health Kits" will be disseminated to students amidst final exams week. These kits include stress balls, motivational stickers, lanyards that read "it's okay not to be okay" and

copying cards with motivational and positive suggestions on how to deal with feelings of stress, sadness, being overwhelmed, and other feelings that are common to students during this time.

The time to get involved is NOW. Connect with your teens and students. Talk early. Talk often. And listen. The SPC Regional Prevention Coalition welcomes your support, input and encourages you to attend one or all of our coalition meetings. Visit www.spcprevention.org/about-us/ to reach out to SPC's Regional Director and Advanced Certified Prevention Specialist, Patricia Sweet, or the municipal coordinator in your town.

Editor's Note: Patricia Sweet, BA, ACPS, serves as Director of Prevention Programs & SPC Regional Prevention Task Force for the Tri-County Community Action Agency.



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Gubernatorial candidates discuss poverty-related issues

By EMMA BARTLETT

Housing, education, healthcare and food security were the main topics gubernatorial candidates addressed Friday in a forum hosted by the Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty. The panel of candidates included Governor Dan McKee, Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea, Matt Brown, Dr. Luis Daniel Munoz and Ashley Kalus; Helena Foulkes was unable to attend due to an illness.

Emceed by David Veliz, Director/Organizer of RI Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty, the forum had five experts in their fields ask candidates questions.

Housing

Kristina Brown, who works as the program officer of housing and economic policy for United Way of RI asked candidates how they intend to ensure that state and federal dollars allocated to the development of affordable housing will produce units through the entire state. She said over the last two years, Rhode Island has seen the housing crisis worsen and – according to the National Income Housing Coalition – Rhode Island has a deficit of 24,000 homes that are available and affordable to the lowest income households.

Kalus: Kalus said in her first month as governor, her administration will put together a council of cities that have missed the 10 percent goal and ask local leaders what they can do to meet that standard. The expectation is to work with developers/local leaders to find a solution to create housing stock in the community.

McKee: Since Rhode Island does not have a housing plan, McKee said the first step would be to create one. In the FY 2023 budget, he said \$250 million is allocated for housing. He said the government now has a Secretary of Housing and he is working on a governance model to empower the Secretary of Housing to manage funds that the state can invest in housing. McKee also shared that in his first budget he included a funding stream for low-income housing.

Gorbea: Gorbea, who previously served as the executive director of Housing Works, said she comes with the knowledge and expertise to address the challenges of building affordable housing. As governor, she would use a significant amount of the state's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to build affordable homes. She would also work with cities and towns on this issue and thinks the Secretary of Housing should be in the office of the governor and not the commerce office.

Munoz: As governor, Munoz said he will stand with the people and create incentive programs around infrastructure with municipalities to encourage them to increase housing stock; the state also needs zoning issues addressed in terms of multi-

family housing. Munoz said if the community is not educated, nothing changes – saying that the governor should be the state's activist, educator and first one to act when issues arise. Munoz said the rent relief program and its management of how the funds are dispersed is problematic and local resources are not being used enough.

Brown: Brown said there is a barrier to building multi-family homes across the state and called to eliminate these bans. He would also like to fund the construction of 10,000 green, affordable homes within Rhode Island and – under his plan – no one would pay more than 20 percent of their income for those homes.

Food Insecurity

Andrew Schiff, CEO of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank asked candidates if they would commit to using state funds to provide free school meals to all children in Rhode Island. There has been a significant increase in food insecurity and hunger and, while the federal government took steps to reduce child hunger by making school breakfast and lunch free for all students, that provision is ending. All candidates said yes to continued funding.

Racial/Ethnic Disparities

Marcela Betancur, the executive director of the Latino Policy Institute, asked what specific policies candidates would propose to address long standing racial and ethnic disparities in the state.

Gorbea: According to Gorbea, the best way to have policies that address the state's diversity is by putting people in power and positions that reflect diversity of the state. During her career, she has brought together people of diverse backgrounds to the policy making table and plans to do the same as governor. She said the government has the ability to work with the nonprofit sector and would like to restructure the way the two partner with each other.

McKee: McKee said there are millions of dollars in the budget for nonprofits to address food insecurity and other issues. He redid the office of Diversity and Economic opportunity and implemented a Hispanic leader; McKee said he is making sure Rhode Island follows the state law that requires 10 percent of government contracts to go to minority and women owned businesses. He also has an education package and would like to implement a higher education academy to help families bump up their degrees – whether it's certificate, associate or bachelors – to the next level.

Kalus: Over the past decade, Kalus said she has worked to ensure that communities have access to power. She served as the director of public engagement and outreach and took on the position because she wanted to ensure that Black and Brown communities and communities that did not have lobbyists had access to the governor's office. Kalus said the Democratic Party has failed a generation of Black/Brown communities in the state and ad-



TIME TO DEBATE: Gubernatorial candidates gathered Friday to discuss questions related to housing, education, healthcare and food security. In attendance (from left) were Matt Brown, Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea, Ashley Kalus, Governor Dan McKee and Dr. Luis Daniel Munoz and; Helena Foulkes was unable to attend.

vocates for education reform and economic opportunity.

Brown: Brown would like to shut down the polluting industries in the Port of Providence, build 10,000 affordable homes and cap annual rent increases at four percent. Additionally, he would like to pass the Equality in Abortion Coverage Act so everyone on Medicaid has access to abortion. He said change to the criminal justice system is needed and has caused harm to Black and Brown people – he calls for an end to cash bail, end for profit prisons and to free all nonviolent drug offenders. Lastly, Brown would raise taxes on the one percent and fund schools every child receives a quality and equal education.

Munoz: Munoz said there needs to be more candidates of color and people of color leading the nonprofit organizations and an end to redlining. Munoz advocated for having a livable minimum wage that is \$25 plus. He said there needs to be a stop to any form of a merger that reduces the likelihood of any form of health equity and said the state needs to listen to Providence students when they say they don't want SROs slamming them on the ground but want mental health workers provided instead.

Economic Security

Linda Katz, who works as the policy director for the Economic Progress Institute, addressed economic security with her question. She said the Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for processing the eligibility for Snap, Rhode Island Works, GPA and Child Care Assistance Program; Katz asked candidates what they would do to ensure that DHS provides residents with efficient and timely access to basic needs benefits while addressing needs for sufficient in-person application assistance as well as online application.

Kalus: To address this vulnerable population, Kalus calls for creating a culture of customer service and accountability and delivering results in a timely manner. She said in terms of accountability, there needs to be something equivalent to the VA Accountability Act which will drive accountability through the department. It also needs to be ensured that all services are accessible online, can be managed online and are mobile friendly. Lastly, there should be multi-lingual

support and convenient hours for in-person access for working people so they don't have to take time out of work to access services.

Munoz: Munoz said to stop privatizing public health in Rhode Island and outsourcing to middlemen companies. The focus should be on investing in mutual aid organizations and getting grant dollars to them. He said one thing he learned on the Equity Council when running vaccine clinics was that the community organizations can rally more effectively on the frontlines to meet people where they were. He said Rhode Island needs a governor who's the state's activist.

McKee: McKee mentioned that DHS has some "skeletons in its closet" with Uhip and other things. The government sent a team to DHS and are working through the issue – the big one being the Medicaid re-upping which is coming up. McKee said in the budget he has put in for additional staff and said he has visited DHS sites around the state – spending 20 to 30 hours with DHS staff to understand the problems they're having.

