

INAUGURATION 2023

Mayor to swear his son into office Jan. 9

By PETE FONTAINE

There will be extra special pomp and circumstance on Monday evening, Jan. 9, beginning at 6:30 inside the Johnston High School Auditorium.

It will be a historic happening for Johnston — as well as a possible “first” for any other municipality in

the state — when long-time Mayor Joseph M. Polisena administers the Oath of Office to his son, Joseph Polisena Jr.

The night will feature many talented students from Johnston High School’s national award-winning Music Department, and soon-to-be-ex-Mayor Polisena will emcee what promises to be an exciting evening,

highlighted, in part, by the swearing in of Mark Vieira as Chief of Police and David Iannuccilli as Fire Chief.

Inauguration 2022 — which town officials say will begin a “new era” in Johnston — will also feature the classy and well-uniformed Police and Fire Department Color Guards.

MAYOR - PAGE 10

Hope wrapped up tight



SPIRIT OF HOPE:

Louis Spremulli, left, and Paul Orlando, right, presented their Spirit of Hope “rescue kits” to the Providence Rescue Mission on Cranston Avenue in Providence. Orlando said the number one item in every kit is a pair of new, fluffy white socks. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

Spirit of Hope gives a small package of hope to those suffering in the cold

By RORY SCHULER

Louis Spremulli and Paul Orlando stood at the large wooden table, the contents of their Spirit of Hope “rescue kits” carefully laid out on its surface. The shades were drawn but the vintage windows looked out onto Cranston Avenue in Providence. “Here’s the number one item,” Orlando said, leaning forward, grabbing a pair of new, fluffy white socks.

HOPE - PAGE 13

Two solar-related public hearings scheduled for same night

By RORY SCHULER

Two public hearings have been scheduled for Jan. 10 in Johnston.

Town residents will have to choose between a Planning Board public hearing, where the board expects to hear from developers pitching a preliminary plan for a Central Avenue solar farm, and a Town Council solar ordinance public hearing, which could

guide Johnston’s residential solar array public policy into the future.

The Johnston Planning Board was expected to hold their public hearing on a preliminary plan application Tuesday, Dec. 6, but that meeting was canceled due to expected “lack of quorum,” according to Johnston Town Clerk Vincent Baccari.

The solar field has been pitched by applicant Revity Energy LLC for construction on

seven “frontage lots for residential development and one larger lot for a solar field” at 1252-1262 Central Ave. (AP 43 Lots 70 & 95). The land is zoned R-40 (residential).

The public has little chance to sway the Planning Board on the pending Central Avenue project.

“The proposed solar farm off of Central Avenue appears to have been approved by the Planning Board and Zoning Board back in

November 2021,” said Town Council member Robert J. Civetti. “Therefore at this time the proposed ordinance, if approved, would not have any impact on this project. However, I would hope that (the) residents in the area surrounding the Central Avenue Project would attend the Planning Board meeting so that they can get a better understanding of the project, its location, proposed buffers, etc.”

SOLAR - PAGE 6

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Panther of the Week



POTW: This week's Panther of the Week is Chann Sophonn Mann. Chann was nominated by two teachers, Ms. Natalie Bolino, English II teacher, and Ms. Vanessa Faiola, Spanish I teacher. He is a High Honors Sophomore who enjoys being involved in the Drama Club and World Cultures Club. After Johnston High School, he plans to go into interior design or become an architect. Ms. Bolino says, "Chann is great to have in class, an excellent student who always works hard, and is undeniably funny!" Ms. Faiola says "Chan comes to class daily with a positive attitude and is always willing to help his classmates. He enjoys learning so much that he even practices Spanish when we are not in class. Keep up the great work, Chann!" (Photo submitted by Matt Velino, Johnston High School Assistant Principal)

Editor's Note: This is the newest installment of an ongoing weekly series highlighting Johnston's amazing students. Staff at Johnston High School will be nominating students and submitting a caption and a photo for publication. You'll find each week's winning Panther on Page 2 of the Johnston Sun Rise.

Police Chiefs' Association reminds RI motorists to drive sober

The Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association (RIPCA) has issued a warning to drivers as they plan their New Years Eve celebrations.

Law enforcement agencies across the state are increasing the number of impaired driving patrols during the holiday season as part of the national "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" enforcement campaign, according to RIPCA.

While the 2022 Holiday Season National Enforcement Mobilization began Wednesday, Dec. 14, it runs through the New Year, on Jan. 1.

During this time, agencies will have officers specifically on the lookout for impaired and reckless drivers on the roads, according to a press release from RIPCA.

"The Providence Police Department's Breath Alcohol Testing (B.A.T.) Mobile Unit will be used by police departments across the state during the enforcement campaign, allowing officers to have a centralized location to process DUI arrests, including administering breathalyzer tests," according to RIPCA. "Departments will also have trained Drug Recognition Experts on hand to further evaluate drivers who may be operating while under the influence of a controlled substance other than alcohol."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), during the New Year's and Christmas periods in 2020, there were 209 drunk-driving-related fatalities. In 2020, there were 11,654 people killed nationwide in drunken driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third of the crash fatalities that year, RIPCA reports.

According to the NHTSA, people ages 21-

34 accounted for the highest percentage (26%) of alcohol-impaired fatalities in December 2020. Nighttime driving in December 2020 was significantly more dangerous than daytime driving, with 30% of drunk-driving-related crashes occurring between the hours of 6 p.m. and 5:50 a.m. Almost half (44%) occur between the hours of midnight and 2:59 a.m., likely when bars are closing and people are driving home.

"Nationally, it is illegal to drive impaired — no exceptions. It is illegal to drive in Rhode Island with a BAC of .08 or higher," RIPCA reminds the Ocean State's drivers. "However, remember that even a small amount of alcohol or drugs can quickly affect a person and their judgment."

RIPCA recommends the following tips to ensure safety on roadways this holiday season:

If you plan to drink, make a plan ahead of time for a sober ride home. Designate a sober driver, or plan to use public transportation or a ride share service.

Watch out for your family and friends. If someone you know is impaired and planning to drive, take their keys and make arrangements to get them home safely.

If you're hosting a holiday gathering, help out the designated drivers by making sure there are non-alcoholic beverages available.

Never get into a vehicle if the driver is impaired.

If you see an impaired driver on the road, safely pull over and call 911.

Drivers are also reminded to always wear their seat belt, to follow the speed limit and to never drive distracted.

JPD



SUPPORTERS OF THOSE WHO SERVED: This was the recent scene at Operation Stand Down when the JPD and International Brotherhood of Police Officers gave a concluded No-Shave November to help at-risk and homeless veterans. The group includes Richard Lambert, Erik Wallin, Bobby Abbruzzese, Tyrone Smith, Capt. Mike Babbitt, Chief Joseph Razza, Sgt. Remy Mendez, Lt. Steve Altomari, Detective James Seymore and Deputy Chief Mark Vieira. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

‘Our officers ... understand how important service is’

By PETE FONTAINE

Good tidings with joy and respect. That could have been an appropriate theme for a brief yet impressive ceremony at 1010 Hartford Ave. in Johnston.

On a recent sunny morning, a number of JPD vehicles converged on Tony DeQuattro Way and immediately parked next to a long trailer that houses the highly important Operation Stand Down Food Supply Cupboard.

Led by Johnston Police Chief Joseph P. Razza and Deputy Chief Mark A. Vieira, officers were joined by OSDRI staffers led by Executive Director Erik B. Wallin and began unloading boxes upon boxes of perishable food.

“We were honored to recently present Operation Stand Down Rhode Island with \$3,000 worth of gift cards, food and supply donations,” said Vieira. “The Johnston Police officers raised \$1,500 participating in No-Shave November, which was matched in kind by the International Brotherhood of Police Officers Local 307.”

As Vieira later emphasized: “Our officers, some of whom are veterans, understand how important service is, and we have an enormous amount of respect for our service members. We’re extremely proud to assist Operation Stand Down and their mission to assist homeless and at-risk veterans.”

Vieira also wanted it known: “It’s very important for us to give back to the community, and to help bring joy to veterans families, especially during the holidays.”

Meanwhile, Wallin said: “Operation Strand Down Rode Island is immensely grateful for the generous donation of the Johnston Police Department and their union Local 307. The men and women of the JPD and their union (have contributed) over \$3,000 as well as food to help meet the basic human needs of struggling veterans here in Johnston and across the state.”

After issuing thanks to each and every JPD officer, Wallin added: “We are humbled by the continued support of those who already put so much of themselves on the line each day, but still are inspired to give more to help at-risk veterans in the community.”



NO SHAVE: Johnston Police officers raised \$1,500 participating in No-Shave November, which was matched in kind by the International Brotherhood of Police Officers Local 307. The officers also collected food for the OSDRI food pantry. (Photos courtesy JPD)



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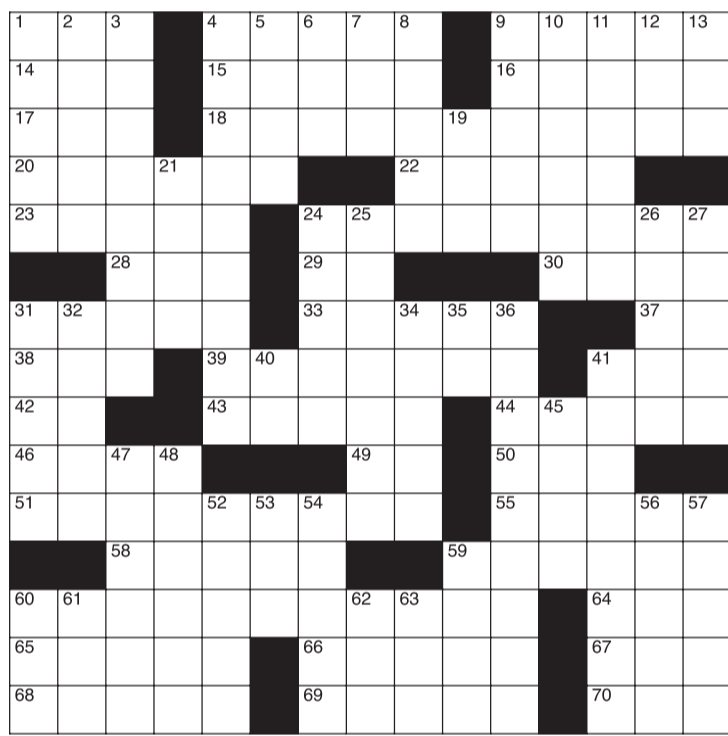
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1. Product or ___ (abbr.)
4. Zodiac sign
9. S. China seaport
14. Former OSS
15. Early English printer
16. Aphid genus
17. General's assistant (abbr.)
18. Aussies
20. Dissuades
22. Make law
23. Drench
24. Soak in a liquid
28. Male child
29. It cools your home
30. Small constellation
31. To call (archaic)
33. Explores beneath the Earth
37. Commercial
38. W. hemisphere organization
39. You can find it in a can

CLUES DOWN

41. "Land of the free"
42. 36 inches
43. Footwear
44. Challenges
46. They hold things together
49. Of I
50. Partner to flow
51. Not connected by kinship
55. Worries
58. Garlic mayonnaise
59. A way to take by force
60. Legendary English rockers
64. Your consciousness of your own identity
65. Fencing swords
66. Silly
67. Actor DiCaprio
68. Encircles with a belt
69. Mails a message
70. Longing

CLUES DOWN

1. Horse mackerels
2. It can be viral
3. Prickly plants
4. Consciousness
5. Type of sarcoma
6. Tax collector
7. Sun up in New York
8. One who scorches
9. Influential psychotherapist
10. Situated at an apex
11. Communicative
12. Forearm nerve
13. Former CIA
19. Folk singer DiFranco
21. Employee stock ownership plan
24. Large-scale
25. School environment
26. Remove
27. Male parents
31. Large rodent
32. Weighed down
34. Held tightly
35. ___ route: going there
36. Explains again
40. Exclamation of surprise
41. Courteously
45. Lying down
47. Judge
48. Forcefully took
52. Loosely compacted sediment
53. High mountain
54. Portable conical tents
56. Cereal grass
57. Dining utensil
59. Thoughtful
60. Helps you walk
61. Indicates near
62. Midway between northeast and east
63. Local area network



GENEROUS GIVING: Our Lady of Grace pastor Rev. Peter J. Gower (left), Pannese Society President David Venditelli (center) and OLG parishioner Lou Mansolillo (Pannese secretary-treasurer) are holding hams that accompanied food baskets that made Christmas merry for families in need. (Submitted photo)

Nicholas Project distributes gift cards & food baskets

By PETE FONTAINE

The Nicholas Project — a Rite of the Advent Season at Our Lady of Grace Church for years — numbers were staggering.

For example, the Roman Catholic parish distributed more than \$2,000 in store coupons for food and \$2,500 for stores where families in need could purchase gifts as well as hundreds of different toys and clothing items for families in need.

“The amazing thing,” as OLG’s popular pastor Rev. Peter J. Gower began, “is the joy not only of people who are giving but to see the joy of all those who received from the generosity of people in our parish.”

Perhaps the best example of the annual Nicholas Project giving happened last week when people came to the office rectory and received special heartwarming donations of food, gift cards and toys, many had tears in their eyes and told OLG volunteers they were “truly grateful for the generosity of so many people in the parish.”

Likewise, as Father Gower went on: “As a parish we work together to try to meet the needs of one another and this Christmas we succeeded in bringing joy to so many, many people.”

Father Gower proudly noted: “There were well over 100 households that — because of the generosity of the people at Our lady of Grace — will have a happier Christmas season.”

The unmatched Nicholas Project begins each year with proud OLG parishioners embarking on a program that includes many individuals offering food, gifts, toys and gift cards. Once it’s underway, OLG’s office staff (as well as different societies within the church) reach out to find people who are in the most need at Christmas and begin putting the special baskets together.

As equally impressive is each and every food basket includes a ham which again was donated by the Pannese Society, and more generosity from special sponsor David Constantino who owns and operates Columbus Door in Warwick.

Even the Pannese program is unique and a two-fold act of giving and tribute to the Pannese Society’s late president/holiday ham founder Joseph Spremull and late William Constantino, who like his brother are members of the Italian American non-profit.

“We are proud to again donate the hams so people can have a Christmas dinner,” said Pannese President David Venditelli. “We donated 40 hams and 40 gift cards for the Nicolas Program and another 10 hams to the Johnston Senior Center.”

