



FRISKIE FOOD TRUCK: Rob Parrish works as food truck manager for Friskie Fries, a venture that began as a small fleet of food trucks and blossomed into a brick-and-mortar business with locations in Providence and Johnston. He welcomes the opportunity to bring Friskie Fries to more Johnston customers, via food truck. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

Let the food trucks roll?

By RORY SCHULER

The “crispiest friskiest fries in town” may be a little easier to sample if Johnston changes local laws governing mobile food trucks.

Town Council held its first reading of an amended food truck ordinance Monday night.

According to Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr., food trucks are “currently banned town-wide.” He hopes to change the law.

“This is an idea that Al Carnevale and I came up together,” Polisena said earlier this week.

District 3 Town Councilman Alfred T. Carnevale introduced the ordinance Monday night. It’s the first ordinance he has introduced since joining Town Council, and filling Polisena’s former seat on the five-member municipal board.

Carnevale briefly paraphrased the new law, which will amend town code pertaining to mobile food trucks.

FOOD TRUCKS - PAGE 15

10th 1,000-point Panther

BIG SCORER:

Johnston boys basketball senior captain Derek Salvatore joined the 1,000 point club on Tuesday night when he reached the milestone in the second quarter against Lincoln. Salvatore became the tenth Panther to accomplish the feat in Johnston boys basketball history. Read the story on page 16. Salvatore posed for a photo with his family moments after he sank the historic basket.



Law pitched to fine, impound scattered e-bike & scooter rentals

By RORY SCHULER

The last rental riders left their pair of electric bikes under a Hartford Avenue business sign days ago.

By Tuesday afternoon, the bikes had fallen over.

Town Council has taken aim at bulky rentals blocking public rights of way. If passed, police will impound app-based electric bike and scooters left on public streets and sidewalks overnight, and companies could face a \$500 fine for each abandoned two-wheel vehicle.

“We’re so close to Providence that

they ride over the line, and most people don’t realize it,” said Rob Parrish, food truck manager for Friskie Fries.

The bikes are outside Friskie Fries’ Johnston location at 751 Hartford Ave., next to the street near the entrance to the eatery’s parking lot.

“Spin needs to collect them more often,” Parrish said. “You can’t move them without the alarm going off.”

And once the riders took them out of Providence and parked the bikes, they were unable to get them started again, to travel back into the city.



PILING UP: The abandoned electronic bikes and scooters are starting to pile up at locations in Johnston, like this spot on Hartford Avenue near the Providence line. If a Johnston ordinance is approved, police will be able to impound the bikes and scooters and levy fines. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

E-BIKES - PAGE 10

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JHS Panther of the Week



POTW: This week's Panther of the Week is Balla Marone. Balla is a sophomore at Johnston High School and is on the Boys State Championship Volleyball team. He is also a First Honors student and plans to go into nursing after high school. He was nominated by Mr. Scott Leonard. Mr. Leonard said, "Balla is a great student. A leader. Extremely hard working and polite. Other students feed off of his positivity. Our semester just ended and he was the best student out of all five classes." (Photos 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.

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TOO BIG TO STAY: AA Wrecking & Asbestos has been operating at 1307 Hartford Ave. since 1986. The business has outgrown the site, nestled in the heart of Johnston's business district, next to the Johnston Senior Center and across the street from Market Basket. The business may be moving and a new business may be moving in. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

State program tapped to transform Hartford Ave. site

Cooperative cleanup at AA Wrecking & Asbestos hopes to make 17-acre parcel 'pad-ready' for new industry

By RORY SCHULER

A long driveway snakes back behind the Johnston Senior Center and leads to a hidden industrial property. Old railroad remnants and demolition debris populate the site, currently occupied by AA Wrecking & Asbestos Abatement Co., Inc.

In the future, however, the location at 1307 Hartford Ave. may be home to a new industry.

Johnston Town Council voted unanimously Monday night to pass a resolution, allowing Mayor Joseph Polisenia Jr. to enter into an agreement between Johnston, the Quonset Development Corporation (QDC), Winfield Realty Company, Inc. and Valentino A. Tirocchi Jr. (one of AA's partners) to authorize the enrollment of 1307 Hartford Ave. into the Rhode Island Ready Program.

Rhode Island Ready aims "to activate industrial sites across Rhode Island to create jobs, attract private investment from companies, generate tax revenue and provide economic benefits for the people of Rhode Island," according to the program's mission statement.

Ready projects have a shared goal: "to create an inventory of pre-permitted properties throughout the (Ocean State) that can successfully support industrial development."

"Basically this program uses state-bonded funds to prepare industrial sites as pad-ready," Johnston Assistant Town Solicitor Dylan Conley told Town Council on Monday evening. "Quonset Development Corporation manages the project but it's a Commerce RI program."

The QDC "is a quasi-state agency, established as a special purpose subsidiary of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (formerly the RI Economic Development Corporation) which is responsible for the development and management of the Quonset Business Park," according to the QDC website.

Quonset Business Park in North Kingstown links Rhode Island industries via its deep water port.

The Rhode Island General Assembly created the QDC on July 1, 2004, and is governed by an 11-member board of directors.

"The QDC is a real estate development and management company responsible for developing and managing the Quonset Business Park in accordance with the QDC Master Land Use and Development Plan and in the best interests of the citizens of Rhode Island in order to attract and retain successful businesses that provide diversified jobs," according to the QDC mission statement.

"In broad terms," QDC's development goals are to "create jobs, stimulate private sector investment and create additional tax base."

"Commerce RI in the process of recruiting industrial development, and companies that need ... spaces to Rhode Island," Conley told Town Council. "It's a large advantage to the state if the sites are pad-ready."

AA Wrecking & Asbestos is still operating at the site. On Tuesday afternoon, the office was open and vehicles were traveling in and out of the facility.



CENTRALLY LOCATED: AA Wrecking & Asbestos is located on 17 acres of land, adjacent to the Johnston Senior Center, and smack in the middle of downtown. One of the company's owners said that about 10 of AA's 17 acres are "usable land." (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

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OFF SCREEN: Dominique Turner, a former ABC6 news reporter, announced her new job on Twitter last week. She will serve as Deputy Chief-of-Staff for Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisenia Jr. Turner announced her new job via Twitter (below).

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Mayor creates, fills new Deputy Chief-of-Staff position, sets \$80,000 salary

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisenia Jr. has hired a former TV news reporter to fill a new position in his office.

The position — the newly created Deputy Chief-of-Staff position — includes an \$80,000 annual salary.

“Town Services and information to residents are lagging,” Polisenia said Tuesday. “In an effort to increase transparency and optimize services and information she will be performing digital media coordination, purchasing, press communications, records retention compliance, grant writing, constituent services, electronic sign management, personnel reorganization, event coordination, automated notification management and claims.”

Dominique Turner, a former ABC6 news reporter, announced her new job on Twitter last week.

“#BreakingNews: I’ve left the business!” Turner wrote on Feb. 7. “So thankful for my experience in the Providence news market. With that being said, I’m now working as Deputy Chief of Staff for Mayor @JosephPolisenia in @johnstonri.”

Polisenia’s executive office is now up and running. He retained his father’s Chief-of-Staff, Doug Jeffrey. According to Polisenia, Jeffrey’s position is part-time and pays a \$45,000 annual salary.

The full-time Deputy Chief-of-Staff’s salary will be “budgeted through unfilled vacancies, as we are having the same problems of finding workers as the private sector,” Polisenia explained.

The mayor’s office also employs a full-time secretary. That position pays \$72,000 annually. The mayor’s salary is \$75,000.

“I am confident our team of three can manage 30,000 residents,” Polisenia said.



DOMINIQUE TURNER
 @Qturnerr

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- Warwick Police Department**
 (99 Veterans Memorial Drive, Warwick)
- Warwick Public Library**
 (600 Sandy Lane, Warwick)
- We Make RI**
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JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

SHOPLIFTING, CONSPIRACY

Two men and a woman have been incarcerated following a shoplifting investigation and subsequent cross-town cooperation effort by local police departments.

The trio allegedly conspired to steal \$1,120 worth of beef tenderloins and shrimp from a Johnston supermarket.

On Jan. 27, Johnston Police responded to the North Smithfield Police Department and took custody of Breanna Davis, of 479 York Ave., Apt. 1, Pawtucket, who was wanted by Johnston Police on charges of Shoplifting and Conspiracy. Davis also had an active bench warrant out of Kent County Superior Court for failing to appear at a pretrial conference. The original charge was for Obtaining Property by False Pretenses out of the West Warwick Police Department.