Gorbea: Gorbea said the issues at DHS are critical because the institution deals with people who need the most help from the government. She said she doesn't understand why so much time was spent with offices closed and applications not being processed for Snap benefits. As governor, she said she can bring people together to get processes done.

Brown: To achieve upward mobility for the people, Brown said there needs to be electoral organizing work to oust people in power who have been crushing working people for decades and elect people who will look out for Rhode Island's communities. He said there needs to be a new majority in the house and senate to enact policies on housing, healthcare, wages and schools.

Education

Paige Clausius-Parks, the senior policy analyst for RI Kids Count finished off the questions from field experts. Her question came in three parts: one, what changes do candidates think are needed for early childhood through the state's Pre-K system so all children receive the high quality education they need to succeed? Two, would candidates support a change to the

state's funding formula to provide more support to multilingual learners? Three, would candidates support a Rhode Island constitutional amendment to establish that an equal, adequate and meaningful education is a fundamental right?

Munoz: Munoz believes in universal Pre-K and said there needs to be long term supplemental wage programs for childcare workers to ensure there are more people in that profession so they can support daycares across the state. Additionally he said in terms of early education, there is not enough done to support students and identify needs early, so when it comes to the education formula, yes he supports it, but addressed the fact that the formula needs to be completely restructured. Munoz said there needs to be a comprehensive after school program throughout the state and would like to expand the RI Promise program to non-traditional students to ensure that those who can only attend part time can be part of this endeavor.

Gorbea: Gorbea said she saw the difference Ready to Learn had in the lives of her children and their peers at home day care; she supports more investments in this area. As for multilingual learners, Gorbea said these individuals are assets to the economy. When she goes to small business presentations, she thinks 'what are the opportunities this business is missing because it is not tuned into communities that have access to different languages in different countries.' She would also support the constitutional amendment.

Kalus: Kalus said the school funding formula needs to change to support special needs and ESL students. For education reform, she suggested looking to Massachusetts. She said there needs to be high standards and higher pay for teachers. Kalus suggested recruiting teachers to failing schools to help turn them around. To level the playing field, Kalus believes in universal Pre-K and the school funding formula. She'd like to also close gaps from covid learning loss by having after school programs and tutoring. Lastly, since there is no one learning style, Kalus said there should be a version of Davies High School in every county.

Brown: Brown answered yes to both the constitutional

amendment and funding formula. He would also look at raising teachers' salaries and making class sizes smaller.

McKee: McKee said yes to the constitutional amendment and funding formula. He said there is over \$445 million in the budget to address education issues. He also mentioned his experience opening Blackstone Valley Prep and the school's success in closing learning gaps.

Utility Rates

Veliz said Rhode Island has some of the highest utility rates in the country and asked candidates if they would support the passage of a percentage income payment plan which would allow Rhode Islanders with a lower income bracket to pay less in utilities as a percentage of their income.

Brown: Yes, Brown would support this passage. He said it is essential and commended advocates who have come up with a solution and put it on the table. He said the source of energy is a broader problem and the fossil fuel industry in the Port of Providence should be shut down. The state should build up rooftop solar, wind power, electrify its bus fleet and enact a new green deal.

McKee: McKee said he's proposing a reduction in the utility bills by using some of the state's surplus money for that. He said for offshore wind issues, he signed the Act on Climate and he plans on investing over \$150 million in renewable sourced energy strategies, investing in a port in East Providence which would bring in more jobs and provide money for fisheries so places like Galilee continue to prosper.

Munoz: Yes, Munoz supports the passage. He proposes that the government should have a tax placed on fossil fuel companies that pulls into a categorical fund and that the categorical fund can supplement these programs.

Kalus: No, Kalus does not support the passage. She does not believe in income-based bills but believes in programs to provide relief for families and believes the government should look at structural issues that cause the problem.

Gorbea: Gorbea said she is not familiar with this particular bill but it sounds interesting and would take a look at it and be willing to have a conversation about it.



FOLCARELLI FOLK: Johnston Town Councilwoman Linda Folcarell and her sister Donna, who are active in local veteran's organizations, are joined by Giovanni Folcarelli DAV Chapter 1 officers Rodney M. Leighton, Commander Robert C. Arrico, Richard M. Michaud and Ken DiLeone during Sunday's Memorial Day Ceremony. (Photos courtesy Ron Cece)

Memorial

(Continued from page 1)

"Good morning and welcome as we recognize our heroes on this upcoming Memorial Day," Polisena began. "Memorial Day is a time when we recognize those men and women who served and who are currently keeping us safe. I would hope that we just don't think of Memorial Day as a day off!"

Polisena, who said how proud he is that his late father served during Korean War, added: "We should always think of our veterans — past and present — who have served all of us and our great country every day."

The Mayor also reinforced his belief saying, "We need to always keep in mind why we live in the best country on this earth and we can say and do and be what we want without any federal, state and local government interference."

Likewise, Polisena continued his keynote address saying: "Our world is a very frightening place but what keeps us strong is our enemies know that all of the branches of our military are the best in the world and would deliver a crushing defeat to our enemies if (needed) and the men and women would make the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedom."

He also emphasized: "For it is fear from our enemies that keeps our country strong. Our military are always ready and willing to defend our country no matter where or when."

The Mayor, before concluding wanted it known "I am very concerned with the cancel cultures of this state and country.

I'm sure this day will be in their sights to abolish; the progressive left wants all special days wiped off the books. We must ensure that that never happens. Some of the politicians in Washington hate this country and despise what our veterans stand for FREEDOM!"

There were other moving moments like when JPD Major Thomas Dolan, U.S. Army Retired, read verses of Flanders Field and when everyone recited in unison the Pledge of Allegiance that echoed calming throughout the pristine park.

Likewise, two members of the Kelley-Gazzerro VFW Post 2812 had the privilege of placing a wreath on a flagpole amid a special silence and JHS Chorus members Sam Cambranes and Destinee Costa sang God Bless America and America the Beautiful respectively.

In keeping with tradition the JPD Color Guard — Major Dolan, Lt. Steve Guilmette, Detective Brian Loffredi and Patrolman Chuck Psilopoulos posted the colors throughout the ceremony and were joined by the RI Army National Guard color guard of 1st Sgt. Steven Cornell, SFC Paula Quinones, Sgt. Fred McLin and Sgt. Eder Ribeiro.

The list of Johnstonians, who as the program read "made the supreme sacrifice," includes:

World War II-Army: Joseph DiDonato, Anthony Russo, Anthony Kwiatkowski, Anthony Riccitelli, Michael Macera, William R. Mills, Harry C. Arnold, Anthony Ciarlo, William R. Thorpe, Jr., Joseph R. Searle, George G. Harrington, Emery O. Picotte, James Paterson, Jr., Alfred Chartier, Vincent Mongone, Rocco Stanish, William F. Hickey, Raymond DePettrillo, John

A. Paglio, Carlo A. Coletti, Walter Charbonneau, Leo S. Arguien, Raymond J. Herther and Walter J. Hagerty.

World War II-Navy: Robert Moran, William B. Richardeson, Arthur LaPrade, Edwin Carlson, James F. Cavanaugh, Raymond B. Smith, Joseph Carrara, Jr., Raymond Draper, Alfred S. Ricci, George

Spink and Bernard Pitocco.

World War II-Marines: Anthony Altieri. Korea-Army: Anthony Mazzulla, John K. Burrows, Army. VIETNAM-Ronald E. Blake, Army; Alphonse Macchioni, Marines, Andrew J. Wang, Navy; and John F. Pulpitt, Army.