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SEIZED: RISP reported the seizure of 3.45 kilograms of methamphetamine pills/tablets, 264.5 grams of cocaine, 25.6 grams of fentanyl pills/tablets, \$13,260 in cash, a Taurus G3 9mm pistol, a 16-round large capacity magazine containing an undetermined amount of 9mm ammunition, two vehicles, scales and packaging material used in the distribution of illegal narcotics. (Photo courtesy Rhode Island State Police)

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Cranston man arrested; three kilos of meth seized

State/city police joint operation also finds fentanyl, cocaine and weapons; suspect held without bail

Cranston Herald Staff Reports

Following a joint city and state police operation, a Cranston man is behind bars with no bail and more than three kilos of methamphetamine have been taken off the street.

On Friday, Rhode Island State Police (RISP) announced the arrest of Manuel A. Coradin, 43, of 37 Ryder Ave., Cranston, for narcotics and weapons offenses stemming from a joint investigation between the RISP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force and Cranston Police Department Special Investigations Unit, according to a press release.

"Removing deadly drugs and firearms from our streets is a victory for law enforcement and translates into safer communities," said Cranston Police Chief Col. Michael Winqvist. "This investigation also underscores the value of partnerships and the commitment of Officers and Troopers who make this work their highest priority. I commend them for their diligence on this case which led to a successful outcome."

According to a RISP press release, the RISP HIDTA Task Force and Cranston Police Department Special Investigations Unit initiated the investigation "into an individual who was allegedly involved in the distribution and sales of narcotics in the greater Providence area."

"This investigation is a great example of the excellent collaboration and coordination we have in Rhode Island's law enforcement community," said RISP Capt. Peter Chabot, Assistant Detective Commander. "We are especially pleased that this effort led to a significant arrest and will keep these drugs off of our streets."

State Police said "a court authorized search warrant was obtained for a residence located in Cranston and was executed by members of the HIDTA Task Force and Cranston

PD's Special Investigations Unit.

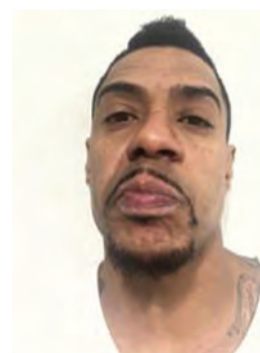
RISP reported the seizure of 3.45 kilograms of methamphetamine pills/tablets, 264.5 grams of cocaine, 25.6 grams of fentanyl pills/tablets, \$13,260 in cash, a Taurus G3 9mm pistol, a 16-round large capacity magazine containing an undetermined amount of 9mm ammunition, two vehicles, scales and packaging material used in the distribution of illegal narcotics.

Coradin was arrested and charged with Possession With the Intent to Deliver in Excess of 1 Kilogram of a Schedule I Controlled Substance (Methamphetamine), Possession with the Intent to Deliver (1 oz- 1 kilogram of a Schedule II Controlled Substance - Cocaine), Possession With the Intent to Deliver a Schedule II Controlled Substance (Cocaine), Possession With the Intent to Deliver a Schedule II Controlled Substance (Fentanyl), Possession with the Intent to Deliver a Schedule I Controlled Substance (Methamphetamine), Possession of a Firearm by Certain Persons Prohibited, Possession of a Firearm When Committing a Controlled Substance Violation, Large Capacity Feeding Device(s) Prohibited.

"At the time of his arrest, Coradin was found to be on federal probation/supervised release stemming from a previous narcotics distribution conviction," according to RISP. "Coradin was arraigned at Third Division District Court and after his appearance he was held without bail (pending further court date)."

According to state police, Coradin could face up to life in prison for the charges, and face millions in fines if convicted.

The HIDTA Task Force — managed by RISP — is comprised of members from the Rhode Island National Guard, RISP, Providence, North Providence, Lincoln, Middletown, Bristol and Narragansett police departments.



CORADIN

Watch Your MOUTH
by Rochelle Rhodes, D.M.D. and David McFarland, D.D.S.
AT-HOME OPTIONS FOR DENTAL PROCEDURE PAIN RELIEF
Dental exams, cleanings, and treatments such as filling small cavities do not usually require prescription pain medication. However, your mouth and gums may be sore after a dental cleaning or other treatment, and you may wish to try some pain relief options at home. Over-the-counter pain medications categorized as NSAIDS are a good choice because they reduce the inflammation often associated with dental pain. Swishing salt water around in your mouth is an inexpensive and effective way to speed the healing process and reduce pain. Rinsing with an antimicrobial mouthwash can also help reduce swelling and pain. A desensitizing toothpaste can help protect your mouth as it heals. Look for toothpastes with potassium nitrate for additional pain relief.
Treat yourself to a little down time following a dental procedure and rest up instead of plunging right back into a busy work schedule following your appointment. You can always count on us to provide you with ideas for home care, answers to your questions, and excellence in dental care from a caring staff committed to your comfort, well-being, and sunny smile. Call us at DENTAL ARTS GROUP for an appointment (401-521-3661). Emergencies are also welcome at our full-service, state-of-the-art dental office located at 1136 Hartford Ave., Johnston. Most insurance plans accepted.
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ARRESTED: Above right, Manuel A. Coradin, 43, of 37 Ryder Ave., Cranston, has been held without bail following an arrest for narcotics and weapons offenses stemming from a joint investigation between the RISP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force and Cranston Police Department Special Investigations Unit. (Photo courtesy Rhode Island State Police)



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SouthCoast Fair Housing is a non-profit organization that works to eliminate housing discrimination in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts by providing fair housing education, outreach, advocacy, and enforcement services.

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant (20040) with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government.



CAPTURE THE SUN: Above and below, Applicant Revity Energy LLC wants to build solar fields on seven Central Avenue lots at 1252-1262 Central Ave. The land is zoned R-40. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

SOLAR

(Continued from page 1)

Civetti would like to see the seats packed at both hearings.

"Ideally, I would like to see the Planning Board reschedule their meeting to another date so that residents could attend both meetings," Civetti said. "Many residents have been waiting a couple months for the Planning Board to meet on this item and the update on the comprehensive plan. However, the items were scheduled to be discussed at the last two Planning Meetings but were not due to meeting cancellations and other matters."

There's some confusion whose Town Council district the proposed solar farm falls into after redistricting. Civetti, who represents Johnston's District 5, said that the portion of Central Avenue pitched for development actually falls into District 1, Councilwoman Linda Folcarelli's district. Folcarelli's seeking clarification on the location of the proposed solar farm.

She said she'd hold her comment on the solar farm preliminary plan proposal until she attended the Planning Board's public hearing.

"I'll have to hear it first, before I make an opinion," she said of Revity's proposal.

She was surprised to hear that it was scheduled for the same night as the Town Council's public hearing on the solar ordinance.

"I don't know what to tell you," Folcarelli said Wednesday morning. "I'm surprised they're on the same night."

She said she'd also wait to comment on the pending solar ordinance.

"Hopefully if residents attending the Planning Board meeting have concerns over buffers or other items they can voice those concerns for consideration in the Planning Board's decision," Civetti said.

Civetti has helped lead the effort to streamline the town's Comprehensive Plan, which is

long outdated. The plan as written, but not updated, offers little insight into whether industrial scale solar arrays fit into Johnston's residential neighborhoods.

Comprehensive Plan consultants Weston & Sampson are expected to attend the Jan. 10 Planning Board meeting.

The pending town-wide ordinance (formerly known as 2022-10 but will now be 2023-01 since it was carried into the New Year), looks to amend Article II and Article III of Section 340 of the Town of Johnston Code of Ordinances, changing the "the definitions and use table regarding Solar Energy Systems."

The ordinance, as written, would draw a distinction between homeowners' private solar panels, for residential use, and industrial-scale solar farms.

"As for the proposed Town Ordinance, I would request that any resident that is concerned with having large scale solar projects being developed on residentially zoned property attend the Town Council meeting to voice their opinion and to contact their Town Council person," Civetti said. "I hope that the attendance at the Town Council meeting is much like the attendance that we had at the marathon meeting of the Zoning Board where over 150 residents came in to speak in opposition of their large solar projects being placed in residential neighborhoods and on residentially zoned property."

Civetti attended the arduous more than eight-hour April 28 meeting, when hundreds of Johnston residents gathered at the Johnston Senior Center to oppose Cranston-based Green Development's proposal to build five solar fields on more than 324 acres of mostly wooded land in a residential zone of the town's western end.

"The Town has plenty of industrial/business zone property where this renewable energy could be placed," Civetti said. "I am in favor of renewable energy but not at the expense of destroying our residentially zoned property."



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Opinion

EDITORIAL

For politicians, boring is good

Politicians who serve at the top levels of local government likely want to be remembered for the things they've accomplished while in office. They want a positive legacy that is free from controversy and scandal, however much that is possible in a society where the online outrage machine is ever-charged and waiting for a moment to strike with a smarmy Twitter post.

We might argue, however, that the better approach to strive for as a politician, rather than trying to please everyone and win over political opponents, is to just be boring. Do the work you think is worthy of being done, advocate for the causes you believe in, and keep out of the spotlight in the moments in between.

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

Three of Rhode Island's top politicians

who will not be serving in their established local capacities as of the New Year have all managed to accomplished that feat with great tact, while also making some positive marks throughout their tenures.

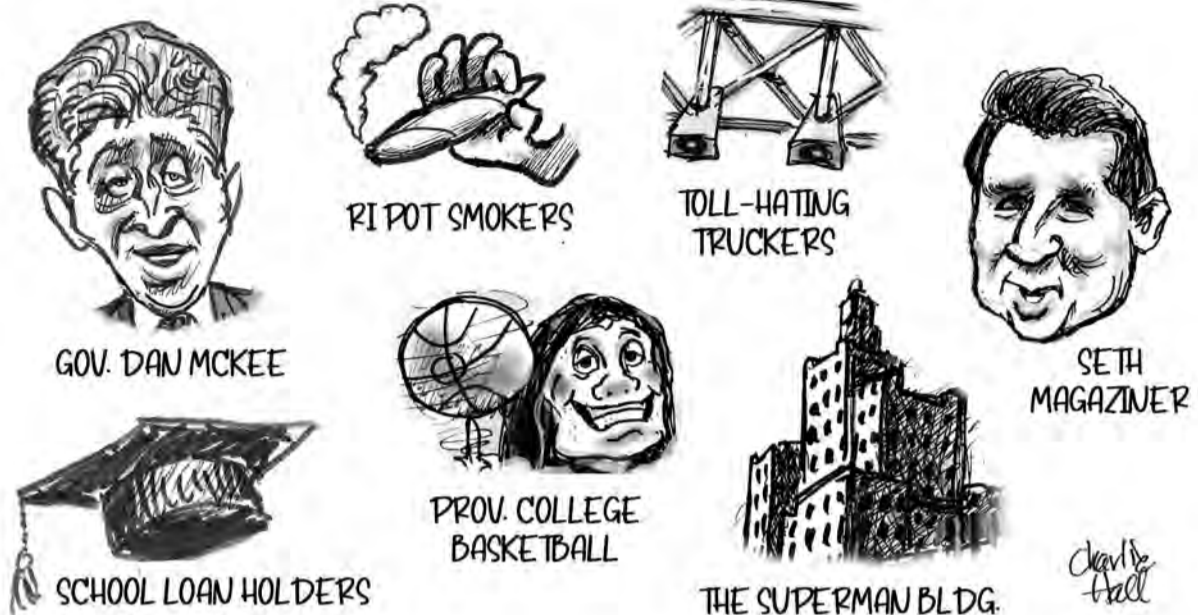
Retiring Congressman Jim Langevin, whom we have written about in the past when it was announced he wasn't seeking re-election, has flown mostly under the radar for the 22 years he spent in the highly scrutinized Washington world — while simultaneously gaining respect and admiration among his peers. He has advocated for veterans, the disabled, and the uninsured; all admirable, worthy causes that strive to benefit those without an upper hand in life, rather than those who inherited wealth and power. Without pomp or circumstance, he set a high bar for his replacement in terms of being able to wield power responsibly, if even a little bit boringly.

His replacement, Seth Magaziner, heads to Washington with a legacy to be proud of. Lots of boring, scandal-free time as Treasurer and the distinction of being the figurehead who brought \$500 million in school improvement bonds to a state that desperately needed a shot in the arm to bring its schools into the 21st century. We are optimistic that Magaziner can navigate the perilous halls of Congress with the same goals in mind to affect real, tangible change for Rhode Islanders.

Lastly, Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea had perhaps the most boring, but important job of all. Throughout all the upheaval of the past couple elections, Gorbea oversaw functional, fair, and free elections that were devoid of scandal and serious drama. However, more boring work lies ahead for her replacement, as looming threats over electronic vote counting machines exist and must be handled.

As we head into 2023, we give a farewell and a nod of appreciation for these three public servants, who managed to navigate high-pressure positions without bringing shame or scandal to our state.

TOP WINNERS OF 2022



Christmas essays worth 'honorable mentions'

Editor's Note: The following are unedited entries to this year's Sun Rise Holiday Essay Contest. There were so many excellent selections that we wanted to devote some space to essays worthy of Honorable Mentions.

"Christmas and What it Means to Me"

By Caroline Berube, Grade 4, St. Rocco School

Christmas ... the time of believing. The time of being kind. The time to be calm. The time of little kids running around. But also Christmas means your elf is watching you! So you better be good! My elf's name is Sarah. She gives us cookies that look like her with our names on them. With all of that amazingness, we also have Santa breaking into our houses! That guy can get away with anything! He's magical!! I mean, what other guy can fit that many presents in that sack? SANTA can! I wonder what other things Santa can do?

"Christmas To Me!"

By Amaya Hudick, Grade 4, St. Rocco School

To me Christmas means spending time with my family. Every year we make cookies with pretzels and M&Ms. They come out like chocolate melted on pretzels! One time my little brother and I went sledding. We had one sled, so we had to share it. When it was Aaydyn's turn he went down and technically flew! He flung right out of the sled sliding into the snow on his stomach. It was hilarious! Another time I asked Santa for books for Christmas. That year there was an entire table of books! Spending time with family always makes Christmas fun!

"What the Holidays Mean To Me"

By Alondra DeLeon, Grade 3, Winsor Hill School

Every holiday means so much to me, but Christmas is my favorite by far. I treasure when we give and receive gifts. <3 (tilt your head to see the heart) Last Christmas my mom and I baked delicious cookies. They tasted amazing. (I bet I am making you hungry). After the cookies, my family and I put on the movie Home Alone. It was a lot of laughs! I wonder what we will all bake and watch this coming Christmas.

"What the Holidays Mean To Me"

By Monroe Woods, Grade 3, Winsor Hill School

The holidays are very important to me! I love the holidays, they are so fun! On Christmas Eve I go to my Grammy's house. We have super yummy lobster bisk and we give and open presents. Then on Christmas Day, I go to Didi's house and my Papa makes delicious food! Just like my Grammy's we give and open presents together. When we go to my Grammy's house we bring my little sister's meme book. It is so funny, we laugh our hearts out! Even though days fly by, they are the best. Time always flies when you're having fun!