Once at Johnston Police Headquarters, Davis was processed and held pending arraignment. Davis was arraigned later that day by J.P. Frank Sacoccio on the Shoplifting and Conspiracy charges. Her bail was set at \$2,000 PR. She was held without bond and remanded to Women's Intake due to being a bail violator (twice) and a probation violator, according to the Johnston Police supplementary report.

Johnston Police also took custody of Gregory Pettinato, also of the same address (479 York Ave., Apt. 1, Pawtucket). Pettinato was wanted on the same two charges — Shoplifting and Con-

spiracy. He was processed and held pending arraignment. North Smithfield Police also handed Pettinato over to police on Jan. 27.

Pettinato was also arraigned by Sacoccio and bail was set at \$2,000 PR. However, Pettinato was remanded to the ACI Men's Intake, as a bail and probation violator, according to police.

On Jan. 25, Johnston Police also responded to the Providence Police Department to take custody of Eduardo Vazquez, homeless (no last known address given). Vazquez was also wanted by Johnston Police on Shoplifting and Conspiracy charges. No further arraignment information was available.

Davis, Pettinato and Vazquez all faced charges stemming from an incident reported around 6 p.m. on Dec. 28, 2022. The trio allegedly conspired to steal \$1,120 worth of merchandise from a grocery store in town. The merchandise included 16 packages of beef tenderloins (with an average value of \$60 each) and eight bags of shrimp (averaging \$20 each).

Davis allegedly passed all points of purchase with a full carriage but made no attempt to pay. Police say she exited with the other two men, but one of the store's employees attempted to stop them. A struggle ensued and the suspects wrestled the carriage away from the employee and fled into the parking lot, according to the police report.

They fled the scene in a black Kia. Cross agency vehicle checks on the vehicle helped identify Davis. Local po-

lice had initiated traffic stops on the vehicle twice late last year. First by the Warwick Police Department on Oct. 16, 2022, and a second time by Rhode Island State Police on Dec. 19. Both times, Davis was identified as the vehicle's driver. Police said Davis' driver's license photo matched the suspect seen on the store's security footage.

According to a supplemental police report, Davis has 26 previous charges on her RI Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI) record. Pettinato has three previous charges, and the pair reside together in Pawtucket, but previously lived in Johnston, according to police. Vasquez has 53 previous charges on his BCI record, police said.

SUSPENDED LICENSE

At 10:22 a.m., Jan. 4, Johnston Police Patrolman Patrick Gendreau spotted a vehicle traveling west on Plainfield Street with no front registration plate. He initiated a traffic stop and identified the driver as Andhony O. Alvarez, of 95 Petseys Ave., Apt. 1, Providence. Alvarez was driving the vehicle despite a suspended license stemming from a DUI arrest by Rhode Island State Police. Alvarez was charged with Driving After Denial, Suspension, Revocation (a misdemeanor). He was also cited for Display of Plates. The vehicle was driven by the scene by another licensed operator.

SUN RISE SCOOPS

Sun Rise Staff Reports

Trolley Cars

At 1 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 19, The Johnston Historical Society will be showing a film about "Old Rhode Island Trolley Cars" at the JHS museum, 101 Putnam Pike, in Johnston. All the information is on their website, johnstonhistorical.org. Check the events section.

"I viewed this film on PBS and I found it fascinating," said JHS member Anthony J. Ursillo. "We look forward to showing it to our membership as well as any other Johnstonites who wish to attend."

Coffee will be served following the screening. Admission is free.

More at Mohr Library

Mohr Library will host a 3-part book discussion of Prince Harry's popular memoir, "Spare," on Thursday nights at 6:30, on April 6, 13 and 27. Let the Library know you're interested, or need a copy of the book.

During school vacation week, Tuesday, Feb. 21, through Saturday, the library will have a number of crafts and activities. Call or visit for more information.

Therapy dog Teddy will visit the library again on Wednesday at 10:30 a.m., for kids to read to him and learn about his job. The following week regular story time for preschoolers is offered Wednesdays at 10:30. There are afterschool activities nearly every day, including varied programs for middle and high-school age kids and crafts for younger kids.

For adults, the crochet group continues to meet Fridays at 10 p.m.

Mohr Library is closed Monday, Feb. 20, for Presi-

dent's Day.

The Library is located at 1 Memorial Ave. in Johnston. Call 401-231-4980, email info@mohrlibrary.org or visit their website at mohrlibrary.org.

Johnston Senior Center highlights

The Johnston Senior Center is better than ever. Offering more exercise programs and trips every week; Hi Lo Jack, Monday & Wednesday and Poker on Wednesday. Arts & Crafts, on Monday, Mar Jong on Thursday & Quilting on Wednesday, Tia Chi on Tuesday. The Senior Center also has a book Club the last Tuesday once a month.

There is no charge for Senior Center activities. They offer Bingo on Thursday and Friday. Lunch is served daily at 12 p.m. (with a suggested donation of \$3).

A Social worker/Medicare Counselor is also provided 5 days a week. Contact Madeline Ravenelle at 944-3343.

Feel free to come in for a tour of the facility at 1291 Hartford Ave.

Soul of '71 Scholarship Fund

The Johnston High School Class of 1971 is raising donations for The Soul of '71 Scholarship Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation. A generous donor has offered a \$4,000 challenge! The donor will match all gifts to the Fund up to a total of \$4,000. The Class of 1971 initiated the fund on the occasion of its 50th reunion in 2021. Each year a scholarship will be awarded to a Johnston High School Senior planning to attend a college, university, trade or technical school. Donations are tax according

to your filing status. To donate, go to the following website: www.rifoundation.org/funds/soul-of-1971-scholarship-fund.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance

More than 1 in 4 US households struggle with their home energy bills. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can help keep the heat on. The Tri-County LIHEAP Program helps to cover the cost of home heating bills for those that qualify.

Visit www.tricountyri.com for more information about the LIHEAP program, and other weatherization programs that can help to reduce your home energy bills. To submit an application for LIHEAP, or to see if you qualify, contact them at 401-519-1913. The Tri-County LIHEAP program has locations in North Providence and North Kingstown.

NAMI-RI: Registration open for Family-to Family course

The Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness is now accepting registration for our next virtual Family-to-Family course which begins Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023. This is a free, 8-session educational program for families, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program, which means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition. NAMI-Rhode Island's Family-to-Family course is taught by trained

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Watch Your MOUTH

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

PREGNANCY GINGIVITIS

During pregnancy, hormonal changes (increased estrogen and progesterone) make a woman more susceptible to gingivitis, or gum disease. Gingivitis is inflammation of the gums, which can cause soreness and bleeding. According to the CDC, pregnancy gingivitis affects as many as 75 percent of pregnant women. Hormonal changes can lead to gum inflammation because of the body's decreased ability to fight plaque bacteria coupled with increased blood flow to the gums. While there's no evidence that shows mild gingivitis is harmful to the fetus or causes premature birth or miscarriages, ignored gingivitis does lead to periodontitis (advanced gum disease), which has been linked to preterm birth and low birth weight. It can also lead to tooth loss if not treated.

As part of their healthcare team we encourage our patients to make the commitment to do what it takes to keep their teeth and gums in the best of shape. Questions about pregnancy and dental care? Problems with your oral health? Turn to our dental team for comprehensive care, from an assessment of your existing oral condition, to restorations, cosmetic dentistry, and suggestions for at home dental-care regimens. Whatever dental care you need, you'll find it at DENTAL ARTS GROUP, where all dental problems are dealt with efficiently, effectively, and compassionately. Hours by appointment at 1136 Hartford Ave., Johnston; please call 401-521-3661.

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Jennifer graduated summa cum laude from Roger Williams University with a major in business management and a minor in political science. She has a juris doctor degree from Roger Williams University School of Law

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OFF TRACK: AA Wrecking & Asbestos is "a full service demolition contractor," and has tackled projects "from baseball stadiums to bridges, railroads and smokestacks." The company is "licensed, bonded and insured for all phases in asbestos removal, disposal and encapsulation." (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



■ Industry

(Continued from page 3)

The business's future is uncertain. "We don't know yet," said John Furtado Jr., President of AA Wrecking & Asbestos. "We don't know what's going to come here. We have to clean this up and do something with it."

Furtado said the site is not contaminated; that any asbestos entering the site is already in "bags or barrels" and shipped out immediately. It is a bit messy, though.

"We just need to clean up the mess we made," Furtado said. "It's not that much really ... Just think of the size of what we have here. We need another piece of property."

AA Wrecking & Asbestos is located on 17 acres of land, adjacent to the Johnston Senior Center, and smack in the middle of downtown. Furtado said that about 10 of the acres are "usable land."

He said the company has outgrown the site, but he and his two partners — Tirocchi and Valerie Mooney — hope to relocate this business to another, more appropriate site.