The need has never been greater!

Do you understand the assignment?

Let's save lives!

GIVE BLOOD

Cherry Hill Community

Supported by:

Cherry Hill Manor, Bridge at
Cherry Hill, Johnston Police & Fire

Thursday, June 9, 2022
11:00 am - 5:00 pm


Bloodmobile - Cherry Hill Manor
2 Cherry Hill Road, Johnston

DONATIONS BY APPOINTMENT!

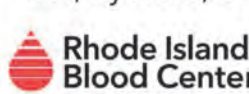
Scan the QR Code to Book:




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May 29

IN MEMORY OF
Agnes L. Furtado



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Dillon

(Continued from page 1)

conjunction with the RI Attorney General's office and still investigating the tragic death of Dillon Viens to the fullest extent possible," Razza wrote via email. "Our deepest sympathies go out to the family and friends of Dillon, but the investigation is on going and still evolving and as more information becomes available, I will be able to advise the family, you and the rest of the media."

Johnston Police arrested Marios M. Kirios, 29, of Cedar St., Johnston, as part of the "ongoing investigation into the shooting death" of Viens.

Kirios was charged with four misdemeanor counts of violating a state law that requires Safe Storage of a Firearm (RIGL 11-47-60.1). According to court records, Kirios was serving five years probation for a 2019 arrest.

"Why does he have weapons in his possession?" Brewster asked.

"How's he out?" asked Dillon's father, David Viens. "I'm pissed about that."

He was facing four charges — for Fraudulent Checks (More than \$1,500) — when he entered a plea of Nolo Contendere on one count, and was sentenced to probation and ordered to pay \$32,000 in restitution.

The day after the shooting, Razza said: "We are treating the incident as accidental and those involved (are) fully cooperating with investigators."

"Kirios, who was not at home at the time of the shooting, had legally possessed the firearms that were later seized as part of this investigation," according to a statement released by Johnston Police in February.

Kirios was arraigned the following Wednesday at Kent County Courthouse and was held as a Superior Court violator, according to Johnston Police.

He was soon released, however.

"In February ... the state, presented the defendant as a probation violator because he had this new charge," said Blake Collins, spokesman for Rhode Island Attorney General Peter F. Neronha. "And the court set bail for him over our objections."

Collins confirmed that there is "a pending investigation, by the Attorney General's Office and Johnston Police, into the shooting death of Dillon Viens."

Collins said he could not provide details or answer questions on case specifics.

"It's overwhelming, the things we're waiting on," Brewster said Tuesday. "Right now, they have Dillon's phone with the FBI in Boston. They feel that supposedly Dillon was recording at the time he got shot. Supposedly. We don't know if there's anything on the phone. Pictures of what they were doing that day ... That's information that would help add to what was going on; what was taking place ... And how something innocent turned into ... you know."

Brewster cried.

Dillon Viens' parents both wept. The last few months have been torture.

The family, aided by friends, recently held a rally demanding justice for Dillon Viens.

"It's not fair for a child who was very involved in his community; very involved in outreach programs," Brewster said. "This was not a child that was involved in drugs and guns and ..."

"Skateboard and BMX," his father interrupted.

"BMX and he went to see his sister play in flag football," his mom continued.

Although Brewster and Viens live separately, they were working hard to raise their kids in Johnston.

"We don't own any guns," Brewster said. "That's just not a part of our lives ... He was a bright kid; a good student; a great friend. He didn't judge people. He took people as they were."

"He was going to Davies for mechanics," said his father. "We want to keep things alive, until we find out what the charges are."

"Stricter rules need to be applied," Brewster added.

Brewster and Viens have started a petition, calling for stronger gun storage laws.

"Dillon is my son, my first true love and my greatest heartbreak," Brewster wrote, in her online appeal for signatures. "I wouldn't wish this on no parent, grandparent, sibling, or anyone else in the world. The pain that I feel daily is overwhelming as all I want is to hug, kiss, and tell my boy I love him. Please sign and help us change the narrative of another child being taken by gun violence and negligence."

They hope to help stir support for state legislation that would enact tougher penalties for irresponsible gun owners. They'd love to one day celebrate the passing of a bill named for their son — Dillon's Law.

"What Dillon's Law would represent is a mandatory felony charge for any firearm not properly being secured, a fine up to \$5,000, and five (5) years in prison," Brewster wrote. "A misdemeanor charge for such a tragic event is simply not enough."

In the meantime, Dillon's parents demand answers to a few lingering questions.

"We don't have his autopsy," Brewster said.

"I know for a fact the weapon was washed," added David Viens, who insists police told him the gun had been washed following the shooting, but before it was taken into evidence.

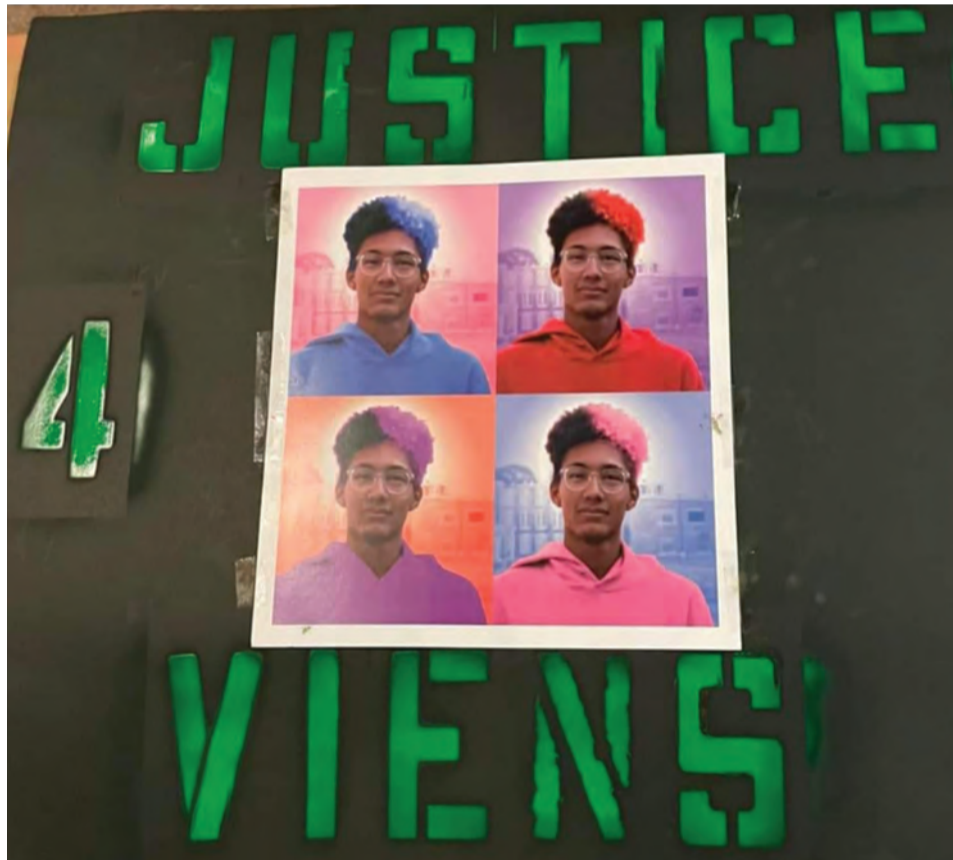
Dillon's parents met with Johnston Police at their headquarters. A prosecutor from the Attorney General's Office joined via remote link.