LETTER

Help spread the 'Spirit of Hope'

In the days leading up to the Christmas Holiday festivities culminating on Dec. 25, Christians everywhere took time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and recall His message of "Joy to the World."

For many people, however, Christmas can be a time of disappointment — and not joy — due to separation from family or no one to share gifts with them.

But one small charitable organization raised a great deal of money throughout the year to buy needed items like: food baskets ,toys , personal hygiene products, store gift cards ,winter outdoor hats, gloves and scarfs and religious books to brighten the holidays for those who may have been deprived of such gifts.

Volunteers from the Johnston location of Spirit of Hope charitable foundation, acting like Red Cross care givers, delivered thousands of dollars worth of necessities like socks and insulated gloves and other cherished wish items to many homeless men at the Providence

Rescue Mission in Providence.

Plus food, gift cards, cooking pans, personal toiletries products, clothes and reading pamphlets to hundreds of families and homeless veterans, many who rely on the McAuley House soup kitchen for several meals a day and weekly visits for groceries from their well stocked food pantry, were given directly to the McAuley director, Ms.Kenner for immediate distribution.

For the Providence youngsters who are growing up impoverished, the Spirit of Hope donated over 800 diapers, diaper wipes , and stuffed animals to the Mothers for Life Assistance Center; plus 40 pairs of gloves ,mittens and tokes for preschoolers attending classes on the grounds of the John Hope Settlement House on the west side of Providence.

In similar fashion , 15 food baskets , numerous food coupons and personal care backpacks were handed out to needy individuals referred to us by our sponsors and

SOH board members. All in all it was a very enriching experience for both the givers and receivers during the Christmas and Hanukah religious observations of the season.

In closing, Louis Spremullifounder and President of "Spirit of Hope" charitable foundation, was extremely pleased that his generous sponsors and dedicated volunteers stepped up to the cause of rendering help to those in our region who need it most. And that more altruistic people will join him in donating time and money to the religiously based foundation so that more "joy" can continue to spread further into the hearts and minds of those still seeking our support. Interested persons can reach this charity by calling 401-374-4590 for information. Become a sponsor and enjoy the feeling of giving to those in need!

Paul Orlando
Spirit of Hope Marketing Director

Louis Spremulli,
Spirit of Hope President



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PUBLIC SAFETY ELVES: Above, JPD officer Arthur Petterutti, Mayor Joseph Polisena, Councilwomen Linda Folcarelli and Local 307 President Detective Jim Seymour are standing in front of JPD cruiser that was overflowing with gifts for children. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

PACKED RESCUE: At left, JPD officer Arthur Petterutti, Mayor Joseph Polisena, Councilwomen Linda Folcarelli and Local 307 President Detective Jim Seymour are standing in front of JPD cruiser that was overflowing with gifts for children.

Obituaries

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

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

- Thank you

LEGAL NOTICES

Public Notice Town of Johnston Public Hearing

Pursuant to the Rhode Island General Laws § 45-24-53 Public Notice is hereby given of a Public Hearing for the consideration of:

Ordinance 2023-1; (Formerly known as Ordinance 2022-10) - An Ordinance in amendment of Article II, section 340-4 and Article III, Section 340-8 of the Town of Johnston Code of Ordinances. Said Ordinance proposes to add definitions of Accessory Solar Energy Systems and Solar Energy Systems and also proposes use regulations for Accessory Solar Energy Systems and Solar Energy Systems for each zoning district.

THE PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD ON:

January 10th, 2023 AT 7:00 PM

**AT THE JOHNSTON MUNICIPAL COURT BUILDING
1600 ATWOOD AVENUE, JOHNSTON, RI 02919**

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. Any alteration or amendment must be presented for comment in the course of the hearing. Said proposed Ordinance is available at the office of the Town Clerk for examination.

The meeting place is accessible to the handicapped in conformance with R.I.G.L. 42-46-2. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting date.

Johnston Town Council
Robert V. Russo
President

Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

12/22/23, 12/29/22, 1/5/23

**Public Auction
Legal Notice**

Form of notice under RI General Laws 39-12.1 to 12.1-5

TO: Michael Hanley 21A Pheasant Run Smithfield RI A public auction will be held at 635 Potters ave Providence RI on January 7, 2023 at 9:00 Am . The Vehicle a 2012 Jeep VIN # 1C4RJFAG2CC218365 belonging to the above. The auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

12/29/22

**JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD
MEETING AGENDA
Thursday, December 29th, 2022
at 6:30 PM
Johnston Senior Center
1291 Hartford Avenue**

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Review will hold a meeting on December 29th, 2022 at 6:30 pm, at Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Avenue. All persons interested in the following proposals are requested to be present at this time. The assembly facilities are accessible to the handicapped. Persons requiring special accommodations shall call the Zoning Office at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting (401) 231-4000 ext. 4117. Persons utilizing TDD equipment may contact the Town through "Relay Rhode Island" at 1-800-745-6675. The agenda for the evening will be as follows, subject to change:

New Business

Petition of Paula and Vito DeSimone, Owners/Applicants for 6 Freedom Court, AP 19 Lot 274, zoned R-15. The petitioner is seeking a side yard Dimensional Variance to attach a garage to the single family structure.

Petition of John Rosa, Owner/

Applicant for 98 Greenville Ave, AP 16 Lot 353, zoned B-2. The petitioner is seeking a use variance for Commercial Storage of Vehicles- Dump Truck and Pickup Trucks.

Appeal of a zoning violation notice by Boston Equipment LLC, Owner/Applicant for 1835 Plainfield Pike, AP 29 Lot 1, zoned R-20.

NOTE: If a Case has not been called for a hearing by 10:30 p.m., the Board, at its discretion, may continue the Case to a subsequent or a special meeting. The Agenda and Minutes are available for review at ClerkBase on the Town's web page or Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Building Office, 100 Irons Avenue, Johnston.

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

12/15, 12/22, 12/29/22

**Planning Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 10, 2023
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. APPROVAL OF 2023 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS
IV. OLD BUSINESS**

PB 17-36 – Residences at Hopkins Pond – Request to Modify Final Approval of a Major Land Development. Public Meeting to discuss the request of the Association to modify the Final plan by eliminate and/or relocating guest parking. A.P. 44 Lot 26 located between 620 Central Avenue and

I-295. Applicant: Residences at Hopkins Pond condominium Association.

PB 21-47 – Central Avenue Solar/ Preliminary – A Public Hearing on a Preliminary Plan application to create seven road frontage lots for residential development and one larger lot for a solar field. The property is located at 1252 – 1262 Central Avenue AP 43 Lots 70 & 95 - Zoned: R-40. Applicant: Revity Energy LLC.

PB 21-30 – Hartford Ave Self Storage I - Public Hearing for a proposed Major Land Development and Unified Development Review for a self-storage facility. Located behind 1357 Hartford Avenue AP 20 Lot 25. Property is zoned - B-2. Applicant: National Development Group. The Applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow the self-storage facility, dimensional variances to the yard requirements and possibly other variances.

PB 21-44 – Hartford Ave Self Storage II - Public Hearing for a proposed Major Land Development and Unified Development Review for a self-storage facility. Located behind 1347 Hartford Avenue AP 20 Lot 81. Property is zoned - B-2. Applicant: Commonwealth Investments Group LLC The Applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow the self-storage facility and may seek dimensional variances to the yard requirements and possibly other variances.

PB 21-25 – Vel-Tree Minor Subdivision – Substitution of Bond.

V. NEW BUSINESS

PB 22-09 – FedEx Distribution Facility – Public Meeting on the proposed expansion of parking facilities in accordance with Section

340-27. Located at 6 Green Earth Avenue AP 31 Lot 62.

PB 22-60 – Bird's Eye Vue – Public Meeting on a Master Plan submission for a Major Subdivision creating 8 lots. Located westerly of 17 Wynchwood Place AP 38 Lots 310 & 338. Property is zoned R-10 and R-15. Applicant: Robert E Moll.

PB 22-59 – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the Petition of Robert Cardillo to rezone 180 & 184 Shun Pike from R-40 to Industrial. Council Petition 2022-CP-167. Assessor's Plat 33 Lots 27 and 84.

PB 22-61 – Rustic View Condominiums – Public Meeting on a Master Plan submission for a Major Land Development creating 28 dwelling units. Located at 1765 Atwood Avenue AP 47 lot 38. Property is Zoned R-7. Applicant Churchill & Banks, LLC.

VI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – Discussion

PB 22- 57 The Johnston Comprehensive Plan – Presentation and discussion by/with Weston & Sampson, plan consultant.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT & SPECIAL ITEMS

VIII. 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.

12/22/22, 12/29/22, 1/5/23

PB 22-59 – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the Petition of Robert Cardillo to rezone 180 & 184 Shun Pike from R-40 to Industrial. Council Petition 2022-CP-167. Assessor's Plat 33 Lots 27 and 84.

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12/22/22, 12/29/22, 1/5/23

'Overflowing with toys'

JPD & JFD collect Toys for Tots

By PETE FONTAINE

There were two extraordinary events last week at 183 George Waterman Road in Johnston.

First and foremost was the 12th Annual Toys for Tots Party, coordinated annually by the unmatched generosity of the Johnston Association of Firefighters Local 1950 and Johnston Police Union Local 307.

Likewise, Stephanie Harris celebrated the 5th anniversary since opening her highly popular Strings Bar and Grille amid a crowd of countless Johnstonians who once again upheld the town's reputation of unmatched giving anywhere in the state.

People were everywhere — inside and outside — Strings Bar and Grille and arrived bearing good tidings of joy and toys that resulted in what people called "the biggest and best Toys for Tots Party in the exciting event's 12-year history."

Even Santa Claus — a.k.a. Paul Paon — was overwhelmed by the colossal collection of toys and included everything from children's bicycles to games to toys you'd expect to see at Jolly Old Saint Nick's North Pole headquarters.

Moreover, the shoppers and super staff at PetSmart-Johnston, which is located at 1386 Atwood Ave., made the largest donation that resulted in the need for a second and reserve JFD rescue to deliver all the grand gifts fits to the United States Marines Corps for its annual Christmas distribution.

Last week's Toys for Tots Party also featured a who's who in Johnston headed by Mayor Joseph Polisena, Mayor-elect/Council Vice President Joseph Polisena Jr., members of the Town Council and School Committee, JFD and JPD officials and proud people who wanted to make Christmas extra special for children from families in need.

"This (is) fantastic ... amazing," Mayor Polisena offered while helping accept bikes etc. alongside Local 307 President Detective Jim Seymour, Councilwoman Linda Foclarelli an Officer Arthur Petterutti who all agreed, "This is an excellent example of caring and sharing at an all-time high."

The night also featured yet more generosity from Robert V. Russo, President of the Johnston Town Council, who sponsored the delicious buffet that also drew rave reviews about each and every item.

"This is incredible," were some of the comments about the food and special service by Harris' fun-loving super staff. "This is a special holiday happening, for sure."

As someone suggested while standing outside in the night's chilly air: "This is a show of warmth and love — unlimited."

Meanwhile, JFD Local 1950 vice president Lt. Jon Pistachio offered: "I really can't put this into words; the generosity of our (Local 1950) membership and each and every Johnston Firefighter who again dug deep this holiday season for people in need."

Pistachio paused then added: "Every year this gets bigger and better. Tonight, there was a number of firsts; the JPD showed up big time with a cruiser already overflowing with toys. We're excited to partner with them again next year."

As many JFD and JPD officials offered: "Thank you to all the generous residents, elected officials, friends and families who helped to once again make tonight a huge success. We also want to again thank Mayor Polisena for year-after-year allowing us to use a reserve rescue to deliver toys from this great event."



DELIGHTFUL DUTY: U.S. Marines Cpl. Gabriel Ortiz, Sgt. Cristian Hulsey and 1st Sgt. Robert Weinhardt join Town Council members Mayor-elect Joseph Polisena Jr., Al Carnevale, Lauren Garzone and Linda Folcarelli join Santa Claus during last week's Toys for Tots party. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



SUPER SERVERS: Strings Bar and Grille owner Stephanie Harris (second left) is joined by her special staff that served great hospitality and fine food at last week's Toys for Tots Party.



OUTSTANDING OFFICERS: At left, among members of the Johnston Police Department who helped make the Toys for Tots Party a success, were from left: Joe Salvatore, Deputy Chief Mark Vieira, Santa Claus, Remy Mendez and Kevin Brady. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

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Carolyn & Patricia

Mayor
(Continued from page 1)

As Mayor Polisena, who has held public office since serving as a Rhode Island state senator from 1993 to 1999, and then again from 2001 to 2007, and was first elected Mayor in 2006 — has said time and again (the most recent being at the Johnston Senior Center Christmas Party): “Everyone is invited to the Inauguration.”

Meanwhile, the town readies to welcome a new mayor, the current mayor’s son.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to lead this community into the future,” Polisena Jr. said with pride ringing in his voice. “I will govern with the message I ran on of stable taxes through economic development, continuously improving our public education, supporting public safety with our police and fire departments and providing quality town services for all residents.”

As for Mayor Polisena, who compiled a long record of public service and leadership, and brought new business after new business to Johnston, he has not yet announced what his future holds. However, as he said recently: “I have had four or five offers, but at present I haven’t accepted any of them.”

One thing, though, is certain. The soon-to-be-former mayor plans to enjoy his role as a grandfather while his son Joseph Polisena Jr. begins a new era as mayor of the town where he, and his father, were born.

Editor’s Note: *Pete Fontaine is a freelance writer for the Johnston Sun Rise.*



THREE JOES: Joe Polisena Jr., his son Joseph Polisena III, and Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena pose for a three-generation snapshot following the middle Joe’s candidacy announcement for Johnston mayor in May 2022. (Sun Rise FILE photo)



MAYOR ELECT:
At right, Mayor-elect Joe Polisena Jr. hugs his father, current Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena, after the General Election night victory was clear in November. (Sun Rise FILE photos)

THE TALLY:
At left, Joe Polisena Jr. stands with supporters as they count up precinct totals from across Johnston on General Election night.



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SUN RISE SCOOPS

Sun Rise Staff Reports

Explore the 'Woony'

You can "Join the Woony Team!"

"Please donate to the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council to help us continue to restore the Woonasquatucket River and Greenway," the organization asks. "Your donations also provide cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities for youth, adults, and families. Thank you!"

Pre-registration is required for the hikes. The Explore the Woonasquatucket Recreation Series is made possible with support from REI Co-op.

More hikes have been planned for future months:

Hike the Stillwater Scenic Trail at 10 a.m., Saturday, Jan 7: This roughly 2 mile round trip walk will follow along sections of the Woonasquatucket, including Stillwater Pond. You'll see some of the buildings remaining from Stillwater Village, some remnants of the railroad spur that served the mill complex, and pass by dams that created these ponds - reminders of RI's thriving industrial past.