The "three-generation family-owned company," was founded in 1986, to "meet the state's growing need for asbestos removal," according to AA's website.

The business is a "a full service demolition contractor," and has tackled projects "from baseball stadiums to bridges, railroads and smokestacks." AA is "licensed, bonded and insured for all phases in asbestos removal, disposal and encapsulation."

"What we do and where we go is so far up in the air," Furtado said Wednesday. "We have no sure plans. We're just looking to see if we can get it pad-ready and find somewhere else to go. I don't have answers of where, when and why."

Even after all the work is done, the site may not find a new owner.

"While it's no guarantee we'll get a tenant as a result of it, what they do ask is agreement from the local municipality, so that all the permitting is done up front," Conley told Town Council. "And the potential corporation has an understanding that the municipality is a partner, and not an obstacle."

Conley said the town will be working with the QDC.

"This is something they've done several times before," he explained. "They're very experienced in this area ... It's quite frankly an excellent program. It's great news that the town of Johnston has basically been deemed to have a site that they're interested in."

Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti asked who would be covering fees associated with site development.

"My understanding is, there is no cost to the town," Civetti said. "Permit fees are still paid by the property owner?"

"The town is basically a willing partner ... zoning is good ... we wouldn't object to them using this location," Conley said. "It's paid for from a statewide bond program."

Town Council President Robert V. Russo inquired about the parcel's zoning.

"Would that be industrial?" Russo asked.

"Yes ... the reason why the site gets identified is because it's already zoned as such," Conley answered. "They're not asking for us to change anything. They're basically asking us to continue to not change anything."

Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr. confirmed future plans at the site are unclear.

"There are no current plans for development there," Polisena said on Wednesday. "The Rhode Island Ready Program, managed by Quonset Development Corporation, requires town council approval in every municipality."

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Opinion

EDITORIAL

Fines won't fix a healthcare system in crisis

This week the Rhode Island Health Care Association (RIHCA) released a statement advocating for the waiver of impending fines set forth by a new law that mandates a certain amount of care required to be given to residents within nursing care.

The letter makes a compelling argument that nearly 3 out of every 4 nursing care facilities in the state is unable to provide the necessary amount of care, due largely to the unavailability of staffing that has been amplified due to a drain of employees from the healthcare system since Covid.

As a result, these facilities face millions of dollars in fines — up to \$60 million in the first full year of implementation of the new law, by the RIHCA's calculations — and majority of facilities would be forced to cease operations

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

should the fine structure be implemented as it was written in Rhode Island law.

While we believe the law mandating a higher amount of care was written and implemented with good intentions, it cannot be ignored that such a law has, in practice, merely revealed the known limitations and weaknesses of the elder care system in the state and rather than address those, has threatened their very existence in laying down this mandate.

Quality care for our senior citizens cannot be ensured by merely requiring a certain amount of time dedicated to them. That can only be done by ensuring that facilities have ample amounts of trained professionals to care for them. And that can only be accomplished by ensuring that healthcare professionals are able to enjoy a satisfactory standard of living through reasonable wages and job security.

The problem facing senior citizens is not a problem unique to Rhode Island, and there is no simple solution within an industry that is rife with as much mismanagement, waste, and convolution as the United States healthcare system. However, it can certainly be taken as a sign that when the care facilities sound the alarm as the RIHCA has in this instance, the chosen solution has missed the mark and should be reexamined. At the very least, the proposed fines should be postponed until a better solution can be amended.

Nursing homes and elder care facilities should be given more latitude when it comes to categorizing patients who have support from family members, and which patients do not, and allocate resources more appropriately rather than a blanket mandate requiring a certain number of hours per patient that disregards staffing and the abilities of each unique location.

With the goal of helping more senior citizens enjoy a better quality of life, we can hardly imagine that legislators want to see dozens of facilities close down, rendering some of our most vulnerable citizens even less cared for than before.

LETTER

Cranston City Council should rescind judicial appointment

To the Editor,

Thank you to the Cranston Herald, Johnston Sun Rise and Rory Schuler for what, so far, has been the best coverage of a truly scandalous story unfolding in the City of Cranston, namely, the City Council's illegal action in appointing a new Probate Court judge. In choosing the judge, the slim majority of council Democrats blatantly violated provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

The council members hastily appointed Fred White Jr. to the Probate Judge Advisory Commission, a five-member board that advises the council on the merits of applicants for the judgeship. White, an honorable man, told the Herald that former City Councilwoman Cindy Fogarty recruited him to serve on the commission just days before the commission met to discuss the three candidates for the job of Probate Court Judge. By City Charter, the council appoints the members of this commission.

On or before Dec. 21, the council violated the Open Meetings Law. On Dec. 20, the Probate Judge Advisory Commission voted 4-1 to reappoint sitting Judge George Cappello to serve as judge of the Probate Court. Mr. White, recruited by Fogarty and installed on the commission without a public vote, cast his ballot for another applicant: Cindy Fogarty herself.

The next morning, a City Council member called Judge Cappello to give him the heads up: When the council next met on Jan. 2, it was going to ignore the Advisory Commission's opinion, and install former council member Fogarty to the judgeship over Cappello. The councilor did offer this booby prize: Judge Cappello could stay on as Fogarty's "auxiliary judge," an insulting demotion for a man widely regarded as one of the most knowledgeable probate lawyers in the state.

On Jan. 2, the slim majority of Democrats on the council went ahead and chose Fogarty, their former council colleague, on a 5-4 vote, as a council member had said they would. That is evidence on its face of an Open Meetings violation. Obviously, the five members of the council collaborated among themselves outside the forum of a public meeting, reached a decision to ignore the advisory commission, told Judge Cappello of that decision, and only then came to the advertised public meeting to rubber-stamp the decision they had illegally made in private.

Politics obviously plays a role in selecting judges, but this process went beyond the pale of politics as usual, and crossed the line into illegal behavior. The majority ignored the Open Meetings Law when they decided to talk among themselves, outside of an advertised open meeting, to appoint Fogarty to the post.

By way of disclosure, George Cappello has served as my lawyer in real estate transactions, including in Cranston, and in probating two estates, including one in Pawtucket. I happen to know the Pawtucket Probate Court judge personally, and she told me that Cappello, now Judge Cappello, is highly venerated for his knowledge of probate law. I have witnessed Judge Cappello in action, and can vouch for his calm judicial temperament, calm because he is secure in his knowledge of that branch of law. Probate law has not been a large part of Fogarty's law practice, and the people of Cranston deserve better than a judge who would require on-the-job-training to serve their needs.

The remedy for illegal actions is to rescind them. The City Council must rescind its appointment of Fogarty as Probate Court judge, and properly go through the process, publicly and above board. If, after hearing testimony from the public, including from Mr. White himself (a man who now supports Judge Cappello) the Democrats still want to support the inexperienced Fogarty over Judge Cappello, they may do so — and answer to the voters next year. The City Council must act within the parameters of the law, it has no authority to meet in secret and to issue rulings by fiat. Process and public input is important to a transparent, free Democracy.

Gerald M. Carbone
Warwick



Publisher John I. Howell Jr. - JohnH@rhodybeat.com	Credit Manager Lynne Taylor
General Manager Richard G. Fleischer - RichardF@rhodybeat.com	Bookkeeping Leslie Paz
Advertising Director Donna Zarrella - DonnaZ@rhodybeat.com	Production Manager Lisa Bourque Yuettner - LisaB@rhodybeat.com
Editor Rory Schuler - RoryS@rhodybeat.com	Production Staff Monique Rice - MoR@rhodybeat.com
Sports Editor Alex Sponseller - AlexS@rhodybeat.com	Advertising Representative Natalie Payette - NatalieP@rhodybeat.com
Journalists Pete Fontaine	Spotlight Profile Writer Jennifer Coates - JenniferC@rhodybeat.com
Classified Advertising Ida Zecco - IdaZ@rhodybeat.com	Tel. 401-732-3100 Fax: 401-732-3110
Circulation Leslie Paz	

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OCEAN
STATE
STORIES

Food insecurity, a statewide issue

Network of non-profits address the mounting crisis

SECOND
OF TWO PARTS.

By G. WAYNE
MILLER

For Andrea Iacifano, an unemployed single mother of two, each month faces bruising decisions involving her rent, utilities, car, food, and other necessities.

"It's like, 'which bill do you pay?'" Iacifano said.

Without the food and other assistance her family receives from Community Care Alliance (CCA), "I've got to be honest. I think my kids would probably go hungry," she said. "You try not to get stressed but obviously it's stressful."

Iacifano spoke with Ocean State Stories at CCA's food pantry, part of the organization's Family Support Center, 245 Main Street in Woonsocket. The center and CCA programs at other locations also provide behavioral health, education, housing, and many other services.