"We were told by the state prosecutor that 911 wasn't called until 40 minutes after the shooting," David Viens said.

"What happened?" Brewster asked.



HAPPIER TIMES: David Viens poses for a photo with two of his kids — Racquell "Rocky" and Dillon Viens. Dillon died in February following a shooting in a Cedar Street home.



SIGNS FROM ABOVE: At a recent rally, friends and family of Dillon Viens held signs like this, demanding justice for their lost friend. (Photos courtesy Jashua King)



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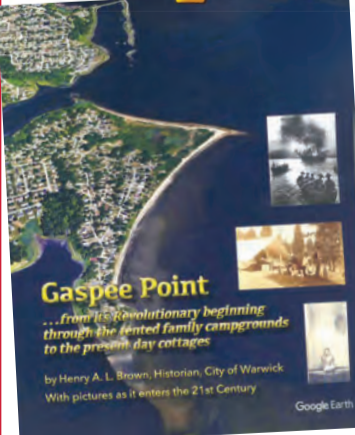
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RALLY FOR JUSTICE: Friends and family of Dillon Viens rally in Johnston several weeks ago, demanding stricter gun storage laws and more charges in Dillon's shooting death. Nearly four months have passed, and Johnston Police and the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office say they are still investigating the case. (Photos courtesy Jashua King)



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Ocean State Vintage Haulers host 28th annual show

By PETE FONTAINE

It's officially named the Ocean State Vintage Haulers 28th Annual Show and is proudly presented by the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Truck Haulers Society.

It will be held this Sunday, June 5, inside the Johnston Jewel — a.k.a. War Memorial Park — that's located off Route 6 with the main entrance on Memorial Drive and will run from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., featuring a host of trucks from a bygone era, vintage heavy haulers as well as some of the most impressive antique fire engines and apparatus from all around New England.

Admission is, as it has been for the past 27 years, free and there will be a full-blown concession stand for families and children as well as a raffle table where event-goers can purchase the show's always colorful signature T-shirts.

However, Sunday's "Super Special Show", as the unique club's members want it known, will differ greatly from any of the Ocean State Vintage Haulers 27 spring shows or the group's highly-popular fall steak fry/barbecue round-up that's held every October at Ron Rossi's famed Christmas Tree Farm in Cranston.

That's because this Sunday's Ocean State Vintage Haulers Antique Truck Show will be a memorial — make that mighty memorial — dedicated to the group's late and highly-popular President Joseph Pingitore III, who passed away unexpectedly on Oct. 25, 2021, at the tender age of 60 years old.

"We all think about Joe every day!" exclaimed Ron Rossi, who succeeded his beloved friend as president. "Joe was one of a kind; a class act, a true gentleman who loved everyone, especially and was always the driving force behind the success of the Ocean State Vintage Haulers Association."

Pingitore III founded Pingitore & Sons Construction/Paving Company in 1985. He loved riding his motorcycle in various charity and benefit events and doing as much as he possibly could for his three sons — Joseph Pingitore IV, Dylan Pingitore and Dylan Pingitore — sister Francine Pingitore and brother David Pingitore, a long-time Johnston Firefighter who serves as Secretary-Treasurer of Local 1350.

"People always say you can count your friends on one hand," offered Richard Quetta, a North Providence resident who owns a vintage fire truck that will be on display Sunday and is memorial to his late brother Frank J. Quetta, who was once a Battalion Chief with the Providence Fire Department. "As for Joe, I never-ever met anyone who didn't like or love Joe or for that matter call him their friend."

Which explains why President Ron Rossi, Vice President David Pingitore, Secretary Margaret Philbrook and OSVH members are expecting a record crowd to pay tribute and honor a man who made countless contributions to his fellow men and women before his life was cut far too short.



MIGHTY MEMORIAL: This is just one of the vintage vehicles — a 1952 Sterling White HB Tractor that the late Joseph Pingitore III owned and operated and will be on display throughout Sunday's Ocean State Vintage Haulers 28th Annual Antique Truck Show in Johnston. Pingitore posed with his sister Francine Pingitore and brother David Pingitore. (Sun Rise file photo)

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SUPER SPECIAL SLOGAN: The words "Kindness is contagious" on this huge handmade wall-hanging describe the lessons children in ECC Teacher Linda Greco's classroom have been learning in recent months. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

■ **Kindness**
(Continued from page 6)

Meanwhile, as several people said as they congratulated Greco: "Everyone should be proud of what we just witnessed; we need more programs that offer lessons in life for people of all ages."

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By JENNIFER COATES

There is something wonderful and essential about a clothing boutique and gift shop located in a small town where such sights can be hard to find. It is especially wonderful when that shop's namesake is a one-year-old little girl named Victoria who just happens to be the light of her mother's life! Such is the story of Victoria's Closet, a small but mighty store found just off North Main Street in Pascoag.

Victoria's Closet is the vision and brainchild of her mother Gina DiBasio who, until recently, had spent most of her career as a phlebotomist. When Victoria was born and the pandemic hit, Gina hit a crossroad that made her rethink her goals and dreams. She made a bold decision that would allow her to do what she most wanted to do ~ spend more time raising her young daughter. Soon thereafter, she purchased a vacant storefront in town and thus became an official small business owner.

Gina and a team of supportive friends and family went right to work transforming this neglected space into a bright, cheerful, and welcoming place. Soft, teal-colored walls are now punctuated with crisp white accents; newly laid tile floors and neatly organized display units create the perfect backdrop to showcase the store's many treasures. There are even some places designated just for Victoria when she is there with her mom.

Working diligently alongside Gina is her friend, fellow biker and now store employee Breonna Diniz. Today, Breonna is a familiar face at Victoria's Closet. Gina and Breonna have assembled a wide variety of clothing and accessories for women, men, and children of all ages. Shoppers here can find almost everything they need to wear for a casual



Come to Victoria's Closet in Pascoag to discover clothes for all ages and sizes, as well as shoes, accessories and so much more. Check out the custom-made items here ~ perfect for every occasion, every person, and every budget.

summer day, a night out on the town, or almost anywhere! Though limited in size, the store accommodates many racks of seasonal clothing ~ from infant and children to adolescents and adults ~ as well as shoes, shapewear, ties, jewelry, hair accessories, bathing suits, handbags, and all kinds of unique gift items. It is such a fun place to explore and discover great finds for every budget.

One of the best things about Victoria's Closets are the custom-made t-shirts, tote bags, pillowcases, hoodies, aprons, kitchen towels, onesies for babies, and sweatpants that Gina makes. These items are emblazoned with catchy

phrases and fun sayings that make the perfect gifts for loved ones, baby and wedding showers, birthdays ~ any occasion you can think of! Gina's work is flawless, professional looking, made-to-order, and very affordable.

Victoria's Closet is worth a trip to 74 North Main Street in Pascoag. Summer hours are Mondays, 12-5pm, Tuesday, Wed. & Thurs. 10:30am-7pm, Saturdays, 8:30am - 4pm and Sunday, 9am - 3pm. Closed on Fridays! For more information, call the shop at 401-710-4023 or find them on Facebook. Maybe if you are lucky, you will even get to meet Victoria!

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Sports

Panthers' playoff run ends in EP

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston girls lacrosse team returned to the playoffs and would get a 9-5 win over Classical in the play-in game last week. Unfortunately for the Lady Panthers, their run would come to a close when they fell 17-0 to No. 2 East Providence on the road over the weekend.