Hike Olivia's Forest Hike at 10 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 21: This is a short, 0.7 mile hike, but it is delightful and has some tricky spots to traverse. So, wear your hiking boots and get ready to enjoy the serenity of this quiet, peaceful, lovely path.

Hike Steere Hill Conservation Area at 10 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 18. Join them on this a casual 3-mile hike through the woods and meadows of the Steere Hill Farm Conservation Area in Glocester.

Hike Fort Wildlife Refuge in North Smithfield at 10 a.m., Saturday, March 4. Located near Primrose Pond, this 3 mile hike is very near the northernmost part of the Woonasquatucket River Watershed. This loop trail is part of an Audubon site, so wildlife abounds.

Hike Heritage Park Conservation Area at 10 a.m., Saturday, March 18: This is a lovely, wide path with rolling hills. On the walk through this section of the Glocester Land Trust's 447 acre property, the group will amble through beautiful forest land, pass majestic rock ledges and loop up and around Steere Hill before heading back.

Hike Connors Farm Conservation Area at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 1. Located in Smithfield, Connors Farm is a 2.9 mile loop trail that passes by cranberry bogs, small brooks and ponds and features a picnic area at the top of a lookout spot. It's a beautiful

rocky terrain, with ups and downs — there will be some uphill traversing on rocks.

For more details and to register, visit WRWC.ORG/EVENTS.

Johnston Historical Society Events

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.

BY APPOINTMENT: Please note Both the Johnston Historical Society museum and the Elijah Angell House are open by appointment. The Johnston Historical Society always welcome visits by interested individuals or groups. Just shoot them an email at johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com, or leave a message at 401-231-3380 to set one up. To see photos of past events, visit the Johnston Historical Society Facebook page at www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical.

More at Mohr Library

Mohr Library offers special activities for middle-school and high-school age kids most afternoons. For more information contact Young Adult Librarian Marissa Galonski at 401-231-4980 or email marissa@mohrlibrary.org.

Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library is now open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Monday through Thursday from 9a.m. to 8 p.m. The library is located at 1 Memorial Avenue in Johnston. Visit their website: mohrlibrary.org.

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.

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.

Vintage Hollywood NYE Ball

Welcome 2023 with a vintage Hollywood-era ball at the Historic Park Theatre and Event Center on Dec. 31. The event starts at 9 p.m. and ends at 1 a.m. There will be DJ Kabeza, OG Pauly D and special guests! Dancing, hors d'oeuvres, champagne toast and more. Costumes/1920's-1940's outfits and accessories are encouraged and welcome, cocktail attire dress code. Tickets can be purchased online at theparkri.com/event/vintage-hollywood-nye-ball/.

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 nonprofit events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.



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ALL EARS



STOCKING ELVES: Alfonso Otero, of Providence, stocks the elves ... um shelves at the Johnston Market Basket today. When a shopper needed help, he was all ears. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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SPRIT OF COOPERATION: Louis Spremulli, left, placed a "Spirit of Hope" ball cap on the head of Sean Carew, a minister who serves as founder and CEO of the Providence Rescue Mission at 627 Cranston St. in Providence. The two organizations are working together to provide aid to the homeless. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

■ Hope

(Continued from page 1)

Orlando picked up the socks. "This product is in high demand," he said, dropping them back in place. Spremulli and Orlando head the Johnston-based Spirit of Hope religious nonprofit group. Last Tuesday they met with Sean Carew, a minister who serves as founder and CEO of the Providence Rescue Mission at 627 Cranston St. in Providence. The trio gathered around 4 p.m., shortly before the mission hosted its evening dinner for the region's unsheltered. "The need is year-round," Carew said. He dismissed recent reports of rising rates of homeless men, women and children in Rhode Island. He said the need is ever-constant, but his mission always has space for more. "On any given night we have 100 men and women seeking emergency shelter services," Carew said. "We're always open for the homeless of Rhode Island." The privately funded Providence Rescue Mission has been helping the Ocean State's unsheltered for 24 years. "What motivates reduction in shelter is money. When people have the ability to earn, they can deal with the issues of a homeless life ... If you see somebody on the street with a can, rain snow or sleet, they're there. Clearly they want to acquire resources to live. But there's a disconnect." Spremulli placed a "Spirit of Hope" ball cap on Carew's head. "To me, they're people who have so much potential," Carew said. Spirit of Hope raised more than \$1,000 for personal toiletry items and winter gear for their rescue kits, which each include a hat, gloves, socks, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, mylar blanket and more. They planned to hand out the survival kits on Christmas Day. "These gifts could be a turning point," Carew told the two Johnston men. "What folks are looking for is a little bit of hope. The opening of that Christmas gift could

be a spark of hope." "That's where we get our name," said Spremulli, Spirit of Hope's president and founder. "This is not a one-stop train today," Orlando pledged to Carew. "We'll be doing this again." Orlando serves as the organization's fundraising and public relations manager. Both Johnston men are retired. They stood and watched as the Rescue Mission packed with hungry souls. "We just saw 40 guys go in," Orlando said. Each kit costs the group about \$15 to assemble. "Many of the organizations we help say the need has doubled since last year," Orlando said. Besides the Providence Rescue Mission, Spirit of Hope also works with the McAuley House, at 622 Elmwood Ave., and Mother of Life Pregnancy Center, 400 Atwells Ave., both in Providence. "We just bought the center 800 diapers," Spremulli said. "The organization is finally coming together and making partnerships with other nonprofits, like the Providence Rescue Mission and McAuley House," he wrote in a press release distributed by Spirit of Hope. The group is struggling to keep up with increasing rescue kit demand. They thanked the sponsors who have funded Spirit of Hope so far: Atwood Pharmacy, Alert Security, Woodlawn Funeral Home, Orlando Contracting, Dr. David Coia, D'Andrea Pool Service, D'Ambra Construction, Mark Scetta Web, Enza's Hair Studio, American Eyeglass, state Rep. Edward Cardillo, West Fountain Auto Body, Glocester Country Club, Lanzi Furs Inc., J&M Power Washing, Berarducci Funeral Services, Quality Properties, Johnston Town Councilwoman Lauren Garzone and RI Wholesale Jewellery. "Lastly, this organization (asks) anyone who follows the word of God, to pitch in and give us a call for support," Spirit of Hope said in their press release. "Please, one life lost to the cold weather means so much ... what we could have done to prevent this."



RESCUE KITS: Spirit of Hope's rescue kits each include a hat, gloves, socks, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, mylar blanket and more. (Submitted photo)

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spotlight ON BUSINESS

The Preserve at Briarcliffe

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By JENNIFER COATES

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

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

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

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

Residents at The Preserve enjoy three freshly prepared,



The tables are set in the welcoming and elegant dining room of The Preserve at Briarcliffe for one of the many healthy and chef-inspired meals served every day at this state-of-the-art, catered community in Johnston.

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

For those who are "creatures of habit", the chef at The Preserve has created an "Always Available" menu which

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

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

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BUSINESS

'Operation: Santa Paws'



CANINE KRINGLE: Morgan Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center in Johnston, where residents often benefit from animal-assisted therapy visits, has launched "Operation: Santa Paws" to collect pet supplies and donate them to a local animal shelter. Through Dec. 20, the skilled nursing facility at 80 Morgan Ave., welcomed donated items such as blankets and bed sheets, dog and cat beds, towels and washcloths, unopened pet food/treats, pet toys, grooming supplies, collars and leashes, and food/water bowls. For more information, visit MorganRehab.com. From left, Elisha Perito, HR manager, and Tracey Holmes, admissions director at Morgan Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, helped sort through the donations. (Submitted photo)

ANIMAL TALK
By Karen Kalunian
Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Jessica Woody

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

Johnston woman appointed to Neighborhood Health Plan of RI BOD

Johnston resident Yahaira "Jay" Placencia, of Bank of America Private Bank, and Dioscaris Garcia, PhD, of Brown University and Rhode Island Hospital, bring "important expertise, a commitment to ensuring more diverse and equitable communities, and strong records of service" to the Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island Board of Directors, according to the agency.

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island, a not-for-profit health plan founded to serve Rhode Island's at-risk populations, recently announced that Garcia and Placencia have been appointed to its board of directors.

Their contributions to Neighborhood's 17-member board will help advance the organization's long-term initiatives to ensure everyone in Rhode Island has comprehensive health care coverage and access to cost-effective, high-quality health care. Their expertise and lived experiences will bolster Neighborhood's continuous advocacy for healthcare equity for vulnerable Rhode Islanders.

As a senior vice president and private client advisor with Bank of America Private Bank in Providence, Placencia taps nearly 30 years' banking experience to address the financial and growth needs of business owners, entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations. Together with her team, she focuses on

uncovering possible efficiencies in investment management, business succession planning, tax minimization strategies, liquidity-event planning, and credit and lending strategies.

"Jay's deep experience in banking - from helping to grow businesses to assisting them identify cost efficiencies - makes her particularly valuable to Neighborhood," said Peter Marino, president and CEO of Neighborhood. "This important work coupled with her expertise at building relationships and applying strong strategic planning skills will assist Neighborhood as we innovate to improve the healthcare system. We are also excited about Jay's commitment to equity given our focus on ensuring health equity for the state's most at-risk populations."

Since joining Bank of America's business banking division in 2000, Placencia has held various roles, including senior client manager. Her responsibilities in that role included oversight of key commercial client relationships and development of strategies to support for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. She joined Bank of America Private Bank (formerly U.S. Trust) in 2014, and began her career in banking in 1993 working for a local non-traditional lender.

Deeply committed to her community, Placencia is a member of the Rhode Is-



PLACENCIA

land Commodores, serves on the Rhode Island Foundation Impact Investment Board and is a member of the Foundation's Equity Leadership Institute Steering Committee. She is also director for the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce Board, Trustee of the University of Rhode Island Board, and Chair of the Community Advisory Board for the United Way of Rhode Island.

Placencia earned her Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Rhode Island while working full-time. She is a first generation Dominican American and a resident of Johnston.



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Sports

The year's best



STATE CHAMPS: The Johnston boys volleyball team after winning the state championship in June. (Photo by Leo van Dijk/Irthyphoto.zenfolio.com)

Boys Team of the Year: Volleyball

The Johnston boys volleyball team captured the school's lone state championship in 2022 and was one of the best clubs in Rhode Island. It was also the

program's first ever title after joining the RIIL in 2018.

The Panthers' program struggled early in its inception, winning only one

game in its first two seasons. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit and canceled the 2020 season, which halted the growth that the Panthers seemed poised for in

their third year.

However, the team would return in a shortened 2021 season and go 6-1 and

BOYS - PAGE 17

Girls Team of the Year: Soccer

The Johnston girls soccer team dropped to Division IV this past season and made the most of the move, finishing in first place with a 14-1 record and reaching the semifinals.

The Panthers were coming off of multiple down seasons and were looking for a spark in the program. The move down paid dividends and the Panthers were able to reach their full potential in the new field and were instant contenders, finishing the regular season as the favorite to win the championship.

Although Johnston's run was ended by Providence Country Day, the Panthers enjoyed a nice



BIG YEAR: The Johnston girls soccer team this past fall season. (Submitted photo)

GIRLS - PAGE 17

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ON THE COURT: Derek Salvatore in a recent game. (Photo by Alex Sponseller)

Boy Athlete of the Year: Derek Salvatore

Derek Salvatore is the *Johnston Sun Rise's* Boy Athlete of the Year for the impact he made on both the basketball court and baseball diamond.

Salvatore, a senior, has been a member of the basketball team since his freshman season and was the starting point guard in 2021-2022, helping guide the Panthers to the playoffs. His standout campaign helped garner him Second-Team All Division honors from the coaches association, and he is already off to a stellar start this winter season.

Salvatore also made his college decision official recently, committing to play for Division III St. Joseph's College in Maine.

Salvatore was also a member of the baseball team, which had a big 2022 spring and qualified for the playoffs. He was later named to the All Division Second Team.

Best of the rest: Jeremy Urena, Steven Finegan

Girl Athlete of the Year: Emily Iannuccilli

Emily Iannuccilli was a multi-sport athlete that finished her senior year strong on both the basketball court and softball diamond.

Although the Johnston-North Providence girls basketball co-op had a down season, Iannuccilli was a standout point guard for the club and was a leader both on and off the court, along with being the team's top producer most nights on the scoresheet.

Iannuccilli then went on to have a huge softball season for the Panthers, where she led the team with a .450 batting average to go along with a team-leading 27 hits and 10 stolen bases. Her performance helped the Panthers return to the postseason.

Iannuccilli would later be named to the Division II First Team and Second Team All-State by the coaches association. She



THE THROW TO FIRST: Emily Iannuccilli makes a play last softball season. (Photo by Alex Sponseller)

will be playing college softball for Nichols College in Dudley, Mass this coming spring season.

Best of the rest: Alexia DiLorenzo, Talia LaFlamme

Boys

(Continued from page 16)

advance to the semifinals. Much of the same core returned in 2022 and they were on a mission to take the next step.

The Panthers did just that and rolled to a 14-2 record in the regular season, which was good for second place overall. John-

ston would stay hot in the postseason and beat St. Ray's in a 3-2 thriller to advance to the state finals against Exeter-West Greenwich, where it would roll to a 3-1 win after dropping the first set.

Joseph Cateno-Gonzalez was named First Team All-Division while Josh Philbrick and Kasem Sasa were named to the second team.

Best of the rest: Baseball, wrestling

Girls

(Continued from page 16)

bounce back season and set themselves up for what should be another big year next fall.

Leading scorer Alexia DiLorenzo and Ayomide Olagundoye were named to

the coaches association's All-State Division IV team while Olivia Iafrate and Kaylee Poole were named to the Division IV First Team and Ava Waterman the second. First year head coach Toni Scavitti was named the Division IV Coach of the Year.

Best of the rest: Softball

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The best of 2022

It's the final week of the year which means one thing ... taking a look back.

As you can see, this week we are revealing our end of the year awards to our local teams, players and coaches. It is always a challenge to narrow it down to just a handful of recipients, and this year may have been the hardest one yet.

Rhode Island has one of the most overlooked and undervalued sports scenes in the country, but fortunately, that has been improving on an annual basis since I arrived here in 2018. I am very appreciative of the locals that are so passionate and so talented. This is an incredible sports community and I am thrilled to once again be able to help celebrate all of the accomplishments of our teams.

As we say goodbye to 2022, let's also welcome in 2023. If it is half the fun that 2022 was, then we should be in for a pretty good year.

Happy New Year to all of our readers, it is a pleasure covering you.

Now, let's reflect some. Here are some of my favorite moments of the year 2022:

I am a sucker for an underdog story, and last winter playoffs (which took place in February and March), provided plenty.