Like Iacifano, Sue Rennie, another food pantry client, relies on CCA. Retired after a career as an office worker, she lives on Social Security.

"When I was done [with] my working years, things weren't quite as easy as I thought they were going to be," she said. "All the prices started going up on anything and everything. And so your money doesn't go as far as you were used to it going."

CCA has helped Rennie not only keep food on the table but remain living in her house.

"You come in once a month and they'll give you commodities," she said. "In addition to that, you're allowed to come and get a food voucher for one of the churches in the city [that provide food]. I also found out that I could get help with paying for the oil to heat my home. That's been a real godsend."

Elba Gonzalez, a cli-



THERE WHEN THEY NEEDED HELP: From left are pictured: Jake Stanton, Southside Community Land Trust; Edith Paye; Nell Paye, with her baby Edison; and Margaret DeVos, Southside Community Land Trust executive director.

ent, told of her appreciation for the help she receives from Family Support Center. "The food service is very important," said Gonzalez, who lives with a disability and spoke through a translator, Madeline Silva, center supervisor.

Noely Quinones, an employee of housing agency NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley, agreed. Quinones is raising her two children alone.

The pantry, she said, "has been very useful, especially during hard times when you have to juggle between what bills you're going to pay. Do you have enough food? Are the food stamps enough?"

Services statewide

Quinones said that with all the services it offers, the center "is this great resource where you can get additional food, you get your vouchers, whether it's for food as well as for clothing. It's been a great program. I have been using it as much as I can when I'm really in need."

According to Michelle P. Taylor, CCA's Vice President of Social Health Services, the organization annually serves about 16,000 people, "across the lifespan from birth to death. With over 50 programs, we are serving people statewide." Many are in Woonsocket, Burrillville, North Smithfield, Lincoln, and Cumberland.

Heather Hole Strout,

executive director of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center, walked into the center's pantry on Dr. Marcus Wheatland Blvd. in Newport on this recent afternoon and greeted staff members who were busy helping clients. Lively conversations abounded.

Nutritious food and social contact, Strout told Ocean State Stories, both have significant value for the more than 5,600 people her center assists throughout Newport County, which includes Newport, Jamestown, Middletown, Portsmouth, Tiverton, and Little Compton.

The need is large, according to Strout – and the population served may come as a surprise to some, she said.

"When people think of who comes to a food pantry, I think a lot have a vision of people who are living on the streets and that's very much not the reality," she said.

"We have people who come here all the time that are working two jobs, that are trying to support a family," Strout continued. "We have some large families that no matter how hard they work, they're just not going to be able to make ends meet. And the reality is that we live in a community where a one-bedroom apartment is \$2,000 a month and if you're making anything under probably \$30 an hour, you're going to struggle with making ends

meet."

According to its latest annual report, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center provided 657,240 meals through its hunger programs in 2022. In fact, the center distributed more than 85,000 pounds of produce, and its Mobile Pantry, similar to the Rhode Island Public Health Institute's Food on the Move program, made 156 visits to 20 neighborhoods. Twenty-nine percent of center clients identified as Hispanic/Latinx, with 30% children from birth to age 17, and 29% adults 55 and older.

Founded in 1922, the center buys some of its food and for the rest relies on donations from the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, Stop & Shop, Shaw's, the Newport Restaurant Group, Stoneacre, farmers markets, foundations and trusts, municipalities, businesses, individuals and other sources.

In addition to fresh produce and frozen items, the pantry offers milk and eggs, canned goods, healthy grains including farro and quinoa, cereals, personal hygiene products, household cleaning products, and pet food and pet supplies. Many of the cereals such as Kellogg's Corn Flakes and Cheerios are geared to children, deliberately.

**Food insecurity
rate at 8.4%**

An analysis by Stack-



CENTER ASSISTS 5,000: Heather Hole Strout is executive director of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center in Newport that in the course of a year assists more than 5,000 people.

er, the New York City-based media outlet that specializes in data-driven journalism, showed that in 2020 Newport County's child food insecurity rate was 12.7% (at 19.6%, Providence County has the state's highest rate). The overall food insecurity rate was 8.4% (at 11.6%, Providence County was highest), according to Stacker, which analyzed data from Feeding America, the Chicago-based national hunger-relief organization.

The two-story building at 404 Broad Street in Providence is steeped in history. Built in 1868 as a livery, it has housed a bank

branch, a grocery store, and now, after an extensive and award-winning renovation, the headquarters of the Southside Community Land Trust.

The Land Trust has been making history of its own since its 1981 founding – and it continues to do so with innovative programs and community gardens and farms that get fresh produce into economically challenged urban households, executive director Margaret DeVos said on a visit to 404 Broad.

"What we're trying to do is connect the farmers and the food

■ **FOOD - PAGE 9**

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Food

(Continued from page 8)

growers with the actual consumers so that people have access not just to enough food, but to food that helps them succeed in life, food that's healthy and keeps people out of the doctor's office," DeVos said. "There's no healthy food system that works for people in South Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls," DeVos continued. "It's not reliable. And so we are day in and day out working with people who want to create reliable sources of fresh, healthy, affordable food for their families and their communities." Some of these individuals are at risk for chronic and potentially deadly diseases such as diabetes – a risk that an unhealthy diet raises.

The trust's latest annual report tells a story:

- The trust serves about 15,000 people a year, including individuals who feed themselves from gardens and farms;
- 85% of gardeners live below the poverty line;
- 30 farm businesses grow on the trust's more than 70 acres of rural farmland;
- 55 community organizations have partnered with the trust; and
- 34 languages are spoken in the organization's gardens.

When Edith Paye and daughter Nell left their native Liberia for Rhode Island in 1994, they initially experienced difficulty in finding the kinds of healthy food they ate in their homeland. But with Southside Community Land Trust's commitment to culturally sensitive food, they and other immigrants have been satisfied.

"The Land Trust has done so much for not only my family but for the West African community as a whole," Nell told Ocean State Stories.

Along with others, the Payes grow crops on lots and farms overseen by the Land Trust, notably Urban Edge Farm, 50 acres of state-owned land in Cranston that is under long-term lease to Southside.

The farms there are "operated by people originally from Liberia, the Dominican Republic and the Hmong region of Laos, as well as the U.S.," the trust states on its website.

Many local, state, and federal programs offer assistance to families and individuals who are facing food insecurity. Here are some of them:

- Food pantries and meal sites are in operation throughout the state. For a list of locations, hours, languages spoken, handicapped accessibility, and more, visit <https://rifooodbank.org/find-food/>

- The state-administered federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, formerly called food stamps, helps needy families and individuals buy food. Information on eligibility and application is at <https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/supplemental-nutrition-0>

- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, WIC, "provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age 5 who are found to be at nutritional risk," according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Learn more and apply through the links at <https://health.ri.gov/find/services/detail.php?id=44>

- Several programs for schoolchildren that provide breakfast, lunch, and after-school snacks and meals are available. Learn more at <https://www.ride.ri.gov/cnp/Home.aspx>

- Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island provides elders home-delivered meals, pet food and supplies, and other food-related services. Details at <https://www.rimeals.org/> or call (401) 351-6700.

- The state Office of Health Aging helps fund some 70 Community Table sites at senior centers, restaurants and other locations. Locations are listed at <https://oha.ri.gov/what-we-do/connect/nutrition/community-tables> or dial (401) 462-4444 or 211.

- People of any age needing help with food (and housing, childcare, and other needs) can dial The United Way of Rhode Island's 211 line, which is answered by trained professionals around the clock, 365 days a year. Translation is available in many languages. "One call connects you with the appropriate resources you need in your community." Learn more at <https://www.unitedwayri.org/get-help/2-1-1/>

- The state's Health Equity Zone Initiative, from the Rhode Island Department of Health, works to address the social determinants of health, including improving access to nutritional food. Links to the initiative's programs are at https://health.ri.gov/programs/detail.php?pgm_id=1108

According to Nell, the West African community could not afford to buy the land on which its members farm. "Without the Land Trust, none of this would be happening," she said.

Some 100 households annually get food directly from land the Payes farm Nell said, and some produce is sold to local restaurants and at farmers markets and farm stands. The Rhode Island Public Health Institute's Food on the Move program sources some of its produce from the trust.

Along with growing and consuming healthy food, Nell said, Land Trust activities provide fellowship, especially important when someone dies. The Paye family experienced that intimately when Cousins Gaye Paye, Nell's brother and Edith's son, died of cancer at the age of 37 in June 2022.

"The farm was the place that allowed not only my mom but all of us to be with each other," Nell said. "Everyone came to take our minds off, to kind of rest his soul, to talk. We grew everything that he liked to grow that season and then cooked it to have a big thing. So that's why we do it: to have that place of community and cultural practices."