The Panthers claimed the final seed in Division III and took on the seventh-seeded Purple in the play-in match up.

Johnston led 4-3 at half-time but would cruise to five more goals in the second half to put the game out of reach. Hannah Lavergne led the way with a game-high five goals while Kaylee Poole added three and Courtney Dias one. Lavergne, Dias and Samantha Marcotte all recorded assists in the win while goalie Riley Guenette made six stops in the cage.

"When we played (Classical) in the regular season they beat us 17-13 but we didn't play our game. I told the team that everyone has a bad game and maybe that would be ours. We knew that we had three



PLAYOFF BATTLE: Johnston's Courtney Dias (left) and Samantha Marcotte last week against East Providence. (Photos by Mike Zawistoski)

● PANTHERS - PAGE 20



TERRIFIC TWINS: JHS Student Council President Rebecca Clements (left) and her twin sister Janet, who is secretary of the group, enjoy lighter moment during last week's Battle of the Classes Teachers vs. Students. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

JHS holds Battle of the Classes

By PETE FONTAINE

Perhaps Bob Deming, a popular Johnston Public Schools employee who watches over Mayor Joseph Polisenia Stadium, said it best about the JHS Panthers most recent super social success story.

"I don't think any other high school in the state has events like we have here in Johnston," said Deming as he talked about last Wednesday night's first-ever Battle of the Classes between students and teachers. "There is always something unique going on here (at JHS)."

The night's Battle of the Classes between students and teachers had a total of 10 exciting events beginning with the one-mile relay and concluding with the ageless Tug of War that tested the metal and athletic prowess of four student teams representing all four classes consisting of nine males and as many females who were se-

● JHS - PAGE 18



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CONCESSION CREW: JHS faculty and staffers who helped make the first-ever Battle of the Classes Teachers vs. Students a success and even worked the concession stand, are: Phyllis Allsop, Lisa Seifert, Greg Russo, Michaelinn Irons, Patty Lombardo and Hannah Kelly.



FAITHFUL FANS: Among the many people who watched the first-ever Battle of the Classes Teaches vs. Students were Nicky Aucone, Kaylee Ponte, Sofia Williams and Jordon Maggiamo.



TICKET TAKERS: Sue Volante and Pam DelPonte volunteered to work the admissions gate for last week's unique event.

PLANK PACK: JHS football and baseball coach Joe Acciaro (right) leads the balancing act for his team during the popular Walk the Plank event last Wednesday night.



JHS
 (Continued from page 17)

lected at random after expressing an interest to participate in the historic event.

Each participant paid \$5 with the total revenue collected going to the JHS Student Council to help fund the always-active group that is known for its many outstanding and unique events.

The entire evening had the flavor of a big-time sporting event, replete with a concession stand that offered everything from meatballs to popcorn, countless volunteers from faculty and staff and a public address announcer who gave event-by-event of student and teacher movements during all 10 fun-filled events.

He was Greg Russo, who chairs the JHS Science Department and serves as faculty advisor for the Student Council and SADD (Students against Dangerous Deci-

sions).

Everyone inside Polisena Stadium concurred that Russo made the night special with an emotional announcement when he requested a moment of silence for the school children and adults who were sadly killed in the recent Texas shooting.

"Congratulations to Greg for doing that," several spectators said while watching the fun-filled events. "The people here (at JHS) have always been so kind and caring. I'm sure every person here tonight relates to that senseless tragedy."

Each of the ten events – one-mile relay, sack race, over and under, walk the plank, balloon toss, ready steady, bucket brigade and tug of war – was filled with fun, laughter, falls and surprises endings.

The night moved quickly as the classes and teachers exchanged victories in various endeavors.

Perhaps what Russo called "the clutch moment of the evening" was

the fantastic catch made by Tara Teolis and quick throw to Melissa Iafrate that won the balloon toss for the teachers.

The evening concluded with the tug of war and after a series of eliminations it boiled down to the teachers versus the seniors in the final match and as Russo mused: "Yes, the teachers won."

As Russo and Principal Dr. Donna Penacchia said: "Thanks to the teachers that gave their time to make this event a sparkling success" and almost ensured there will be a second annual event next year.

For more photos please see next week's Sun Rise.

Those teachers were: Mike Harwood Matt Nierney, Mike Iafrate, Brianna Cardillo, Ashley DeLeo, Lauren Fagundes, Lisa Fresolone, Justin Pimental, Christian Young, Joe Acciaro, Ed Saravo, Melissa Iafrate, Vanessa Faiola, Emilia Ruggiero, Isabelle Russo, Officer Lou Cotoia, Tammy Iasimone and Brien Bordieri.

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By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

We have an influx of Atlantic menhaden (pogies) in Narragansett and Mt. Hope Bays this week. With all this bait and the perfect water temperature (just over 60 degrees), now is the time to try to catch some striped bass because they have arrived following the bait.

Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence, said last week, "Anglers are catching some great slot size (28 to <35 inches) and larger striped bass with chunks (of pogies) all the way up to I-195 in Providence."

East End Eddy Doherty said, "I caught a 21-pound striped bass two days after May's full moon on the Cape Cod Canal. Primary forage baitfish has been consisting of significant schools of herring, silversides, squid and nine inch bunker as well as smaller groups of mackerel that have entered the Canal so let's hope they decide to stick around to feed the predators."

With all this bait in the water here are some favorite ways to catch striped bass:

10. Trolling with umbrella rigs. I like to use this technique trolling in deeper parts of Narragansett Bay, off Newport or Block Island with a variety of squid, shad, worm or eel umbrella rigs. Hook two fish at the same time and you will experience a great fight.

9. Casting soft plastics, various bait types and weights to fish different depths. Many anglers love this technique and use it successfully in the spring. Make sure the plastic baits are scented if they are not add some scent.

8. Buck tail jigs with pork rind squid strips. Have had success with this method to get under schools of bluefish and to the striped bass on the bottom.

7. Live eels. Used by shore and boat anglers, some fishing guides use this as their primary method to catch killer stripers. Hook the eel through the mouth and out one eye. Going between the eyes usually kills the bait. You must use circle hooks, it is the law. Circle hooks generally slide out of the fish and hook it on the corner of their mouth on the way out allowing you to release the fish you are not keeping ... and release them alive and well.

6. Live menhaden. Snag the live bait with a weighted treble hook or net them. Hook the bait through the bridge of the nose, find a school of At-



WHAT'S THE CATCH: Leo Beras of Providence with a striped bass caught last week in the East Passage of Narragansett Bay.

lantic menhaden and put the live menhaden into the school bait and let it swim. Used when menhaden are running strong, particularly up the Providence River in early spring.

5. Chunking fresh or frozen menhaden. You can anchor (and chum); drift fish or fish the moving bait schools with chunks. Some anglers use a weight slide to get the bait down to the striped bass.

4. Surface plugs. Have caught hundreds of bass in the spring using surface plugs of all types.

3. Swimming lures. Great way to catch fish in coves, on rivers, etc. My favorite is a grey Yo-Zuri Crystal Minnow.

2. Parachute squid jigs. Often used in ocean water (or where there are squid). Anglers successfully use this method off Newport, Narragansett and Block Island.

1. Trolling with tube and worm. I have had great success in the Bay using lead line weighted with two or three ounces of lead between the line and a five foot fluorocarbon leader. I find that bubblegum or red colored tubes work best (the tube hook is tipped with clam worm). The idea of added weight is to get the line down to where the fish are. Tube and worm trolling has been a successful technique for the Southwest side of Block Island using 300 ft. of wire line out in 35 to 45 feet of water, amber colored tubes seem to work best there.