Rarely do we consider a Bishop Hendricken team to be an underdog, but both the basketball and hockey clubs were just that early last season.

The basketball team lost to La Salle in the regular season, lost twice to Classical, then was beat a third time by the Purple in the Division I Championship.

Most people counted them out of the state tournament. Sure, we knew they'd be competitive and have a chance, but the Purple were just so good and had their number three times. Well, Eze Wali and com-

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

ALEXS@
RHODYBEAT.COM

pany played their very best in the state tournament and avenged those losses and got it done in thrilling fashion.

Then, in hockey, La Salle was undefeated and seemed to be the odds on favorite to roll to the title. The Hawks did not back down and beat the Rams in the semis then cruised past East Greenwich in the championship series to win.

Also, the West girls basketball team. Midway through the regular season, the Falcons were not even in the playoff picture and seemed to be going through growing pains. Then, out of nowhere, the team gelled and emerged as maybe the best-rounded team in the state. Maddie Alves was a defensive monster, Kaitlyn Antonucci was great under the basket, Maylina Cotto-Santiago was a sniper on the outside. Just like that, they wound up in the state Final Four. Incredible.

We had some electric teams competing in the spring for our schools. Our best overall team, in my opinion, was the Pilgrim boys lacrosse team.

The Pats were coming off a heartbreaking end to their 2021 spring, in which they lost in the championship game against Burrillville, a team that in reality, they probably should have beaten.

Instead of being discouraged,

the Pats came back with a vengeance in 2022 and went undefeated and rolled to the championship. Pilgrim was virtually untested throughout the entire year and beat Narragansett 12-5 in the title match.

Guys like Ryan Barlow and Braxton Bragg were some of the best players in the state. Half the roster seemed top earn postseason awards and rightfully so. I said this at the time, but I think Pilgrim would have been a playoff team in Division II and even may have been a competitive team in Division I. The way it dominated Division III was something special to see.

Although I hate to celebrate against the home team, the football state championship was a remarkable story. La Salle lost to the Hawks in the regular season and the Hawks were seemingly unbeatable. Well, not only did the Rams get the win, but they ran away with it. The game was over late in the third quarter.

Games like these make you really stop and appreciate what sports are. No team is truly unbeatable, any day can be "your day".

It really all comes down to who outplays the other on the day of, virtually nothing else matters.

Maybe my favorite story of the entire year was the Toll Gate girls soccer team.

The team lost girls like Olivia Dutra in the regular season then faced other injuries throughout the year. The Titans were basically playing with half of their starting lineup at times, but still pulled off a first-place finish and claimed the championship. Not to mention the team was in the middle of a bus accident just hours before the start of the big game. This team had every reason to fold, but it never did, and much of the same core will be back in 2023.

Boys Coach of the Year: Greta Lalli

Greta Lalli helped pave the way for the Johnston boys volleyball program to establish itself in the RIIL, and in 2022, the team reached the promised land by winning its first ever state championship.

The Panthers had a remarkable turnaround in 2021 after returning from the pandemic, going 6-1 in the shortened season and breaking through as true contenders. The team picked up right where it left off and would cruise to the title.

Lalli's program on both the boys and girls side is consistent and battle-tested, as evidenced by this year's club. The Panthers had to dig deep to beat St. Ray's in the semis



CHAMPIONSHIP COACH: Greta Lalli after the Panthers won the state title. (Photo by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)

and also battled back from an early deficit in the finals against EWG.

Lalli's leadership was recognized by the NFHS, as she

was recently named the boys volleyball coach of the year.

Best of the rest: Joe Acciardo, Mike Bedrosian, John Antonucci

Girls Coach of the Year: Toni Scavitti

The Johnston girls soccer program struggled in 2021 and needed a breath of fresh air heading into 2022. The Panthers dropped to Division IV and also elevated Toni Scavitti to the head coaching position, which paid immediate dividends.

The Panthers played with confidence from the get-

go, and Scavitti's system helped Johnston boast the division's best defense, allowing less than a goal per game. Scavitti also helped standouts like Alexia DiLorenzo take a step forward to lift the team to the playoffs.

Scavitti was later named the Division IV Coach of the Year by the coaches association.



LEADING THE WAY: Toni Scavitti this past fall. (Submitted photo)

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Christmas tree drop off and volunteers

By **CAPT. DAVE MONTI**

Narragansett Trout Unlimited and the RI Department of Environmental Management Fish & Wildlife Division are collaborating once again this year on their Trees for Trout program.

The Trees for Trout program uses recycled Christmas trees to improve habitat for wild trout and other aquatic organisms. The trees are strategically installed in streams and rivers to reduce erosion, provide refuge habitat, and stabilize stream banks.

The trees will be placed along riverbanks to provide stability and control erosion. Known as "conifer revetments," they will trap sediment and decompose to gradually become part of the banks themselves. In the meantime, their branches along the edges in the water will offer protection for small trout and other aquatic animals seeking a place to hide from predators.

Drop off your trees Saturday, Jan. 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Arcadia Check Station, Arcadia Management Area, Route 165, Ten Rod Road at Wood River, Exeter, RI.

Real trees only, not fake ones or trees sprayed with fire-retardant chemicals. All decorations and lights, as well as the stand, must be removed before the tree is dropped off.

Please call or email if you would like to volunteer. Even if it's just for a few hours. Contact Maddie Proulx at Madison.Proulx.INT@dem.ri.gov or Dana Kopek at Dana.Kopek.CTR@dem.ri.gov for RIDEM Volunteering or John Genovesi at rhodyflyangler@gmail.com.

Wind farm protections for whales

NOAA Fisheries is seeking comments on proposed regulations to protect marine mammals and minimize the incidental harassment of marine mammals during the

construction of the Revolution Wind Farm and its cable installation off Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

The public comment period is open from Dec. 23, 2022 until Jan. 23, 2023. Documents associated with this proposed action, including how to submit a public comment, are available on NOAA's website at <https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2022-27491.pdf>.

This regulatory action is part of NOAA's ongoing work to ensure the nation's robust deployment of offshore wind energy is done in a manner that avoids and minimizes risks to protected resources, habitats, and managed fisheries.

The comment document relates, "No mortality or serious injury is anticipated or proposed for authorization." To safeguard mammals, especially whales, the proposed regulations include such things as safeguards against incidental harm by pile driving (impact and vibratory), potential unexploded ordnance (UXO/MEC) detonation, and vessel-based site assessment surveys using high-resolution geophysical (HRG) equipment.

Anglers are urged to comment on proposed safeguards.

NOAA Fisheries announces new strategic plan for 2022-2025

Last week NOAA Fisheries announced a new 2022-2025 strategic plan for the agency. For a copy of the plan visit www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2022-12/NOAA-Fisheries-2022-25-StrategicPlan.pdf.

The goals of the plan include: Building a climate-ready nation, including resilient fisheries and coastal communities; Ensuring the sustainability and competitiveness of U.S. fishing and seafood industries; Recovering and protecting marine species; and Continuing to build a mission-oriented, diverse workforce and to promote equity and environmental justice.

NOAA Fisheries related, "We are focused on confronting climate change, expanding our science capabilities, supporting conservation initiatives, including America the Beautiful, protecting and conserving our marine resources, and advancing equity and environmental justice."

The plan defines NOAA's role as they confront the growing effects of climate change impacts on their conservation and management mission. NOAA Fisheries plans on providing scientific information, tools, and capacity for resource managers and stakeholders to assess and reduce impacts, increase resilience, and help adapt to changing ocean conditions.

Offshore wind energy development also plays an important role in U.S. efforts to combat the climate crisis and build a clean energy economy. In support of the Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, NOAA Fisheries will continue to play an important regulatory role. They plan to focus on minimizing the impacts to ocean resources, critical habitats, and fishing opportunities throughout the planning, siting, and development stages.

NOAA said in an advisory it aims to "Increase the competitiveness of the U.S. seafood industry to help make it more resilient to future market and environmental shocks as well as support domestic production and jobs and help ensure food security." They also plan to "Prioritize equity and environmental justice by promoting programs, policies, and activities to address the disproportionately high and adverse human health, environmental, climate-related, and other cumulative impacts on disadvantaged communities."

MA Climate Change Assessment

The Baker-Polito Administration, through the Executive Office of Energy and Environment Affairs (EEA), released the "MA Climate Change Assessment," the

first statewide assessment detailing how Massachusetts people, environments, and infrastructure may be affected by climate change and related hazards through the end of the century. For a copy of the report visit www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-climate-change-assessment.

The assessment will directly inform the first five-year update to the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (SHMCAP) that will be released in Fall 2023. Importantly, it evaluates 37 climate impacts across five sectors: Human, Infrastructure, Natural Environment, Governance, and Economy; and seven regions of the Commonwealth.

Where's the bite

Freshwater. Anglers are reminded to renew their licenses for salt and fresh water for 2023. For licensing information and a list of trout stocked ponds in Rhode Island visit www.dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/freshwater-fishing/freshwater-fishing-faq; and in Massachusetts visit www.mass.gov/freshwater-fishing-information.

Striped bass fishing in our salt ponds and estuaries is still good. I plan to fish once we have a 45 to 50 degree day with low to moderate wind conditions. At press time we just have not had this type of day in a while.

Cod, tautog and black sea bass are being targeted together on party boats until December 31 at which time both the tautog season and black sea bass seasons end in Rhode Island and Massachusetts (were BSB ended earlier on September 4). Party boats fishing for cod this winter include the Frances Fleet at www.francesfleet.com and the Island Current at www.islandcurrent.com.

Rates vary but are about \$135 per adult for a full day of fishing, call to check schedules and make a reservation.

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RhodyLife



Local Mayor moved by 4th grader's 'natural feeling' to help others

By KATE CARBERRY

Last Wednesday when 10-year-old Warwick resident Kassidy Underwood stopped at Mayor Frank Picozzi's home to make a donation to his annual holiday lights display, she had no idea the series of events it would trigger.

The St. Kevin School fourth grader included a letter explaining that last spring she had a lemonade stand in which she raised \$101 for The Tomorrow Fund. The Tomorrow Fund is an organization that helps to ease families suffering the traumatic financial and emotional stress of childhood cancer. The fund is Picozzi's charity of choice for the proceeds of his lights display. What the letter did not contain was Kassidy's full name and this is when the Mayor sprung into action. He was so moved when he found the letter in the donation box that he took to his Facebook account. He posted a picture of the letter and a plea to his followers, "If anyone knows who this child is, please tell me privately. I would love to meet her."

He also made a personal appeal to Kassidy indicating that he saves letters like these, occasionally reads them to remind himself that there are truly wonderful people in the world, that she has a beautiful heart and she and her family should be very proud. This is when the magic of the interconnections of social media came to play.

Mayor Picozzi's Facebook buzzed with hundreds and hundreds of comments and over 3,000 likes of this holiday story about a kindhearted child and her lemonade stand donation. He said he has a lot of followers and began receiving dozens of messages claiming, "I believe this person to be Kassidy this, or I think it's Kassidy that", saying many were wrong. As the wild Christmas light goose chase continued one theme became apparent, many people were inspired by Kassidy with the unknown last name. So inspired in fact that the Mayor's overall collection for the fund kept ticking upward as more and more people became aware of the story. From the time of the initial post to date more than \$1,500 was contributed by those touched and provoked by Kassidy's \$101 offering. A mother of a student in Kassidy's class correctly identified her.

Meanwhile, Lisa and Mike Underwood, Kassidy's mother and father, were going about their daily hustle bustle of the holiday season when word of the Mayor's Facebook appeal made it their way. Lisa said she was shopping, and had her phone in her pocket and when she pulled it out it was full of messages. She called her husband, who was home, and said "I have to go on the Mayor's page and see what is going on." Once she got home she read the comments and responded to Mayor Picozzi.

On Friday morning, the Underwood Family was invited to City Hall. The Mayor presented Kassidy with a citation in recognition of her charitable work to benefit The Tomorrow Fund. Picozzi said, "most children your age would just take that money and buy something for themselves, and I understand that, but you thought about other people. I don't think you know how special you are, I really don't and that is why we wanted to bring you in here and acknowledge your story. You are my hero."

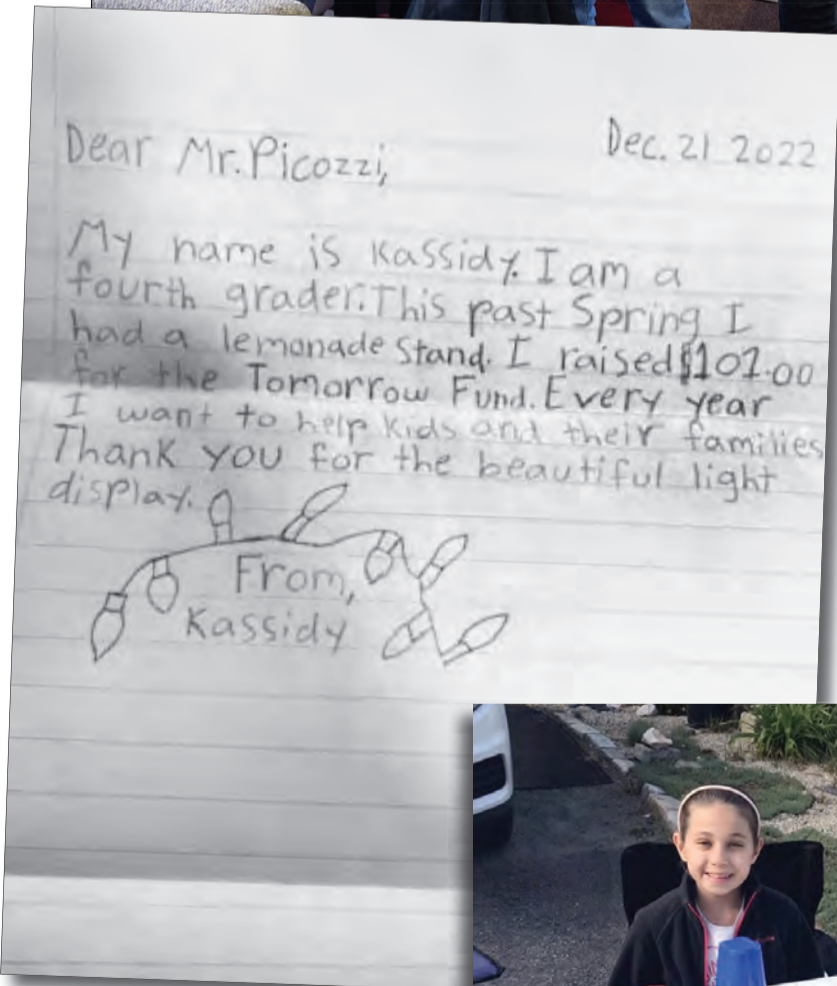
When asked what prompted her to raise money for the fund, Kassidy said, "it was a natural feeling." In mutual admiration Kassidy's father Mike added, "She comes to your light display and you inspire her." Also in attendance was Lisa Abbenante, Executive Director of The Tomorrow Fund. She explained to Kassidy how the funds help families effected by childhood cancer pay their mortgages and keep electricity working. She graciously told Kassidy, "Your story is fantastic. It is the most sincere form of children helping other children. Your donation is tremendously helpful and on behalf of those children and families we say thank you so very, very much."