In 2020, she said, "during the beginning of COVID, the whole harvest season was dedicated to those who were lost."

"We're not doing this to profit, Edith said, "but to help."

And that, she declared, brings a harvest of "happiness from all our farms." Back at Community Care Alliance's Family Support Center in Woonsocket, Albert Martin, 71, recapped his long career at submarine-builder Electric Boat, which ended when he was 68. "I had to retire because of poor health," he said. "I'm on insulin. My wife's on insulin and all kinds of medication."

Martin also suffers from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, COPD. "It's bad," he said. "I keep going to the doctor's."

At Electric Boat, Martin said, "I used to make five thousand dollars a month. I lost that and everything went downhill. Social security -- you can't live on that. And my wife is disabled. So somebody one day told me about the food pantry, so I came."

Now, he said, "I apply for everything I can get," including heating assistance.

"If you have a food need, you might also have a challenge with paying your bills for heat, just like

Albert was talking about," said Darlene Magaw, director of Family Support Services. "You might also be behind on your rent or having some challenges because your family is facing challenges with domestic violence or you have a teenager who is going through a difficult time."

In such situations, Magaw said, staff's response is: How can we connect you to some other resource in the agency?

"Because it's not just food services," Magaw said. "It's the whole person, it's the whole family."

"It helps a lot," Martin said. "And the food is good. I have no complaints."

Ocean State Stories is a new media outlet based at Salve Regina University's Pell Center devoted to stories about issues of importance to Rhode Islanders. Story copyright 2023 Salve Regina University. Originally published at OceanStateStories.org



WELCOMES THE HELP: Albert Martin, who ended his long career at Electric Boat at age 68 because of poor health, talks of the assistance he receives from the Community Care Alliance's Family Support Center in Woonsocket.

Obituaries

In Loving Memory



Robert D. Vita
February 16, 1931-January 22, 2023

Thank you to family, friends and the Johnston Senior Center "Hi-Low-Jack" Leagues for your prayers, spiritual bouquets, flowers and food. A special thank you to Nancy and Kathie, Bob's angels, for always caring for him at the Senior Center. Lastly, to my dear friends, Delores and Celia, for wiping away my tears with love. *May Bob and Maryann celebrate their first, heavenly birthdays together in peace and love.*

Jerry T. Badessa
Seventh Anniversary
FEBRUARY 21



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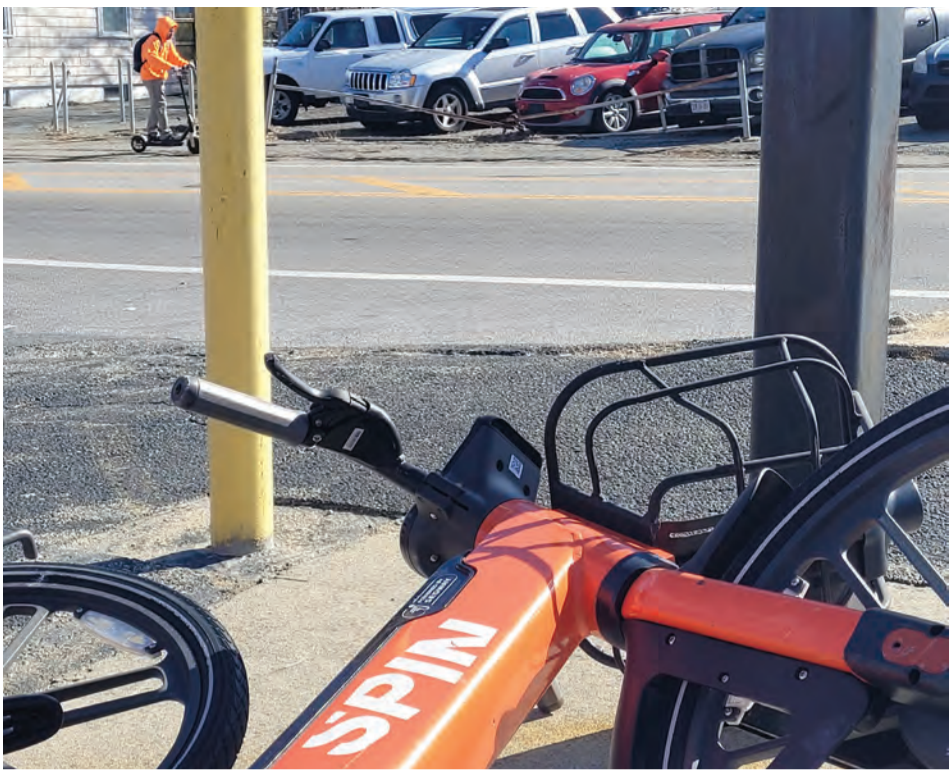
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ANSWER TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE:

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MOBILE METAL LITTER: Abandoned electric scooters and bikes will likely soon be impounded by police if left overnight on the public ways of Johnston. The company owners may face \$500 fines for each confiscated vehicle. In the background, a youngster rides an electric scooter across the street. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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 Gina Russo and families of victims and survivors
 Governor Donald Carcieri
 Lt. General Reginald Centracchio (Ret)
 Mayor Scott Avedisian
 Commissioner/Colonel Steven Pare (Ret)
 Chaplains and members of the First Responders Communities
 †
 Reception to follow in Father O'Hara Hall

Ebikes
 (Continued from page 1)

"Basically, with Providence being an adjoining community that has agreements with multiple companies that have these shared electric scooters and bicycles, they're being left in Johnston public rights of way from time to time," Johnston Assistant Town Solicitor Dylan Conley explained Monday night at Johnston's Town Council meeting.

Town Council voted unanimously to approve the ordinance, which states "no digital application based shared scooter and/or bike business shall allow any of its shared scooters or bikes to remain on any public property, public right of way, public street, or sidewalk overnight."

The new law grants Johnston Police the authority to impound abandoned rental bikes and scooters, and levy a \$500 fine.

"This allows the police to impound the vehicles and impose a fine," Conley said. "Then we have a built-in exception."

The law includes an exemption for businesses that broker an agreement with the town.

"It is somewhat common for these companies to come to agreement with other municipalities and surrounding areas," Conley said. "I believe they just did something to that affect with the East Bay Bike Path about a year ago. It would be to the town's advantage to negotiate a different agreement, rather than the police having to impound these vehicles."

District 5 Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti questioned the license requirements for rental companies.

"Shouldn't these companies, if the scooters are going to be in the town of Johnston, shouldn't they have to come for an operating license within the town itself?" Civetti asked.

"That's exactly what we're talking about," Conley replied.

"I didn't see anywhere where it says they need to ... have an operating license," Civetti said. "It says they need to come to a separate agreement."

"That's what we were contemplating," Conley said.

District 1 Town Councilwoman Linda L. Folcarelli wondered what residents should do if they spot a scooter or a bike loitering on a town public way.

"If we see some of these scooters just lying around for a couple of days, can (we) contact the police department?" Folcarelli asked.

"Yes, if this passes, we can contact the police department and the police department has the authority to impound them," Conley replied.

Civetti asked Conley what the current law permits.

"Even without this passed, and (police are) seeing stuff on the sidewalks, can't they impound them?" Civetti asked.

"Most likely," Conley answered. "The challenge is, 'What is your clear distinction between one of these bicycles and any other bicycle, any other scooter, any other car parked in an area where it's not supposed to be parked for an extended period?'"

Conley argued the town should clearly set

"application based shared scooters and bikes" apart, and define town policy. That would enable the town to pursue the owners, rather than individual renters.

"The other challenge with these more generally, is even within their agreement, they'll most likely impose a liability for leaving it somewhere where it's not supposed to be left," Conley explained. "I'm the last person to drive it. The town doesn't want to be in the position where they have to try to chase down the last person in order to accrue the fine. So we're shifting that responsibility to the company."

Spin did not return a request for comment on the Johnston ordinance by press-time.

According to the company website, Spin requires riders be 18 years of age or older, and upload a valid payment method.

"We're reimagining the way people and cities flow," Spin claims on its website.

The company calls itself the world's top "micromobility player — committed to being the best possible partner for cities while building the safest, most equitable, and most sustainable mobility solution for the communities we serve."

Based in San Francisco, Spin operates "dockless electric scooters on campuses and in cities across North America and Europe."

"Spin has been recognized for launching the first stationless mobility program in the United States and was instrumental in crafting the world's first mobility permit system," according to the company. "As a technology company that powers individual mobility for the benefit of all and strategically collaborates to reshape policy and redesign urban life, our mission is to create a world full of 15-minute cities — and to bring those cities to life by moving people freely through their streets."

Despite the clutter, businesses like Friskie Fries appreciate the electric scooter and bike rental companies, because they help carless customers travel to their locations.