Where's the bite?

Striped bass and bluefish became more abundant this week with an improved bite. "Striped bass fishing improved this week at Block Island with angels catching slot fish and larger trolling wire with tube and worm at the Southwest Ledge. The bluefish bite was particularly good at the North Rip. The bass bite along the coastal beaches has been a night bite," said Elisa Cahill of Snug Harbor Marina, South Kingstown. Sam Toland of Sam's Bait & Tackle,

Middletown said, "The striped bass and bluefish bite out in front of Newport and in Narragansett Bay has been very good with some large fish (above the slot size of 28 to <35 inches) are being caught in the East Passage all the way up to Providence." "Mike Wade of Watch Hill Outfitters, Westerly, said, "The bluefish and striped bass bite on the West Grounds at Block Island was very good this week. We had a lot of fun targeting them with surface and swimming lures and caught fish to 42 inches there." Tom Houde caught a slot size fish on his kayak in a Bay cove this week with a Butchiebuilt.com standard 24-inch tube and worm.

Summer flounder/black sea bass. Black sea bass season opened May 22 to August 31 with a two fish/person/day limit. Anglers are reminded that the minute size is now 16 inches. "The fluke bite had note ben very good off Newport or in the Bay. But the black sea bass bite has been good for anglers," said Sam Toland of Sami's Bait. Mike Wade of Watch Hill Outfitters said, "The fluke bite in the Block Island Wind Farm area has been good. We caught fluke to 26 inches just south of tower five in about 70 feet of water and had no trouble limiting out four fish/person/day limit (18 inches is the minimum size). Things have warmed up so the bite is pretty good." Elisha Cahill of Sun Harbor said, "The fluke bite is good off Carpenters in about 30 feet of water and the bite is very good at the East Fishing Grounds off Block Island and just south of the Wind Farm."

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

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■ Panthers

(Continued from page 17)

girls that they would have to shut down, we had the four-game winning streak in the middle of the season, so their confidence level was pretty good heading into the playoffs," said Johnston coach Jay Areson. "Reaching the playoffs will help their confidence moving forward, and I told them that this is all a learning experience so let's take what we can. I wouldn't say it was surprising, but we weren't expecting to win that game. It felt good for the girls."

The Townies jumped out to a big first-half lead in the quarterfinals and never looked back as they got the win to end the Johnston run. Despite the loss, Areson was proud of his club for reaching the playoffs, especially considering the team is made up primarily of underclassmen.

"We fell behind 11-0 at halftime and I told the girls to keep their heads up, know that they reached their goals and my expectations had been met. We have nothing to lose, so use this as a springboard for next year. We're losing two seniors unfortunately, but we have a lot of sophomores that were in the playoffs in only their second year. That was a good taste for them. How fast it was, the crowd, the media being there, it was a good experience," said Areson.

He was also pleased with the rapid improvement from last spring, when the Panthers failed to record a win.

"Coming off of last year where they didn't win a game, I think this year they finally learned how they had to play the game of lacrosse. Knowing where to be in your position, knowing how to work through checks, how to check. A lot of girls went to a winter camp, so the skill level was raised. The more experience they got in the regular season, the more it helped their confidence," said Areson.

The Panthers will be graduating seniors Rachael Ixcotoyac and Dias and will be looking to fill those shoes next season.

"Rachael and Courtney will be missed. They were really good players for us the last two years and their confidence and support of the younger players played a big role," Areson said. "It's going to be tough not having them next year, but I'm confident that a few girls will be able to step up and fill those roles."



THROUGH TRAFFIC: Johnston's Kaylee Poole battles past an East Providence defender last week on the road.

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STICK WORK: Johnston's Willow Andrews carries the ball last week.

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Solidifying roots and growing branches

Nico's Tree nonprofit assists families and children

By EMMA BARTLETT

When Cranston's Dana Ventetuolo, 48, decided to start the nonprofit Nico's Tree in 2016, she was looking to provide emotional and financial support to patients and families who were undergoing treatment for long term pediatric diseases. Dana had recently lost her son – Nico – to a rare illness known as Severe Combined Immunodeficiency (SCID) and recognized that community support helped her through the tough time and she wanted to assist those who were experiencing similar circumstances.

Nico was born in 2013 without a normal functioning immune system – common colds, viruses and infections would be fatal. SCID is a genetic disorder that depletes the immune system and leaves individuals with a high risk of developing an infection. The only cure was a stem cell transplant since – without one – life expectancy would be two years of age. While Nico appeared perfectly normal when he was born, after one year, he had frequent infections that lacked an explanation. After testing, doctors at Hasbro Children's Hospital determined Nico had SCID, he was sent to Boston Children's Hospital for treatment.

Nico received a bone marrow transplant and from March to July, Dana spent the majority of her time in Boston by Nico's side. After the stem cell transplant, Nico returned home with his mom; she said after three months they could tell Nico was doing better so he went in for a second round of treatment. Unfortunately, it did not take and he passed away in 2016.

She said after the initial shock and grief wore off following Nico's passing, she knew she had to make sense of it all and decided to start a nonprofit to help families get through the hardest time of their lives. Dana said during her time with Nico at the hospital, people reached out to help pay her mortgage, gas bills and groceries. While some of these individuals were friends, others were strangers.



IN MEMORY OF NICO: Nico at Boston Children's Hospital in 2015.

■ NICO - PAGE 24



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The cast of "Million Dollar Quartet" playing at Theatre By The Sea thru June 18, 2022. (Photo by Mark Turek courtesy of Theatre by the Sea)

'Million Dollar Quartet' rocks Theatre By the Sea stage

Theatre Review by
DON FOWLER

The Tony-nominated musical takes us back to 1956; to the first and only time Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley ever made music together in the same room.

The story takes place at Sun Records in Memphis where owner Sam Phillips recalls the night all four stars showed up at the studio.

The four characters argue, reveal secrets and finally come together while joining in a couple dozen rock and roll era classics.

The company starts things off with "Blue Suede Shoes" a subject of contention as Carl Perkins resents the fact that Elvis sang "his song" on the Ed Sullivan Show. In the second act, all four join in harmony in "Peace in the Valley."

Talent wise, Colin Summers leads the pack with his rousing electric guitar playing, sounding the most like his character Carl Perkins.

Wisely, the actors do not try to mimic their characters, but do pick up many of their traits.

Sky Seals – as Johnny Cash – dresses in black and has Cash's low range down pat, but he does not exactly look or sound like him.

Taylor Isaac Gray has played Jerry Lee Lewis on several national tours, stealing the show several times with his crazy antics and wild piano playing.

Alessandro Viviano plays Elvis. While possessing a good voice, he does not appear to be playing his guitar and bears little resemblance to Elvis.

Elvis shows up with a date (Emma Wilcox) who adds a powerful female voice to the gathering.

"Million Dollar Quartet" is light fare, perfect for a May opening at the summer theatre, especially for those of us who grew up in the fifties and could relate to every song.

The show will be at Theatre By the Sea through June 18. Call 782-8587 for reservations. It was well worth a drive south on a foggy night in Matunuck.

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Movies

TOP GUN: MAVERICK

(Exciting sequel)

It has been 26 years since we saw Tom Cruise piloting a jet.

Many of the movie-goers watching "Top Gun: Maverick" had not even been born.