Mayor Picozzi also pointed out that 2022 has been a slow year for his light display. He said that there were about seven or eight rainouts, three of those being on Saturdays, generally his busiest night. He said he was a little disappointed with donations, however after the events of the past week his hope was restored. In addition to the unexpected extra \$1,500 in Kassidy inspired donations, the Warwick Police Department extended their No Shave November fundraiser, where members of the department refrain from shaving, into December. They chose The Tomorrow Fund as their recipient and raised \$4,145 which was dropped off to City Hall last week. Picozzi said, "As Mayor I am so proud of our officers for their generosity and dedication to our community."

Not to be outdone, Kassidy Underwood did not show up empty handed to receive her citation. She had two more donations each in the amount of \$101 - one from her grandfather and the other from her cousin in Alabama. Picozzi gleefully retorted, "See? You're inspiring people." He then had Kassidy take a seat behind the desk in his Mayor's chair, he claimed "You might as well try it out... You are going places".



(Top) CITATION CEREMONY: (L-R) Mike Underwood, Lisa Underwood, Kassidy Underwood, Warwick Mayor Frank Picozzi, Executive Director of The Tomorrow Fund Lisa Abbenante.



(Above) The letter that Kassidy Underwood left in the donation box at Mayor Picozzi's holiday light display



(Right) Kassidy Underwood at her lemonade stand last spring.

COLLECTIBLES



Canteens of the American Revolution

One of the items of important gear used during the American Revolution has to be the canteen. Obviously, the musket and bayonet are necessary, but without water an army can't keep marching and fighting. There were various types used, and my favorite is the so-called "cheesebox" style, which is a collector's term. When you look at one you can see why they are called that. They look just like a cheesebox but with both ends closed. For a long time, people thought these were used during the War of 1812; however, a few dated examples and new research has proven that they were used prior to and during the American Revolution in large numbers.

They are constructed with two pine ends, or drums, about 7" in diameter which are attached to an ash hoop about 2 3/4" wide. The drums are attached with small wooden pegs and the hoop is nailed to itself and the drums. Many of them have two small iron wire loops on the sides and one on the bottom to be slung with a thin piece of linen



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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cording, commonly called a line. There are also examples with three leather tabs nailed to the hoop so that either a line or a thin leather strap can be attached. They were cheap to make and were probably strong enough to withstand a season of campaigning before needing to be replaced. The earliest known example I have seen is in a private collection. It is marked "N.H./1771" on the drum, probably the original owner's initials and the date. Documentation proves they were being produced as early as the 1750s.

In October 1774, Massachusetts formed its own Provincial Congress and began collecting tax money. Some of these monies were used to purchase sup-

plies to form an army for the war that was brewing with England. Colonel Benjamin Lincoln (later general) from Hingham, Massachusetts was the man who was responsible for gathering a supply of canteens amongst other warlike stores. Hingham was a town known for their wood working skills, and many were probably produced in and around that town. By April 14, 1775, just five days before the outbreak of the war, there were 15,000 canteens stored in the Town of Concord at the home of Ephraim Potter.

After the Battle of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, the canteens were shipped into the Siege of Boston for issue to the troops. Many of the supply books survive that show all the issues to units that surrounded Boston. Although 15,000 is a large number, they continued to be manufactured and shipped to the supply locations. When George Washington took command of the newly formed Continental Army, he asked for a list of all the arms and provisions on hand. Even

with the many canteens that had been issued, on July 4, 1775, there were still 13,000 on hand.

These canteens, or "wooden bottles" as they are sometimes called, were issued to soldiers throughout the war, and supply documents list wooden canteens in stores when the war officially ended in 1783. While such a simple object, these canteens can be highly collectable, especially when marked with a date and the name of a soldier.



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WARWICK SHOWCASE

THE WHALE

***** (Joyce) ***** 1/2 (Don)
Psychological Drama

Brendan Fraser stars as Charlie, a reclusive, 600-pound internet writing teacher with all kinds of personal issues. To start with, he is so overweight, he can't get out of his chair or into bed without help from his nurse and friend, Liz, or mechanical devices.

Estranged from his wife and teenage daughter when he becomes involved with one of his male students, it has been eight years since he has seen them.

He is visited by a missionary, with whom he has deep conversations about life and death and the existence of God.

He teaches his writing class by Zoom, with his screen image black so they can't be turned off by his morbid obesity.

He finds a way to have his daughter visit him by helping her write an essay in order to graduate.

There is much symbolism in the story, centering around the whale and Melville's classic tale of Moby Dick.

Charlie has congestive heart failure and tempts death at every turn, binge eating pizza and pushing his bloated body and psychotic mind to extremes.

There is so much more in this two-hour plus movie, taken from Samuel D. Hunter's play.

Fraser is terrific, as is the supporting cast. Makeup must have taken hours.

The screen is square, emphasizing the confinement of Charlie's cluttered house.

Major issues of homosexuality, suicide, religion, estrangement, resentment and obesity are dealt with intensity, leaving the viewer emotionally exhausted.

Joyce said that for the first time since "Saving Private Ryan" that a movie brought tears to her eyes.

If you want to immerse yourself in a whale of a movie (I can't imagine an actor doing this every night live on stage), see "The Whale."

WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY

*** 1/2

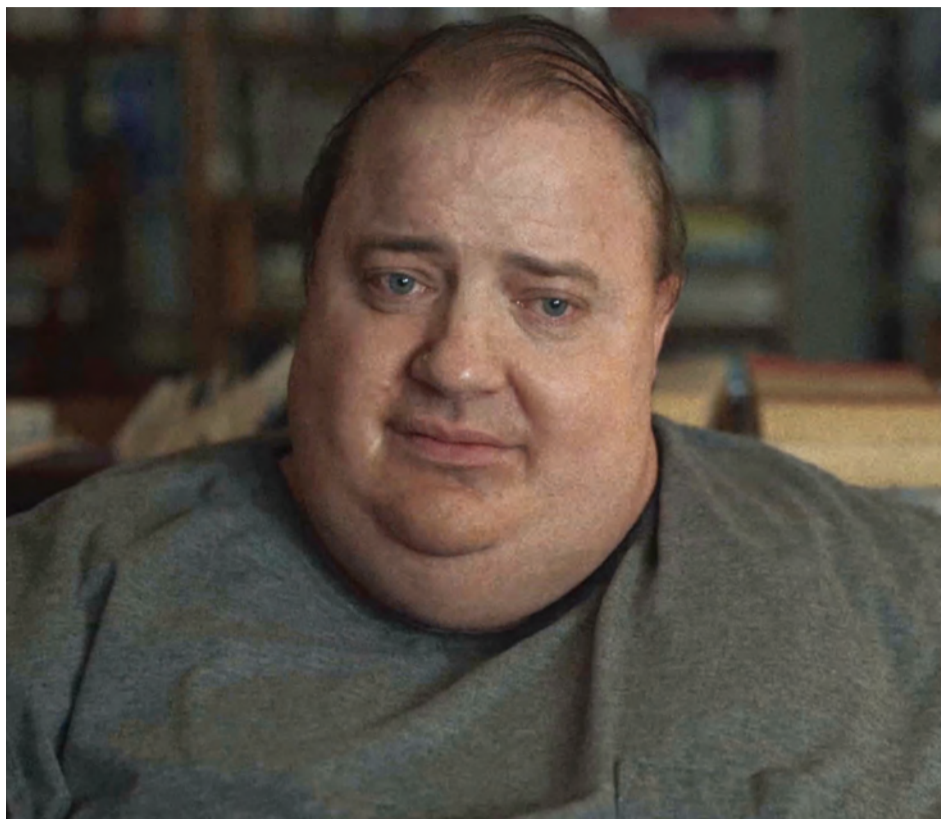
(Whitney Houston Biopic)

Naomie Ackie makes a believable Whitney Houston, lip syncing dozens of the singer's hits and depicting her up

See it at the

with
Joyce & Don
Fowler

MOVIES



THE WHALE

and down career and life with passion.

Stanley Tucci, who can play any role he is handed, plays Clive Davis, Houston's producer, who knows the moment he sees her that she will be a star.

Davis is also a producer of the biopic.

While we pretty well know the ups and downs of Whitney's tragic life, we do get a closer look of her relationship with her "girlfriend" and subsequent marriage of 15 years to Bobbie Brown.

Brown's abusive treatment of Whitney seems to be underplayed, from what we remember from the media.

The movie plays out like many biopics, with the difference being the music, which is terrific.

There is no doubt that Whitney Hous-

ton was one, if not the, best singer of her generation, and we get to hear her actual voice.

BABYLON

** 1/2

(Epic, Often Offensive Comedy/Drama)

Less than 15 minutes into the over three-hour movie, the couple next to us stormed out of the theatre.

I guess the elephant defecating and the woman urinating was a bit too much. They missed the full-frontal nudity, vomiting, spitting and kinky sex. Like to watch a freak show with tasteless sex and a guy eating rats? Stick around! What would have been X-rated a few

years ago now becomes a decadent display of what supposedly was common back in the Hollywood of the twenties.

In the center of the depravity is Jack Conrad (Brad Pitt), actor/director of epic silent films.

Diego Calva plays his Mexican gofer, who rises in responsibility, becoming a success when the silent film industry changed to the talkies and Jack is left in the dust, along with his leading lady, Nellie (Margot Robie).

Both profane and profound, "Babylon" is often an epic depiction of the movie industry with all its flaws, innovations, and racism.

We are sure that we have either turned you on or turned you off with this review. We have certainly raised your curiosity level.

We learned the fate of all the main characters before the film comes to a screeching halt.

NETFLIX

**GLASS ONION:
A KNIVES OUT MYSTERY**

*** (Joyce) ** 1/2 (Don)

Joyce loves the genre and I like it.

I like it more when the writers give you clues that make you a participant in solving the murder.

While this one throws some red herrings at you to throw you off from solving the mystery, it also changes the game by adding some scenes that were not shared with the audience earlier.

If the actors were playing it straight, there's some poor acting. If they were being farcical, there is some bad acting... including Daniel Craig as the self-proclaimed Benoit Blanc, best detective in the world.

Edward Norton plays a wealthy high tech entrepreneur who invites his old friends whom he hasn't seen for years (there's a reason for that) to his posh Greek island for a weekend game of solving a murder.

Somebody dies. Who and why?

By this time, I didn't care.

The host has numerous expensive objects in his mansion, including the Mona Lisa, which plays a major role in the story.

The problem is, we've seen the famous painting at the Louvre, and it is about the size of the one in the movie.



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Looking to ring in the New Year?

Here's what's happening around Rhode Island

By **ROB DUGUAY**

2022 is nearing its conclusion and before we know it, 2023 will be here and we'll be in the thick of it. With the new year, there's obvious resolutions and goals accented by hopes and aspirations. There's also the feeling of making the upcoming 12 months better than the previous 12 or wanting to carry on a period of success into the next cycle. Regardless of how you feel, a good way to ring in the new year is by going out and having some fun until the ball drops and perhaps even afterwards. There's lots of ways to accomplish this around Rhode Island, so here are a few options to consider if you're looking to party it up on New Year's Eve.

Badfish (Sublime Tribute) @ Ocean Mist
 895 Matunuck Beach Road
 South Kingstown
 9pm 21+ \$30

Born and bred in Rhode Island, Badfish has become the quintessential tribute band to the ska-punk legends Sublime. They have a giant nationwide tour coming up next month, but before that they'll be honoring their South County roots at the Ocean Mist on New Year's Eve. Brett Wilson from the reggae rock band Roots Of Creation and Joe Samba will be opening up the show so make sure to be prompt with your attendance.



MYSTIC DEAD
 (Photo courtesy of Darin Keech)

Mystic Dead (Grateful Dead Tribute) @ Knickerbocker Music Center
 35 Railroad Avenue Westerly
 8pm 21+ \$20/adv \$25/day of

Mystic Dead are an act that does deep dives into all sorts of material from jam band icons the Grateful Dead while providing a unique live experience. They also pull this off with each member remaining true to their own creative individuality, which has always been this tribute band's mantra since their beginnings in 2018. Local folk-rock act Woolly Mammoth are going to be kicking the night off with their wide-ranging array of sounds and songs.

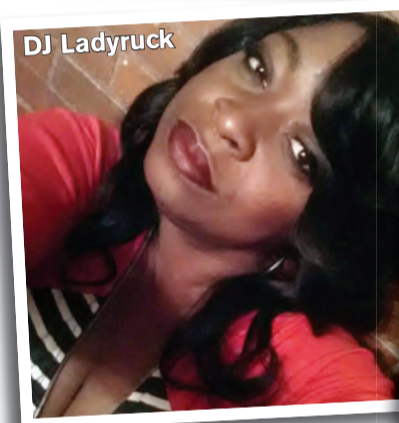


New Year's Eve Soul Power Dance Party @ Dusk
 301 Harris Avenue Providence
 9pm 21+ \$12

Soul Power is the best dance night in Providence that usually takes place at Dusk on the last Friday of each month with DJs Ty Jesso & John O'Leary spinning the best in garage rock, Motown soul, '60s British invasion, protopunk, classic R&B, groovy funk and everything in between. This special edition of Soul Power includes an array of snacks at the bar to indulge in and a champagne toast at midnight. It's the best way to dance into 2023 in "The Creative Capital" so prepare to wear a proper pair of shoes to groove in.

2023 New Year's Eve @ Escada Restaurant & Bar
 39 Putnam Pike Johnston
 8:30pm 21+ Free

For those who want a fun experience without having to dish out a cover charge, Escada has the best deal before the ball drops. Their New Year's Eve party is free admission with a champagne toast, food specials, complimentary hats, festive party favors and the award-winning DJ Ladyruck spinning jams all night long. RSVP'ng beforehand is strongly encouraged and you can do that by logging on to escadarestaurantbar.com.