"We appreciate our local community," Parrish said. "We would not be here without our local customers in Johnston and Providence."

Johnston Police are ready to enforce the new law.

"The Johnston Police Department appreciates that the Johnston Town Council has addressed this issue through a proposed ordinance, 2023-3, amending Chapter 328 of the Johnston Code of Ordinances," Johnston Police Chief Mark A. Vieira said via email Wednesday. "The proposed ordinance would allow officers to take steps to remove the potential hazard and address violations pertaining to the use of these scooters/electric bicycle sharing devices on public property, public rights-of-way, and public streets or sidewalks."

The bikes were likely left along Hartford Avenue due to preset conditions built into the sharing app.

"Spin scooters, and other types of electric bicycle sharing devices, have preset ride zones that set boundaries as to where these devices will work," Vieira explained. "The Johnston-Providence border runs directly through the property of the Domino's Pizza restaurant located on Hartford Avenue. As the scooters passed that boundary line, they apparently shut down, became inoperable, and were abandoned by their operators."

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TALENTED TROUPE: Members of the Tri-M Honor Society pose on stage for pictures following last week's Induction Recital. They are in front: Jonathan Guilmette, Willson El Hage, Elijahna Negron, Trinity Blondin, Katelyn Loffler, Destinee Costa, Shyla Soto, Phoenix Russell, David Pagliarini, Dominic Whitten and Lucas James Stimpson. (Photo by Christin Belmont)

JHS musical talent recognized

By PETE FONTAINE

It was a showcase of teenage talent of the highest level. Perhaps Destinee Costa, President of the Tri-M Honor Society said it best about last week's Induction Recital held inside the Johnston High School Auditorium.

"Coming to Johnston Senior High School, I found home in this small department," Costa said of the national award-winning music department. "Along with my home, I found a family!"

Thus, Costa was one of 11 students what were inducted into the JHS Chapter 4009 during last week's impressive recital.

"The Tri-M Honor Society includes over 2,100 chapters in all 50 states and involves more than 84,000 students," Matt Gingras, who teaches voice and serves as the JHS Chorus and Choir Director, explained. "These students must display the five points of distinction throughout the building."

They are, as Gingras went on: "Scholarship, Character, Cooperation, Leadership and Service."

"We are extremely proud of all our student member musicians," Department Chair Ron Lamoureux offered. "All our kids work real, real hard. These students were nominated by their and our staff that also includes Oliver Reid. This small event captures the spirit of the Johnston High School Music Department."

Likewise, impressive recital program featured David D'Amico, the Music Department Accompanist and a music coach at Salve Regina University in Newport.

"David has played and/or director music for numerous community and dinner theater productions over the years," Lamoureux offered. "That includes 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum,' 'The Most Happy Fella,' 'Baby,' 'Into the Woods,' 'Nunsense 1 & 11,' 'Godspell,' 'Oklahoma,' 'The Fantasticks' and 'La Cage aux Folles.'"

The program began with Katelyn Loffler singing Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Think of Me" from "Phantom of the Opera" and closed with all the students dancing on stage to Vince Grimaldi's "Linus and Lucy," which was played by inductee and pianist David Pagliarini.

The night also included bassoonist Dominic Whitten playing "Vocalise Op. 34k No. 14" by Sergi Rachmaninoff and Elijahna Negron singing Rodgers and Hammerstein's famed "The Sound of Music" and Percussionist Lucas Simpson doing R. M. Buggert's "Rolling Accents."

Costa, meanwhile, sang Andrew Lipa's "How Did We Come to This" from "This Wild Party" and Phoenix Russell sending the special sound of Will Wood's "Becoming the Lastnames" from his piano keyboard followed by Trinity Blondin singing Malloy and Pierre's No One Else from The Great Comet of 1812.

With Willson El Hage on alto sax, Jonathan Guilmette on Drums and Phenix Russell on piano, Gingras played the bass during quartet's "Black Orpheus" by Paul Desmond and Shylah Sato then sang Ladue-Michel Schonbeg's "On My Own" from "Les Miserables."

Yet another impressive performance was Costa, BLondin and Negron singing John Lennon and Paul McCartney's famed "The Long and Winding Road."



TERRIFIC TRIBUTE: Dominic Whitten receives his certificate as a new member from President Destinee Costa during last week's Induction Recital.

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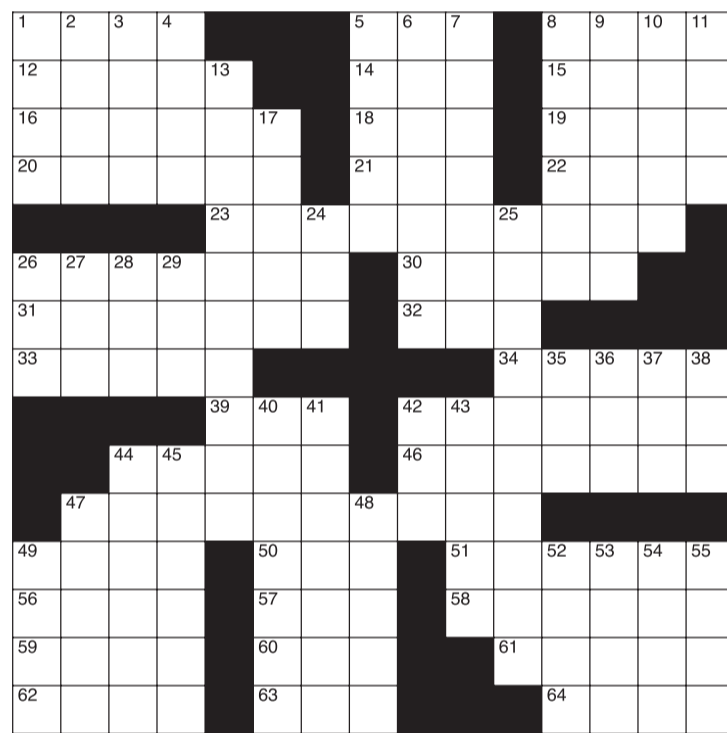
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. River in Tuscany
- 5. A way to represent
- 8. Rocker's guitar
- 12. Civil Rights group
- 14. Brew
- 15. Scratch
- 16. W. Asian country
- 18. The Eye Network
- 19. Clarified butter
- 20. Part of the Cascade Range
- 21. Downwind
- 22. A way to steer
- 23. Loop
- 26. Not ingested
- 30. Swampy coniferous forest
- 31. Musician
- 32. Signing
- 33. Containing iron
- 34. Part of a theorem or proof
- 39. Veterans battleground (slang)
- 42. Of enormous proportions
- 44. Italian city
- 46. Come before
- 47. Balm
- 49. Undergarments

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Cuckoos
- 2. Skin issue
- 3. City in central Japan
- 4. Sorrels
- 5. Twinned diamond
- 6. Canadian province
- 7. Monetary units
- 8. Head honcho
- 9. Goddess of wisdom
- 10. Part of a play
- 11. Get rid of
- 13. Applicant

- 17. Bowling alleys have many
- 24. Explosive
- 25. "The Say Hey Kid"
- 26. Ultrahigh frequency
- 27. No (Scottish)
- 28. Make a mistake
- 29. Credit card term
- 35. Keyboard key
- 36. Woman (French)
- 37. In the middle of
- 38. Score perfectly
- 40. Coat a metal with an oxide coat
- 41. Deadly disease
- 42. A place to dock a boat (abbr.)
- 43. Belch
- 44. Member of U.S. Navy
- 45. "In ___": separate from others
- 47. Examine extensively
- 48. Adjust
- 49. Tattle
- 52. Actor Pitt
- 53. Gulls
- 54. Within
- 55. Exceptionally talented performer

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JHS SCIENCE FAIR



CLEAN WRESTLING: Logan Martins is joined at his "The Prevention of Bacteria and Fungi on Wrestling Mats" project by judge and JHS faculty member Anna Hebert last week's Science Fair that featured nearly 100 student entries. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