Cruise is back as Pete Mitchell. The world has changed. Warfare has changed. His Maverick style has not.

Pete is still as cocky and arrogant as ever. He is also still the same rank of captain and has been grounded.

The Navy finds itself in a precarious position, attempting to fly into enemy territory under adverse conditions and drop a bomb at a strategic location.

Maverick is called, thinking he is to lead the team, but learns that his job is only to train them.

There are subplots, which include making amends with a son (Miles Teller) whose father died under Pete's command; a renewed love affair with an old flame (Jennifer Connelly); defying his superior officers; and facing an old rival (Val

Kilmer).

The story is a bit corny, predictable and manipulative, but it still works. You are drawn into the characters who face death with the dangers of their mission.

Beyond the characters and their individual stories and personalities lies the gripping excitement of the training and eventually the do or die mission.

We saw the movie in the Warwick

Showcase XPlus theatre with its wall-to-wall huge screen and incredible stereo sound.

Lying back in the comfortable seats, you could literally feel the sounds of the F-18s vibrating against your body.

It costs a bit more, but it is worth it to be fully immersed in the action. The sounds and sights of the jets maneuvering are incredible. The scenery from the pilots' perspective is breathtaking.

Cruise, and all the actors, are convincing in their roles, making you feel and care for them.

Don't miss this one!

Rated PG-13 with some profanity. You would curse, too, if you were in the pilot's seat.

The two hours and ten minutes just fly by.



Tom Cruise flies to the top of the box office in "Top Gun: Maverick" (Courtesy of Paramount Pictures)

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By Karen Kalunian

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Trinity's 'Fairview' tackles the race card

Theatre Review by
DON FOWLER

Playwright Jackie Sibblies Drury has given us much to think about in this provocative one-act play that will be seen through different eyes by a diverse – but predominantly white – audience not quite prepared for their usually comfortable night at the theatre.

"Fairview" is divided into three parts, joined together by the concept of racial blindness that provides some 'aha' moments along with a few 'huh?' ones.

What appears like a TV half-hour comedy about a Black family of means takes a drastic turn in the second segment.

It may take a while for you to figure out what is going on as the family goes through the same motions as they prepare Grandma's birthday dinner.

Wait. They are not moving their lips, but white voices are talking. They observe, analyze, give opinions and make judgements, but are they really catching what is being said and done?

Are we in some sort of parallel universe or are we seeing things from a different perspective?

The third segment finds more people showing up, including Grandma who does not look like she was expected to.

Daughter Keisha is confused (as you may be) and tries to make sense



Mia Ellis as Beverly, Aizhaneya Carter as Keisha and Jackie Davis as Jasmine in Trinity Rep's "Fairview." (Photo by Cat Laine courtesy of Trinity Rep)

out of all this, withdrawing from the group. A food fight breaks out. After an uncontrollable melee, something I've never experienced in all my years going to the theatre takes place.

The reaction of the rather sedate Sunday night audience was mixed. It will be interesting to see the opinions of an online request for comments.

People were slow to react and some appeared stunned.

I expect that the opening night crowd with seats filled with many younger students of the Brown/Trinity MFA Acting Program reacted

differently.

"Fairview" is challenging, thought provoking, immersive theatre that attacks your comfort level.

It was good to see Mia Ellis back at Trinity and playing the mother, alongside Joe Wilson, Jr. as her husband, Jackie Davis as her sister and Aizhaneya Carter as her daughter.

A special shout out to Lex Liang for a perfect set.

"Fairview" is at Trinity Rep through June 19. Call 351-4242 for reservations.

■ Nico (Continued from page 21)

"People who didn't know me but heard our story," said Dana, recalling those who generously assisted her and Nico.

Today, the nonprofit assists families during the hospitalization and recovery phases of their journey. The nonprofit offers emergency relief funding, bravery backpacks and mini wishes.

If families need help paying housing costs, utility bills, food and travel expenses and other essential needs during times of hospitalization, Nico's Tree is there to help through their emergency relief funding. Dana said during the second time of Nico's treatment in Boston, she had run out of PTO and had to go back to work while trying to support living in Boston to be near to her son.

"I wanted to develop a foundation to support families that go through the same thing and keep them by their bedside and help them sustain gas, food, mortgage," Dana said.

According to Nico's Tree's website, emergency relief funding is "valuable during the critical months following a transplant or chemotherapy as families often cannot participate in everyday life as they once did in order to protect their child from threat of infections or relapse."

To offer comfort for children while they're in the hospital, Nico's Tree gives out bravery backpacks which are personalized chemo-care kits created especially for patients who are about to undergo treatment or hospitalization. Backpacks are uniquely customized for patients and past backpacks have included games like Uno and MadLibs. There may also be some snacks or socks and slippers.

Dana said a patient's room can become their room for several months so it's important that the kids make it their own during that time. To create the backpacks, Dana collaborates with "Sew for Love" which have also made superhero capes for the kids.

Lastly, the nonprofit's mini wish

program is to help brighten the day of a child undergoing treatment. By letting Nico's Tree know about a wish, the nonprofit will work at getting a grant for it. Dana said that siblings who have donated bone marrow or provided support in another way are eligible for a mini wish.

Dana usually receives requests every couple of months from those in the greater Boston and Rhode Island area. The nonprofit's most frequent request is financial assistance for a mortgage or rental and Dana is able to work with social workers at Hasbro Children's Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital to ensure families get the assistance they need. Dana said during the pandemic the nonprofit saw an increase in the number of families asking for financial assistance.

To accomplish all that they do, Nico's Tree hosts fundraisers once

or twice a year, as well as a golf tournament, trivia and bowling nights. Running the nonprofit is a family and friends endeavor and Dana said the nonprofit has had several student volunteers over the years.

As for the nonprofit's long term goals, Dana would like to see Nico's Tree continue to expand. Additionally, she is currently earning a certificate in grief counseling and is hoping to hire a small staff to offer bereavement courses or meetings for parents. Dana said she used grief counseling.

"It made such a difference and it just helped me heal," Dana said.

Born and raised in Johnston, Dana now lives in Cranston near Oaklawn Village. She has worked at Kent County Hospital for the past 16 years as an emergency room nurse. To learn more about Nico's Tree, visit <https://www.nicostree.org>.



DONATING TOYS: Jimmy Fund social worker Martha Young (left) and Nico's Tree founder/director Dana Ventetuolo delivered toys to the Jimmy Fund Clinic this past December.

COLLECTIBLES



A Functional but Decorative Little Gun



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
 Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers
 Cranston, RI



Today common flintlock and percussion rifles have become more of a decorative object than a collector's item. If they are made by an unnamed maker or have condition issues they can be purchased fairly cheaply to hang on a wall or over the fireplace. Even if the gun is damaged and not functional, if it has a figured maple stock it is prime wall hanging fodder. A few years ago, at an auction preview a person walked in thinking it was a preview for an Americana sale. He decided to snoop around and found three blunderbusses that I had. The next day at the auction he bought all three. I was interested to know why he bought them as he wasn't an antique arms guy. He said to him they were very interesting, good looking, and he wanted to hang them in his office. So, he had purchased all three of these funky little flintlocks as a decoration for his workspace.

In An Universal Military Dictionary published in 1779, the definition of a blunderbuss is "a well-known fire-arm, consisting of a wide, short, but very large bore, capable of holding a number of musket or pistol balls, very fit for a narrow passage, door of a house, stair-case; or in boarding a ship." A search of advertisements in 18th century newspapers list them being sold at most shops in major cities so it makes sense why there are quite a number that exist today.