Jessica Kirson @ Comedy Connection
 39 Warren Avenue East Providence
 10:30pm 18+ \$40

If you're looking to laugh your way into the new year, then the Comedy Connection is the ideal place to be. New York City based comic Jessica Kirson and she's gained a reputation for being a powerhouse performer while also being a guest on The Tonight Show, The View, The Howard Stern Show along with competing on Last Comic Standing and Celebrity Apprentice. She's going to be performing all weekend, but the only show that's not sold out is the one at 10:30pm on New Year's Eve so make sure to grab a ticket quickly.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

It's a new year and New Year's resolutions are top of mind. Whether they are resolutions to be healthier, achieve a better work/life balance, or to save more money and spend less, it might seem daunting. New Year's resolutions can be difficult to implement and stick with especially if they are radical, life-changing goals. However, by setting smaller goals it can be easier to attain them throughout the year. Many seniors enjoy their set routines and can benefit immensely from these three easy resolutions that will allow them to take small steps towards a better self in the New Year.

Volunteer

Volunteering is an easy and achievable New Year's resolution. There are many different ways to give back and it doesn't have to be monetarily. According to a report by Corporation for National Community Service, "research demonstrates that volunteering leads to better health... those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer." From volunteering at the local humane society, gardening in the local community garden or serving meals at your local soup kitchen, there are many ways to give back to the local community.

Exercise Your Brain

While it is important to get in the recommended 150 minutes of exercise per week, don't forget that keeping the brain active is equally essential. According to HelpGuide.Org, the more that you exercise your mind, the better it will work. Try picking up the daily crossword puzzle or the latest Sudoku. Senior learning classes are also a great way to keep minds active and alert and most community colleges offer free classes for seniors.

Learn a New Skill or Find a New Hobby

It's never too late to learn a new skill or hobby. Whether it's knitting, playing bocce ball or mahjogg, there's an activity for everyone. Exercises such as tai chi, water aerobics, yoga or Pilates can help control weight, build muscle and improve posture, balance and mood.

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I'm Grateful for Being Grateful

This is the time of year when we read a lot about gratitude. Friends often hear me talk about the importance of having “an attitude of gratitude.” Not everyone shares my opinion. A recent *Washington Post* article cited research that suggested the benefits of showing gratitude to others. It wondered why we don't give thanks more often. Another article offered 20 ways to “spark gratitude.”

I'm not a religious person, but I consider myself to be spiritual. I practice daily meditations, what most of you would probably call prayers. Some are prayers of gratitude for things in my life and in the lives of family and friends. Some are prayers of supplication, usually health related, for family and friends but rarely, if ever, for myself. These meditations keep me centered and focused. Plus, they help keep my blood pressure down, reason enough to practice them daily.

I can pinpoint exactly when I began doing this. My niece delivered her daughter at 23 weeks 3 days into her pregnancy. This micropremie weighed just one pound seven ounces and was not expected to survive. Today she is a thriving eighteen year old, working on her college applications. When she was born, I began praying for her; I still do. Her survival is one of the first things on my daily list of what I'm

grateful for.

Another is that I'm a 32 year breast cancer survivor. The past two years have been spent battling lung cancer. While I'm thankful for all of my good test results, I don't ask for them. I was originally told I was stage 4, with a 2 to 5 year usual survival expectation. That was 2 years ago, but my tumor hasn't grown during that time. I'm not receiving any more treatments and am now in what is considered a maintenance phase. I get regular CT scans to make sure there's nothing new going on in my lungs.

Early into my treatment, I remember thinking about my grandniece, the micropremie, who faced many health challenges early on in her life. When she was born, if I had been told that, in exchange for her survival, I had to agree to get terminal lung cancer in 20 years, I would have taken the deal. After all, at age 59, living until at least age 79 seemed reasonable if it meant this tiny treasure would live. Of course, looking back is easy when you know



RETIREMENT SPARKS

by ELAINE M. DECKER

you're already 75 and you'll be beating the odds if you pass 80.

Her survival and continued development set me on the path to my daily meditations. The list of those for whom I request health interventions keeps growing. Sadly, some people fall off that list because they've lost their battle, usually with some type of cancer. They're quickly replaced with others who have an equally challenging health issue. When I learn that someone's cancer is now in remission, I'm filled with gratitude on their behalf. It lifts my spirits to celebrate their success.

When I share my philosophy about having an attitude of gratitude, I'm occasionally met with a pessimistic:

“I have nothing to be grateful for.” I counter that everyone has something worth giving thanks for. You just have to think about what happens in your daily life. If there is one person with whom you would not want to trade places, you should have no complaints. Be thankful you're not in their shoes. Everyone knows at least some-

one who is dealing with major problems that they would not want to face. If it's not health, it might be financial or relationship issues.

I feel sorry for anyone who cannot get past feeling that they have nothing to be grateful for. Meditating on all the good things in my life, all the blessings I and my family and my friends have, lifts me up every day as I mentally go through that list. How very sad for those who are missing out on this opportunity.

Being grateful for the good things in other folks' lives can benefit you, too. But being grateful for the good things in your own life... Well, that's a blessing that can't easily be quantified but most certainly should not be ignored or forgotten. In this season of giving thanks, and on every day, I'm so grateful for being grateful!

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Elaine M. Decker's books include Retirement Downsizing—A Humorous Guide, Retirement Sparks, Retirement Sparks Again, Retirement Sparks Redux and CANCER: A Coping Guide. Her essays appear in the anthologies: 80 Things To Do When You Turn 80 and 70 Things To Do When You Turn 70. All are available on Amazon.com. Contact her at: emdecker@ix.netcom.com

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SOCIAL SECURITY

by CHERYL TUDINO
SOCIAL SECURITY PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

Social Security Benefits Increase in 2023

Approximately 70 million Americans will see an 8.7% increase in their Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments in 2023. On average, Social Security benefits will increase by more than \$140 per month starting in January.

Federal benefit rates increase when the cost-of-living rises, as measured by the Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index (CPI-W). The CPI-W rises when inflation increases, leading to a higher cost-of-living. This change means prices for goods and services, on average, are higher. The cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) helps to offset these costs. We will mail COLA notices throughout the month of December to retirement, survivors, and disability beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and representative payees. But if you want to know your new benefit amount sooner, you can securely obtain your Social Security COLA notice online using the Message Center in your personal my Social Security account.

You can access this information in early December, prior to receiving the mailed notice. Benefit amounts will not be available before December. Since you will receive the COLA notice online or in the mail, you don't need to contact us to get your new benefit amount.

If you prefer to access your COLA notice online and not receive the mailed notice, you can log in to your personal my Social Security account to opt out by changing your Preferences in the Message Center. You can update your preferences to opt out of the mailed COLA notice, and any other notices that are available online.

“Medicare premiums are going down and Social Security benefits are going up in 2023, which will give seniors more peace of mind and breathing room. This year's substantial Social Security cost-of-living adjustment is the first time in over a decade that Medicare premiums are not rising and shows that we can provide more support to older Americans who count on the benefits they have earned,” Acting Commissioner Kilolo Kijakazi said.

January 2023 marks when other changes will happen based on the increase in the national average wage index. For example, the maximum amount of earnings subject to Social Security payroll tax in 2023 will be higher. The retirement earnings test exempt amount will also change in 2023. Be among the first to know! Sign up for or log in to your personal my Social Security account today. Choose email or text under “Message Center Preferences” to receive courtesy notifications.





My Memories Ride the American Flyer Rails

My love of trains began when I was a young boy. Every winter we would open the living room doors, which had been closed to conserve heat, and put up the Christmas tree. At the bottom of the tree, I would set up my American Flyer model trains on rails affixed to a sheet of plywood, plug the power unit into the wall, and become a conductor guiding the trains around the oval track. I can still smell the incense burning from the smokestack of the small, log cabin replica as the train approached the iron bridge and railroad caution sign.

I have no doubt that this Yuletide tradition was repeated by countless children with toy railroad collections much more elaborate than mine. The Grimaldi Railroad Company (ironically there is a Grimaldi European shipping line) included a locomotive, coal car, box car and a caboose. The model inspired my childhood imagination, transported my dreams to faraway places, and nourished my appetite to travel when I became older.

In 1960, I rode the Silver Star from Miami, Florida to our home in Providence after a family vacation. The excitement of my first train trip made it very difficult to fall asleep on the overnight jaunt. Arriving in New York City the next day, we hopped the New Haven line for the final leg of our journey. It was my first glimpse of New York City and the canyons framed by skyscrapers; its wide, noisy, chaotic streets clogged with the traffic of honking cars and cabs; and more people in one place than I had ever seen in my lifetime! I half expected King Kong to swoop down from one of the buildings that seemed to touch the clouds. I was intimidated by the city's vastness and its cacophony and was relieved when we pulled out of the station.

In 1964, I rode the train with two of my high school buddies for a day trip to the World's Fair in Queens, New York. Although I enjoyed the wonders of the Fair, the train trip only whetted my appetite for more rail travel and fueled my aspirations to absorb the sights, sounds, and smells of places far beyond my South Providence tenement. During



MY SIDE OF THINGS

by LARRY GRIMALDI

my years as a URI student, I took the train back to Kingston from home many nights. I looked forward to the short, rhythmic trek over the clacking tracks back to the campus. Years later, I hopped on a train from Richmond, Virginia back home to North Providence after a visit with my son, who was living in in the Virginia at the time.

The most breathtaking train ride I took was from the small town of Woodsville, New Hampshire, my wife's hometown, to White River Junction, Vermont on a perfect summer evening. Most of the route ran parallel to the Connecticut River separating the two states. I rode with my father-in-law, Dale LaVoice, who was a conductor on the Boston and Maine Line. Even after more than 50 years, I can still smell the fragrance of the pine trees and visualize the muted colors of the woods along the river banks.

These days, the 60-year-old Grimaldi Crary Street Railroad Company is mothballed. Its cloth-encased electrical cords are frayed, the detached wheels dangle from the undercarriage of the heavy black locomotive, and the tracks have long since rusted and or have been lost to time. But I still set up the locomotive, cars, bridge, and caution signpost under the Christmas tree every year.

I've started to pass the model train tradition to my grandchildren. Three years ago, I purchased a starter set for my oldest grandson Nicholas at a local hobby shop. I plan to the same for four-year old grandson, Benjamin, Jr. when he gets a little older. I hope they love the model trains as much as I still do. Every Christmas, my memories return to my mind's station to catch the train and ride the American Flyer rails. All aboard!

Larry Grimaldi is a freelance writer from North Providence. Many of his previous PrimeTime columns have been re-issued in his anthology, "50 Shades of Life, Love, and Laughter." Columns published in this book are used with the permission of Beacon Communications. For more information about "50 Shades of Life, Love, and Laughter;" or any of his other books, e-mail lygrimaldi49@gmail.com

Old Photos Make Great Gifts



ACCORDING TO DON

by DON FOWLER

The dog-eared photo albums are gathering dust on our bookshelves as we plod along with our downsizing efforts.

Photos of children, grandchildren, travels, weddings, parties, Christmases past, birthdays, anniversaries, and any excuse we could think of were captured induplicate and triplicate with brownie cameras and flash bulbs, box cameras, fuzzy Polaroids, throwaway cameras, and in later life, after the kids had grown, more professional equipment.

A camera in a phone that also carries hundreds of pictures of your grandchildren and your cat?

Who ever heard of a thing!

With the latest invention, sales of photo albums plummeted.

One rainy day when I was totally bored, I picked up one of the photo albums.

Nine out of ten of the "pictures" were either blurred, out of focus, faded, or of poor quality.

But every so often a gem appeared.

My son in his birthday suit.

My daughter playing the ukulele.

The two of them looking up the fireplace chimney for Santa Clause.

A photo of my favorite aunt smiling in the background at our wedding.

My gang from grammar school.

Joyce helping the Massa Mari tribe put cow dung on their straw huts.

And on and on, enjoying wonderful memories, including travel photos to China, Russia, Egypt and other places that aren't very safe these days.

Altogether, there were over two dozen albums plus more boxes of miscellaneous photos.

To avoid exhaustion, I decided to

look at one a day, throwing out duplicates and those of poor quality.

Then it hit me: I'll bet Alex would love a photo of his winning hockey goal. And Bonnie a funny shot of her husband, who passed away years ago.

So I've started the selection process and writing little notes to send off to all corners of the world, including my immediate family, writing a brief note and including them in Christmas cards to people I see often and those I haven't seen in decades.

I am sure the photos will still get passed around at this year's family Christmas celebration and we will look at photos taken of the dog only hours earlier, but I hope we will get a laugh and a remembrance of children and grandparents taken with an old Polaroid fifty years ago.

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Achieve New Year's Resolution Success With Helpful Planning Tools

The new year is often a time to set new goals. However, statistics show that very few people are successful in keeping their resolutions. Why? Likely, because they don't have a realistic, long-term plan. And, as Ben Franklin said, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." This year, create "SMART" goals—as in Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely. Here are a few ideas on how to set yourself up for success with some of the most common New Year's resolutions.

1. Focus on Fitness According to a survey of adults who made a New Year's resolution, the most popular goal (48%) was to exercise more. The best way to stick to it is to do something you enjoy. So whether it's running, biking or yoga, find a way to make it fun. That might mean purchasing new workout clothes or equipment or finding a friend to join in to socialize with and to keep you going. Just remember to start slow, track your progress and you'll soon be getting fit in your favorite way.

2. Connect with Family and Friends With busy schedules, staying connected with friends and family can be difficult. Resolving to keep in touch can be easy though, thanks to new digital tools. Luckily, a subscription service like AmericanGreetings.com allows you to send a variety of digital greetings for any holiday or occasion. To ensure you keep in touch, the

personalized greeting cards can be pre-scheduled for delivery by email up to one year in advance or can be sent via text or social media. Plus, you can even include a gift card. Best of all, one subscription unlocks access to the entire American Greetings' online library, including SmashUps video greetings, Creatacard digital cards, and Pics & Wishes multi-media messages. Subscriptions are \$6.99 per month or \$29.99 per year.

3. Improve Finances If improving your finances is one of your goals, the best place to start is to track your previous year's expenses and categorize them. You might be shocked how those daily lattes or online impulse buys add up! Then, find a financial system that works for you. This could be as simple as a spreadsheet outlining and recording your set expenses and discretionary funds; or syncing your data to your online accounts utilizing a budget-tracking app. Once your system is in place, you'll be able to find areas for improvement and set new financial goals for the future.

4. Get Organized Getting organized is always a top resolution for the new year—and managing your schedule is a simple way to relieve stress and improve productivity. Start by outlining your daily, weekly or monthly commitments with a planner or online calendar. Google Calendar, for example, is a free option that allows you to view and color code appointments by category. Plus, by recording and prioritizing your responsibilities, you'll also be able to see your free time, so you can make time for things you enjoy.

5. Make Time for Mental Health In addition to improving physical fitness, managing mental wellness should be at the top of the resolution list. According to Mental Health First Aid, Americans cited enhanced self-confidence (64%), increased productivity (67%), and increased happiness (71%) as the top benefits of mental self-care. So, start your year by adding "mental break" moments to your daily and weekly schedule (maybe on your new calendar). Self-care can be anything from meditation and sleep, to cooking or reading, as long as it helps you decompress, unwind and find your mental zen.