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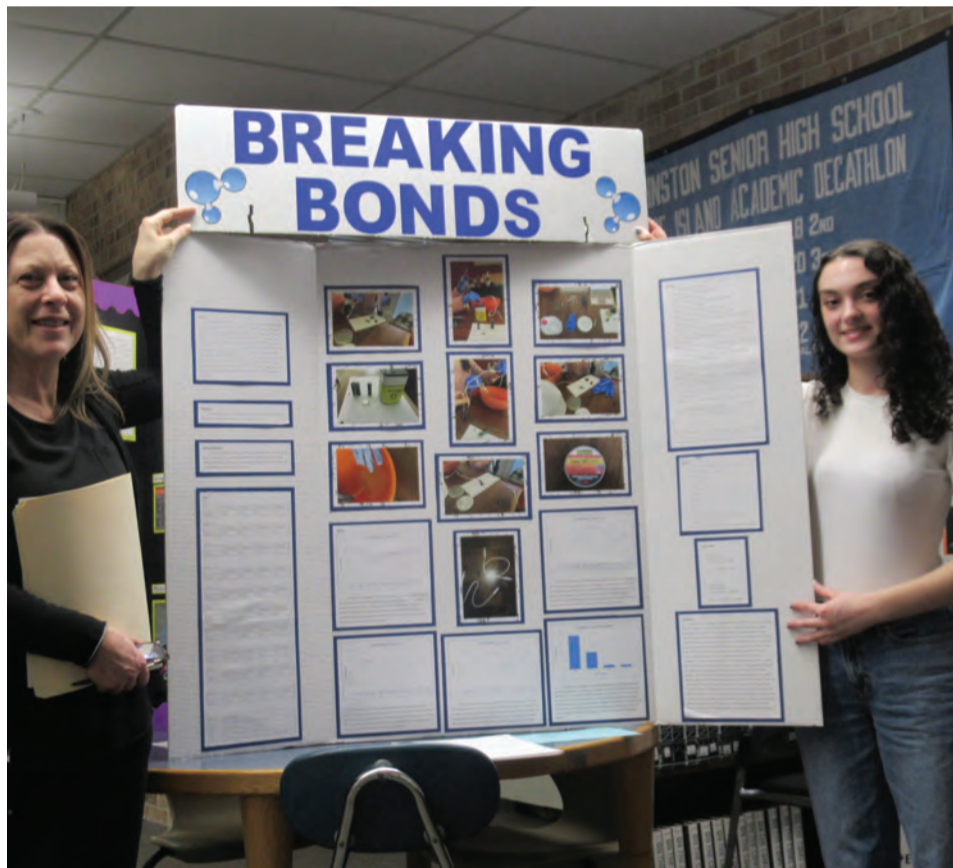
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BOND, BREAKING BOND: JHS language teacher Emilia Ruggeiro stands beside Nicole Patendaude's Breaking Bonds entry during last Thursday's Science Fair judging. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)



DAY-O: "It's Bananas" was the title of Lucas Anderson's first place project that impressed Jennifer Simoneau, Maria Simeone and Carrie Kerins. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

JHS SCIENCE FAIR



CLEVER CREATIONS: These are the top six first place finishers in last week's JHS 2024 Science Fair who qualified for the state finals on March 18 at CCRI in Warwick. They are, from left: Gabriella Pascal, Nicole Patenaude, Catrina Zinni, Lucas Anderson, Brendan Lang and Alessandra Pesare. (Submitted photo)

Hypotheses reached, tested & illustrated

By PETE FONTAINE

Six Johnston High School undergrads last week joined an elite club. Lucas Anderson, Brandon Lang, Gabrielle Pascale, Nicole Patenaude, Alessandra Pesare and Catrina Zinni emerged victorious from a field of nearly 100 student entries and landed blue ribbon first place finishes in the annual 2024 JHS Science Fair. Which means the "Super Six," as some people called the winners, will now compete for top honors in the State Science Fair on March 18 at the Community College of Rhode Island Knight Campus in Warwick.

College Preparatory Science Course," Greg Russo, a long-time JHS faculty member who chairs the Science Department, explained. "Its purpose is to give an opportunity to students to develop and experiment using the scientific method." Other students may also elect to participate in the Science Fair. Russo also noted that along with the basic requirements of a background report and backboards, all students must make a formal class presentation. The science fair counts for 20 percent of their quarter grade. This year's Science Fair judging was done by members of the JHS faculty as well as citizens from the community. Anderson, meanwhile, won first place with his "It's Bananas," project while Brandon Lang's project was titled "Water's Effect on the Moisture

Content of Wood." "Time Flies" was the title of Gabrielle Pascale, and Nicole Patenaude's winning entry was "Breaking Bonds." Alessandra Pesare chose "Which Moisturizers Keep the Skin Moist" for her first place entry while Catarina Zinni's project was titled "Spatter versus Structure." Other projects featured everything from Olivia Iafrate's "How Many Electrolytes are in your sports drink?" to Derek Salvatore who explored "Which method of meal thawing leads to least bacterial contamination?" Logan Martin's project had a unique title: "The Prevention of Bacteria and Fungi on wrestling mats." Glenn Kinya informed fair-goers that their "Fingerprints are Everywhere."



SCIENCE ON ICE: Derek Salvatore's unique project was titled, "Which method of meal thawing leads to least bacterial contamination?" (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)



GERM LESSON: Charlie Curci, a popular and active JHS senior, shows off his "A Lesson in Bacteria" entry. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

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By JENNIFER COATES

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their technicians, all of whom were hand-selected for their skill, their talent, their commitment to their work and their trustworthiness. These technicians are regularly trained and taught, and then implement this knowledge using the shop's sophisticated equipment. The Hallenbecks spared no expense when they invested in top-of-the-line computer diagnostic systems.

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TIPSY THE ALLEYCAT: Rob Parrish, food truck manager for Friskie Fries, at 751 Hartford Ave., looks out the window on the side of one of the eatery's two food trucks, parked outside the Johnston location. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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Food Trucks
(Continued from page 1)

"So there's a restriction right now on mobile food trucks in parks," he said Monday night. The new law would allow food trucks to "park in different areas of the park different days."

"This ordinance accomplishes two things," Polisena added. "First, it allows Johnston to have coordinated food truck events at the park, something that I promised I would establish while campaigning last summer. Second, it allows food trucks to operate at other events, if needed, such as little league games where concession stands may be unavailable."

Rob Parrish works as food truck manager for Friskie Fries, a venture that began as a small fleet of food trucks and blossomed into a brick-and-mortar business with locations in Providence and Johnston.

He welcomed the proposed ordinance.

"As a small business, with two food trucks as well as a brick-and-mortar location based in Johnston, we appreciate any expansion in opportunities to serve our local community," he said earlier this week.

Parrish climbed into one of Friskie Fries' food trucks parked outside the Johnston location at 751 Hartford Ave. He opened the large window in the side and poked his head out.

He looked right to Topsy the Alleycat, whose image has been painted on the side of the Friskie Fries food trucks. Up until now, the business has been able to serve fries from its small shop, but they've been restricted from operating their food trucks in town.

"The trucks are subject to all town ordinances, such as hours of operation, and must have a state license

and seek permission and approval by the town before operation," Polisena explained. "This is (a) small part in a larger coordinated effort to better utilize Johnston Memorial Park for residents."

Next month, Town Council will hear from the public on the proposed ordinance (titled "Peddling and Soliciting ... Mobile Food Establishments."

"(The ordinance) will be heard at the next March meeting for a full hearing where the public can speak in favor or against," said District 4 Town Councilman and President Robert V. Russo.

Earlier this week, District 5 Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti said he had "a couple questions on" the new ordinance. He's concerned about boundaries set for food truck operation outside established brick and mortar businesses.

The proposed ordinance changes limits that define where mobile food establishments can and cannot operate. The old law states that food trucks cannot operate within 1,000 feet of "any brick-and-mortar restaurant." The amended ordinance will change the distance to 100 feet, "unless the restaurant consents to the mobile food establishments operation in said location."

"Number one and my most concerning is why we change it from a thousand feet to a hundred feet," Civetti said Monday morning. "If we have businesses in town that are paying real estate taxes to have a brick and mortar building, I don't know that we should be letting food trucks come in and infringe on their business just because they're only a hundred feet away. I think there's a place for the food trucks and that's what we need to discuss. I will be asking my questions at the council meeting when the time is appropriate."

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Sports

Salvatore scores 1,000th point

JHS boys fall to Lions

By ALEX SPONSELLER

Tuesday was a historic night for the Johnston boys basketball team, as senior captain Derek Salvatore scored his 1,000th career point, becoming the 10th player in Panther history to accomplish that feat.

Salvatore needed four points entering the contest and would hit the 1,000 mark with 5:55 remaining in the second quarter on a midrange jump shot.

"I was obviously thinking about it going into the night but I was more focused on getting the win. (Once I got it), there was definitely a sense of relief knowing that I would be able to just go with the flow for the rest of the game," said Salvatore of hitting the shot.

Salvatore has been a four-year starter at the point guard position for the Panthers and has become one of the division's best players. He is committed to playing for Division III St. Joseph's of



MAKING HISTORY: Johnston's Derek Salvatore drives to the hoop on Tuesday. (Photo by Alex Sponseller)

1,000th - PAGE 19



MAKING NOISE: Ferri's Coach Mario Nasisi, Anthony Sposito, Andrew Urizar, Raymond Desomine, Elias Apon- te, Giovanni Cardillo, Ryan Morin, Coach Brett Polofsky. (Submitted photos)

Ferri grapplers shine at states

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Nicholas A. Ferri middle school wrestling team entered nine wrestlers in the RIPCOA Futures Championship tournament at Coventry High School and five of them took home medals.