Some of them have steel barrels, but the most handsome have brass barrels with a flared muzzle and brass fittings. Some also have spring-loaded bayonets. The example I have shown is one that is perfect for a decorative piece and is affordable. It has a dark walnut stock, brass butt plate, brass trigger guard with a front acorn finial, brass wrist plate and ramrod pies, a brass barrel marked "London" on the top, a spring-loaded bayonet, and is a flintlock. However, this particular gun had been converted to a percussion firing system in the 19th century. At some point over the past 20 or so years, it was re-converted back to flint. Not being in its original flint form affects the value of the gun to someone who wants a pristine example, but it now makes it affordable to someone who wants it for historical as well as decorative value. They do look pretty cool on the mantle!

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The Consumer's Guide to Understanding the Pelvic Floor

12 signs that you're suffering with something more than just regular abdominal or lower back pain!



JESSICA L. PAPA, PT, DPT
OWNER OF
ARANCIA PHYSICAL THERAPY

Have you ever experienced any of the following?

1. Urinary incontinence – bladder leakage?
2. Fecal incontinence – bowel leakage?
3. Bladder pain or burning with urination?
4. Difficulty starting the stream of urine?
5. Frequent urination or strong urges to urinate?
6. Constipation and/or straining to have a BM?
7. Several bowel movements in a short period of time?
8. Inability to complete a bowel movement?
9. Rectal pain and/or pressure before, during or after a bowel movement or just with sitting?
10. Low back pain?
11. A feeling of pressure or something falling out of the vaginal opening?
12. Painful intercourse?

If you have noticed any of these symptoms you may be suffering from a problem involving your pelvic floor muscles.

What is the pelvic floor?

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles that are found at the base of the pelvis. They act like a sling running from the front of your pelvis by your pubic bone to the back of your pelvis attaching to your sacrum (triangle bone at the bottom of your spine).

When functioning correctly, the pelvic floor has 4 functions:

1. It supports your pelvic organs (bladder, uterus, prostate and bowel) from falling out
2. It maintains continence (allowing you to hold in urine, gas and bowel movements)
3. It aids in sexual functioning
4. It works with the abdominal wall to give support and stability to your spine.

What is pelvic floor dysfunction?

Pelvic floor dysfunction is often the result of increased tightness or shortening in your pelvic floor muscles just like a hamstring can get tight or shortened in the back of your thigh. This tension does not allow you to completely relax your muscles for things like urination and defecation and optimal sexual functioning. This can present like pain with urination, frequent urination or bowel movement, as the muscles don't relax enough to allow your bladder or bowel to empty all the way. This gives you the sensation of having to go more often. It can also cause constipation and abdominal pain or bloating as the pelvic floor muscles don't relax

for you to be able to have a bowel movement or when you do have a bowel movement you have to strain to do so. Frequently after childbirth or surgery in the pelvic region or low back the pelvic floor muscles become weak. Some women experience a sensation of pressure or falling out sensation in the vaginal area. This can come from organ prolapse such as your bladder falling down. In this case the pelvic floor muscles cannot function as well to support your internal organs and become even weaker.

The national Institutes of Health found that pelvic floor disorders affect 10% of women ages 20-39; 27% of women ages 40-59, 37% of women ages 60-79 and nearly 50% of women over 80.

How does the pelvic floor help low back pain?

Your pelvic floor is part of your CORE! The alignment of your spine and pelvis/sacral iliac joints is also important since your pelvic floor muscles attach there. Instability of these areas also increases muscle tension and pain. If these bones are not in their ideal position it can cause increased tension, stretching or weakness of the pelvic floor muscles creating an imbalance in your musculature. Any weak muscles around the pelvis and low back contribute to back pain.

If you have experienced any of the 12 signs listed above you are a perfect candidate to explore the possibility of your pelvic floor being the cause or a contributing factor. Remember there are treatment options for you! Don't suffer and compromise your quality of life when the treatment is so easy!

My goal is to help you identify potential causes of your symptoms and give you some ideas for how to begin working towards correcting it and move you closer to restoring the life-style and the quality of life you desire.

The signs of pelvic floor disorders listed above are definitely just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to pelvic muscle assessment and treatment; so, if you continue to suffer or simply would like to undergo a thorough professional assessment, please do not hesitate to contact us. We're here to walk beside you on your return to life, as you once knew it!



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Infertility is defined as 1 year of intercourse without pregnancy for a woman under age 35 and 6 months of trying for a woman 35 years and up. But if you haven't tried to conceive yet, how can you determine if you are at risk for fertility problems? Most adults actually do not have challenges getting pregnant provided they do not have factors that put them at risk.

What about male fertility? Infertility affects men and women equally. Men who have had injuries to their testes, chemotherapy, or radiation may have difficulties with low sperm counts. Certain medications can decrease the chance of fertility in men such as testosterone supplements. Marijuana use can lower sperm counts.

What about young women in their 20s or early 30's? There are several risk factors that are well known. Women who have had asexually transmitted disease in the past may have had damage to their fallopian

Staying Healthy



by
CAROL WHEELER, M.D.
WOMEN & INFANTS
FERTILITY CENTER
PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF
OBSTETRICS AND
GYNECOLOGY
(CLINICIAN-EDUCATOR)

tubes leading to a blockage. Irregular periods which are often due to a lack of ovulation may indicate a problem. Fertility difficulties may be due to a woman having polycystic ovaries or other hormonal problems. Women who have had surgery in their abdomen, a tubal pregnancy or a history of endometriosis may have reduced fertility. They may have chronic pain in the lower abdomen or severe menstrual cramps which could mean there is a problem with the uterus or tubes. Some women may have very heavy periods or a history of fibroids leading to decreased

fertility.

Women over the age of 35 years often have difficulty conceiving, but each woman is different in how quickly her ovaries age. When a woman is over age 40, she may have a significant decrease in fertility, so women in this age group should seek an evaluation as soon as is possible.

What can you do to try to maintain your fertility? Both men and women should have a healthy diet, normal weight, and healthy lifestyle to try to increase future chances of a family. Avoiding reproductive toxins such as smoking and marijuana may have a positive impact. If you have concerns about your future fertility, some basic testing can be done by your health care provider to see if you have any reason to be concerned. For a man, this would be a semen analysis and for women blood tests and an ultrasound are suggested. Individuals on long-term medication or with diseases such as diabetes or high blood pressure should speak with their health care provider to make sure they are as healthy as possible and that the medications that they are taking are safe when trying

to conceive.

Should a woman in her 20s or 30s freeze her eggs? That is not always an easy question to answer as it is a complicated question and an "expensive" insurance policy". Certainly, we are hearing more and more about egg freezing. Freezing eggs is an involved process and not without risk. A woman who chooses to freeze her eggs may never need them. Nevertheless, it offers peace of mind to women in their mid-30s who do not have a partner or who are not ready to begin their family. If that is something you are contemplating doing, you should see a reproductive endocrinologist (fertility specialist) for a consultation. You will have an opportunity to learn about your fertility potential whether or not you choose to pursue any treatment.

Infertility affects about 10-15% of couples. If you think you may have infertility, speak with your health care provider who can help you determine if you should be concerned. The good news is that there are many treatments available should you have difficulty conceiving.

Carol Wheeler, M.D. of Women & Infants Fertility Center is a Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (Clinician-Educator).

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