New Year's resolutions can feel overwhelming; but by using available tools to plan ahead and keep you on track, you'll have realistic ways to achieve your goals. (StatePoint)

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The Carol Sing

MEMOIRS

by SUSAN DEAN

Christmas was always an exciting time of year. My mother would begin the decorating as December dawned, but she would do it gradually. So that every day when we came home from school, there would be another decoration added. A Christmas candy dish on the living room coffee table. Or our wax figure candles - choir boys for my brothers, an angel for me - never lit, but displayed every year - sitting on the mantel. A wreath with a big red bow would appear on the front door. And the house would slowly, but steadily assume its holiday appearance.

There were many traditions associated with Christmas, but there was one in particular that I especially looked forward to every year that happened even before the big day. The night before Christmas Eve was the night of the Carol Sing. Since Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were spent with my mother's family, the Carol Sing was our holiday celebration spent with my father's family.

My father had four sisters and two brothers. One of his sisters and one of his brothers were musicians. Aunt Rosalie was a school music teacher. I actually had her for music during my elementary school years in Warwick for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Uncle Ernest was a music teacher in the Providence school system.

I remember feeling excited the day before Christmas Eve and couldn't wait for the school day to end as it was often a school day, depending on when the holidays landed each year. We'd change into our holiday best, my mother would pack up the casserole or dessert she was bringing, and we'd pile into the car - long before seat belts in those early years.

Uncle Ernest and his wife, Aunt Elisa, rotated with Aunt Lil and her husband, Uncle Anthony - each hosting every other year. Aunt Lil was another of my

father's sisters. It was always a dark, cold night - sometimes with a bright moon and a million stars shimmering above, sometimes it was icy or snowy. But no matter the weather, the annual Carol Sing went on.

The festivities were always already in full swing when we arrived. Making our way up the walkway, the brightly lit windows revealed aunts, uncles, and cousins in a swirl of red and green - laughing and already making merry. We'd tumble through the front door as the nearest person would answer our ring and someone would take our coats. Then hugs and kisses all around.

I remember the savory smells of the many dishes making up the buffet and the variety of tasty sweets for dessert. The night always began with dinner, the adults clustered together in conversation groups, and the cousins huddled in corners balancing our plates on our laps and knees, happily chatting and catching up with each other.

Once the table was cleared, it was time for the music to begin. Uncle Ernest would sit at the piano and someone would hand out Christmas carol handbooks. We'd sing every carol, including all the verses of each, and there was always impromptu harmony coming from the crowd. Uncle Tom usually pulled out his trombone to accompany, and all together we made beautiful music.

The highlight of the evening was when Aunt Rosalie called the cousins together - there were thirteen of us - and lined us up in a row by age and height. She'd give each of us a shiny gold handbell, sometimes giving the older cousins two bells to hold. She'd stand in front of us as our conductor and whoever she pointed to would ring

his or her bell. It amazed me that she always remembered who had which bell as I watched her arms waving in all directions, and how we were somehow able to seamlessly produce harmonious resounding Christmas music, just by ringing our bells following her cues and direction. She magically turned us into a beautiful handbell choir once a year. Our parents, aunts, and uncles were our audience, and I remember their smiling faces full of love and pride. I loved the ringing sound of the bells, the harmonic mingling of their tones, and I loved knowing that each time Aunt Rosalie pointed at me and I rang my bell, I was an integral part of the beautiful music we created together.

The night would come to an end too soon, although it was always close to midnight when we said our goodbyes and headed out into the icy, cold air and made the drive home.

The years passed and eventually my cousin Steve and his wife, Michelle, took over hosting the annual Carol Sing. I have a picture of my daughters and Steve and Michelle's daughter, Leah - when the girls were little - standing together in their green and red velvet dresses singing with Uncle Ernest at the piano.

Leah is now hosting the Carol Sing as another generation - my grandchildren and the grandchildren of my cousins are now the little ones. Aunt Rosalie and Uncle Ernest are long gone, but their music and traditions have lived on.

The Carol Sing holds a special place in my childhood memories, where I learned the beauty and magic of making music together. And whenever I hear the chiming of Christmas bells, I'm reminded of those long ago nights every December 23rd, when the ringing of the handbells and the beautiful music we created together seared itself into my heart and made my soul sing.

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DID YOU KNOW

The burden on health care costs in retirement could be a significant hurdle for retirees without a sizable nest egg or effective strategy to cover such expenses. According to the Fidelity Retiree Health Care Cost Estimate, an average retired couple aged 65 in 2022 could need around \$315,000 after taxes to cover their health care expenses in retirement. Thought traditional retirement goals like financing travel or relocating to a warmer climate are worthy pursuits, it's vital that individuals of all ages, including those on the cusp of retirement, recognize the importance of saving for health care expenses as well. Such expenses, which include medication costs, are easy to take for granted when individuals are still working. However, Fidelity notes that generics, branded drugs and specialty drugs account for roughly 17 percent of retirement health care expenses. That equates to around \$53,500 that might be needed to pay for medication alone. TF232672



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6. Used in combination to denote the middle
9. *Ammo material
13. Star_____
14. The "place with the helpful hardware folks"
15. Neutral shade
16. Orderly arrangement
17. Romanian monetary unit
18. Button on electrical outlet
19. *Frosty's nose
21. *Gingerbread Man, e.g.
23. Drench
24. What a willow did?
25. Famous song by The Jackson 5
28. Cone-shaped quarters
30. *Snow mover
35. A bit of water
37. Pakistani language
39. Measured in knots
40. Tatted fabric
41. **"A Visit from St. Nicholas" poet
43. Tropical edible root
44. Paintings in Orthodox church
46. Not swim or swum
47. Frozen puddle accident
48. Small skullcap
50. Dresden's river
52. Captain's turf
53. Drop of sorrow
55. "Slippery" tree
57. *Frozen spike
60. *Three-horse sleigh ride
63. Words to live by
64. Caviar alternative
66. On D'Artagnan's hat
68. Group of wives
69. Boiling emotion
70. Furnish with a fund
71. Travelers' stops
72. Poetic "even"
73. Buy second-hand

DOWN

1. Agha, alt. sp.
2. Artist Chagall's first name
3. Poet Pound's first name
4. Draws close
5. Fungus damage (2 words)
6. Shake's cousin?
7. *___ fishing
8. Two, in cards
9. Station finder button
10. Not final
11. Curved molding
12. Kind of nurse
15. Bouillons
20. Laudanum ingredient
22. Saturn's wife
24. As opposed to widow
25. Impromptu
26. Emergency pedal
27. *Hot treat
29. Major-leaguers
31. Prefers
32. Butcher shop offering, pl.
33. Ghostlike
34. Parkinson's drug
36. Philadelphia's Ivy League member
38. Russian mountain chain
42. *Fireplace glob
45. TV offering
49. Reef fish
51. Kind of bride
54. Eagle's home
56. Hundred Acre Wood creator
57. A Flock of Seagulls' 1982 hit (2 words)
58. European Council for Nuclear Research, acr.
59. Bad day for Caesar
60. Not quite an adult
61. Spiral-horned African antelope
62. Singer-songwriter Tori
63. Tai's partner
65. Miner's bounty
67. Female sheep

We Need RISavers

Low Cost Retirement Savings Program



AARP - RHODE ISLAND
by CATHERINE TAYLOR

AARP's mission is to empower people to choose how we live as we age. Financial security is essential to that empowerment.

That is why AARP fights so hard to keep Medicare costs down and to preserve Social Security, and to ensure that people have opportunities to save and prepare for their future.

These days many feel their retirement is under pressure. Social Security was designed only to supplement retirement savings. Pensions, both in the private and public sector, have eroded dramatically.

Inflation is putting the squeeze on the ability to save. And thousands of Rhode Island employees have no ability to save for retirement through their work at all.

It's important to put in place a savings plan that can work for both employees and their employers. This plan has a name: RISavers.

It will be a top AARP Rhode Island advocacy priority to pass legislation in the General Assembly to provide employees of small businesses with a choice to save for retirement savings through their employers.

A recent AARP Rhode Island survey found that small business owners in Rhode Island support RISavers as a low-cost, low-risk retirement savings option managed in a public-private partnership by the State of Rhode Island.

Support from small business owners is

critical. For many reasons, the smaller the employer, the less likely its workers are to have access to a retirement plan.

- About 40 percent of Rhode Island private sector workers ages 18 to 64 in 2020 were employed by businesses that do not offer any type of retirement plan.

- Over 70 percent of workers at Rhode Island firms with under 10 employees, and about 59 percent at companies with between 10 and 24 employees lack a plan.

- In businesses with under 100 employees, 91,000 workers do not have access to a retirement plan, compared with about 81,000 workers in businesses with 100 or more employees.

You may be surprised to learn that 42 percent of Rhode Island workers with some college and 26 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher work without the benefit of an employer-provided savings plan. And almost 30,000 employees earning more than \$50,000 do not have access to a workplace plan. The need, you can see, crosses many lines.

Here's how small business owners responded to our survey.

- Close to three-quarters (72%) of Rhode Island small business owners support a privately managed, ready-to-go retirement savings option that would help small businesses offer employees a way to save for retirement.

- Most (81%) agree that state lawmakers should support a bill to make it easier for small business owners to access a retirement savings option for their employees and themselves.

- Most (76%) small business owners in Rhode Island agree that being able to offer a voluntary, portable, retirement savings program helps local small businesses attract and retain quality employees and stay competitive.

- Among the nearly half (46%) of all small business owners who do not offer a retirement savings plan to their employees, most (71%) cite cost as a reason, followed by plan complexity (39%) or being too time consuming to operate (37%).

- Still, among those who currently do not offer a way to save for retirement to their employees, most (72%) would be likely to offer them access to a state retirement savings option if one were available.

Under the RISavers legislation, all private employees (who work for employers with 5 or more employees)

would have the option to enroll in an IRA retirement program overseen by the state and managed by a private financial institution.

Employee participation would be completely voluntary, and any eligible employee may opt out of the program, or to increase or decrease their contribution rate at any time. Employees would have a range of choices for how to invest their savings, with a lineup of investment options overseen by the State Investment Commission.

RISavers would not expose employers to any cost, or to any legal or fiduciary liability. The benefit would be portable and stay with employees if they change employers.

It's time we address Rhode Island's retirement savings crisis head-on. The benefits of RISavers are clear. Let's give our state's workers an important new tool to set the course for their own financial future.



CONGRATULATIONS, SHIRLEY!

Shirley Bishop Harris of North Providence is the recipient of the 2022 AARP Rhode Island Andrus Award for Community Service -- the organization's most prestigious and visible state volunteer award for community service.

We are delighted to provide this recognition to Shirley. She has been a shining star in our corps of volunteers, as a skillful volunteer leader of our Zoom Tech Team and a passionate legislative advocate on state and federal issues important to 50-plus Rhode Islanders.

Shirley's service embodies the words of our founder, Ethel Percy Andrus, whose motto was, "To serve, not to be served."



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*This project is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$904,153 with 74% funded by ACL/HHS and \$319,926 and 26% funded by non-government source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Pair **Soup and Sandwich** for a Warming Winter Meal

FAMILY FEATURES

Cool winter days and their cold, crisp air call for a quick warmup in the form of a classic combo: soup and sandwich. Next time you need warmed up from the inside out, go for a homemade pairing that brings together a cheesy handheld and hearty minestrone.

When you sit down for a wintertime meal with the family, Gourmet Grilled Cheese with Aunt Nellie's

Pickled Beets provides the comfort you crave with caramelized onions, gooey melted cheese and toasted sourdough. Slowly simmered to savory perfection, 3-Bean Tortellini Minestrone – powered by READ 3-Bean Salad – plays the ideal complement to the griddled sandwiches as a filling soup without the hassle.

To find more comforting meal ideas made for combatting the cold, visit AuntNellies.com and READSalads.com.

Gourmet Grilled Cheese with Pickled Beets

Recipe courtesy of "Carlsbad Cravings"
Prep time: 60 minutes

Caramelized Onions:

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 large yellow onions, halved, sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1-2 tablespoons water (optional)
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Sandwiches:

- 8 large sourdough slices, 1/2-inch thick
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 4 ounces fresh goat cheese, at room temperature
- 8 ounces shredded gruyere cheese, at room temperature
- 1 jar Aunt Nellie's Sliced Pickled Beets (about 32 beets)
- 2 cups baby arugula
- 2 tablespoons butter, divided
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided

To make caramelized onions: In Dutch oven over medium-high heat, melt butter and olive oil. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes then reduce heat to medium.

Cook until onions are caramelized and rich, deep golden brown, about 25 minutes, stirring often. Turn heat to medium-low or add water if onions are dry or start to scorch before caramelizing.

Add sugar, balsamic vinegar, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes; cook 1 minute. Onions should be jammy and darkly caramelized when done. Remove to plate to cool.

To make sandwiches: Spread out bread slices on flat surface. Spread thin layer of mayonnaise on one side of each bread slice.

Turn four bread slices over and spread goat cheese on plain side. Top goat cheese with gruyere, even layer of beets, caramelized onions and arugula. Top with remaining bread, mayo side out. Secure with toothpicks, if desired.

In large skillet over medium-low heat, melt 1 tablespoon butter with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Add two sandwiches, cover and grill until bottom of bread is toasted, about 5-7 minutes, and cheese starts melting, checking often. Flip and cook, uncovered, until cheese is melted and bottom of bread is toasted.

Repeat with remaining sandwiches.



3-Bean Tortellini Minestrone

Recipe courtesy of "Joy of Eating"
Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes

- 1 can (15 ounces) READ 3-Bean Salad
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, diced
- 3 peeled garlic cloves, minced
- 2 pinches salt, plus additional to taste, divided
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, plus additional to taste, divided
- 3 small carrots, trimmed, peeled and diced
- 2 celery stalks, trimmed and diced
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 Parmesan rind (optional)
- 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

- 9-10 ounces refrigerated cheese tortellini
- 2 cups baby spinach
- jarred pesto, for serving (optional)

Drain and rinse bean salad; set aside.

In large pot over medium heat, heat olive oil. Add onions, garlic and 1 pinch salt; saute until translucent, 3-4 minutes. Stir in Italian seasoning and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper. Cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add carrots, celery and zucchini with remaining pinch salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are crisp tender, 5-7 minutes.

Stir in tomatoes. Add Parmesan rind, if desired. Cook about 10 minutes until most tomato juice evaporates. Pour in vegetable broth. Bring to boil. Add tortellini; cook 2 minutes, or just until tender. Stir in bean salad and spinach. Cook 2-3 minutes to heat through.

Season with additional salt and black pepper, to taste. Serve garnished with pesto, if desired.



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