Elias Aponte placed second in the 119-pound weight class while Raymond Desomine placed fifth in the 119 pound weight class.

Anthony Sposito placed sixth at 119 pounds, and Andrew Urizar placed seventh in the 119-pound weight class.

In the 275 pound weight class, Ryan Morin placed seventh and Bishop Hendricken Middle School's Giovanni Cardillo placed second.

Ferri then took three varsity wrestlers to the RIPCOA Varsity Championships at North Kingston High School.

FERRI - PAGE 19

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BOUNTIFUL BASKET: Deborah St. Hilaire is all smiles while holding this super-size gift basket she won during Sunday's Super Bowl Raffle.



OLG hosts annual Super Bowl party

By PETE FONTAINE

Ready ... set ... That's the beginning of a famous football cadence and if you add EAT that speaks volumes about Sunday's 7TH Annual Our Lady of Grace Church Super Bowl Party.

Although a sellout crowd didn't fill famed Fioretti Hall, Head Chef Mike Lombardi and eight proud parishioners served OLG's unmatched food and hospitality along with the traditional raffle that featured seven super specially wrapped gift baskets that also received rave reviews once Joe Andreozzi finished calling the winning ticket numbers.

Perhaps OLG's quarterback - a.k.a. Rev. Peter J. Gower - said it best noting "this wasn't the largest crowd we've ever had probably because there weren't any local teams in the Super Bowl, but everyone enjoyed the fantastic food our people prepared."

The mouth-watering menu offered eight items - baked ziti, meatballs, sausage and peppers, hot dogs, chicken wings and tenders, deviled eggs and pizza in covered chafing trays that Lombardi kept heated for late comers or anyone that wanted seconds.

"We even have enough food for anyone who wants to load up a doggie box and there will be hot coffee and chocolate cake for dessert."

Sunday's super party was yet another classic example of OLG's community coming together for what have been many special socials during Father Gow-

er's tenure at the Roman Catholic Church in Johnston.

Likewise, there were many 8-foot-long tables covered in green football turf and gold hash and yardage markers along with chairs facing the main 12-foot-by-12-foot television screen as well as 50 and 43-inch TVs that were mounted on the walls in strategic places.

"There are no obstructed views here," several people suggested. "It doesn't get any better than this."

Unless, of course, the beloved New England Patriots were playing as a number of people - including Ray Dutelle - who along with his wife Fran, who live in Warren and have faithfully followed Father Gower to Johnston from his former parish in that town.

Dutelle, in fact, showed his true colors as he was wearing a Rob Gronkowski No. 87 Patriots jersey.

The Dutelles, along with football fans like Joann Piertrantonio, Margie Rogue, Donald Rock and men like PJ Williams, who brought a jug of his homemade red Camanera wine, Mike Pallotta and Ron Plante were rooting for the Eagles, but "Johnny D" picked "KC" (Kansas City Chiefs) who wound up winning 38-35 on a late-game field goal following what many football fans are calling a controversial call.

Nevertheless, Team OLG - Lombardi and his son Jordan, Michelle Lanciaux, Marilyn and Mecca Del Domenico, Chris Berard, Shawn Hebert, Joe Andreozzi, Deb St. Hilaire and Joe Grasso combined for yet another people-pleasing party that will return next February.



FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS: Our Lady of Grace's popular pastor Rev. Peter J. Gower is joined by George and Betsy Reilly and the Dutelle's - Fran and Ray Dutelle - prior to Sunday's Super Bowl Party in Johnston. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



PHILLY FANS: Nicholas Williams and his father PJ rooted for the Philadelphia Eagles Sunday but despite their loss enjoyed the classic camaraderie and caloric creations at OLG's 7th Annual Party.

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Blown call just tip of iceberg for Eagles

The Super Bowl certainly lived up to the hype in my opinion. The two best teams, the Kansas City Chiefs and Philadelphia Eagles, played a great game and really proved to be worthy of reaching the big game.

Unfortunately, though, so much has been made of holding call in the final two minutes and its impact on the final result.

For those who did not watch the game, there was less than two minutes remaining and the Chiefs' offense was rolling. It looked like the Eagles were about to finally make a stop and force a field goal, but the refs blew the whistle and called a holding penalty

that gave the Chiefs a first down and allowed them to run the clock down to end the game.

The holding call was iffy at best. I guess, by the letter of the law, there was enough evidence to call the holding penalty. Eagles cornerback James Bradberry did grab Kansas City's Juju Smith-Schuster's jersey. In reality though, we all know that he barely tugged it and in no way impeded his ability to run his route and go out for the pass.

Philadelphia fans were outraged along with millions of others watching. The country's biggest sporting event of the year, millions watching, and you blow the whistle on a ticky

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

ALEXS@
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tack call like that? Can't happen.

However, and this is my ultimate point. To say that the refs gave the Chiefs the game, or to suggest that the Eagles got robbed, simply is not correct.

Quarterback Jalen Hurts, if you recall, dropped the

football which led to a fumble recovery and touch-down. The Eagles right there spotted the Chiefs seven points.

Then in the second half, Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City offense made play after play. The Philadelphia defense was nowhere to be found for the final 30 minutes of action.

Football is a cumulative sport. There is never one single play that determines a game, or a performance that makes or breaks an entire outcome, and in this case, a penalty that hands the game to one team or another. Every play, there are 22 guys on the field and a handful of refs.

Whether it is a missed block, a missed tackle, a fumble, a poorly thrown ball, a bad play call, a lousy penalty, a lucky bounce, there are thousands of items to examine in a football game.

Again, the holding call was horrendous for so many reasons. I know that many people, especially in Kansas City, believe that the jersey tug was enough to affect the outcome of that play. I wholeheartedly disagree and also can't believe that the refs stepped in at that point in the game. But remember, there is just so much more that has to be accounted for. That was just one of the handfuls of things that went wrong for Philly.

Let this be a reminder of why sports are so great, es-

pecially team sports. It takes everyone doing their jobs, doing them well, and being able to overcome adversity. The Eagles, all things considered, played a great game. Kansas City just made one or two more plays and committed one or two fewer errors. That's why the game-winning kick happened with less than a minute remaining. It was a nail biter.

If any Philadelphia fans are reading this, I am sorry to disappoint you. I know this take does not make you feel better or help the grieving process, but let's be real, the right team won this game regardless of the referee's impact.

Now, my next take regards the hometown New England Patriots. It really is a shame to see these two teams duke it out and to realize how far off the Pats really are.

Do you really think that this Patriots team is equipped to engage in a shootout with either the Chiefs or Eagles? Even if they make a few tweaks and adjustments? Absolutely not.

Do you really think this Patriots defense is capable of rushing the quarterback or shutting down truly elite receivers and gunslingers on the big stage? The defense is better than the offense, but still, absolutely not.

I know that we are all crossing our fingers, hoping to see the Patriots use

all of their cap space and draft picks to revamp this roster and get back into the championship mix. New England will have the second most cap space to work with in the league and favorable draft position. Still, even if the Pats ace the draft and sign a few difference-making free agents, they're still worlds off.

I look at Mahomes and the Chiefs and what I see is the next great dynasty in the NFL. The Patriots' historic run has ended and the Chiefs are picking up right where they left off.

Now, do I believe that the Chiefs and Mahomes will win six Super Bowls when it is all said and done? No, the league is too talented and competitive.

I do see the Chiefs being a perennial contender for the next decade, though, and without a doubt I believe they will be hoisting another Lombardi Trophy perhaps as soon as next year. This group now has two, and I believe another one or two is in the cards.

Many Patriots fans were rooting against the Chiefs for that exact reason. They do not want to admit that there is a new sheriff in town and that the Patriots are no longer the gold standard. As much as it hurts to admit, I do encourage you to embrace the change and the process. Rebuilds are never fun, but it had to happen at some point. Might as well get the ball rolling.

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■ **1,000th**

(Continued from page 16)

Maine next season and has helped the Panthers claim the top seed heading into the Division II playoffs.

Salvatore pictured the moment since he was a freshman and was proud of the improvement in his game over the years.

"I was getting good minutes my freshman year but I wasn't scoring that much. Over the years I progressed, and this was my dream to get a thousand," said Salvatore.

The Panthers started off on a 16-0 run in league play

to capture first place, but dropped their last two games of the regular season, including the 60-59 decision to Lincoln on Tuesday.

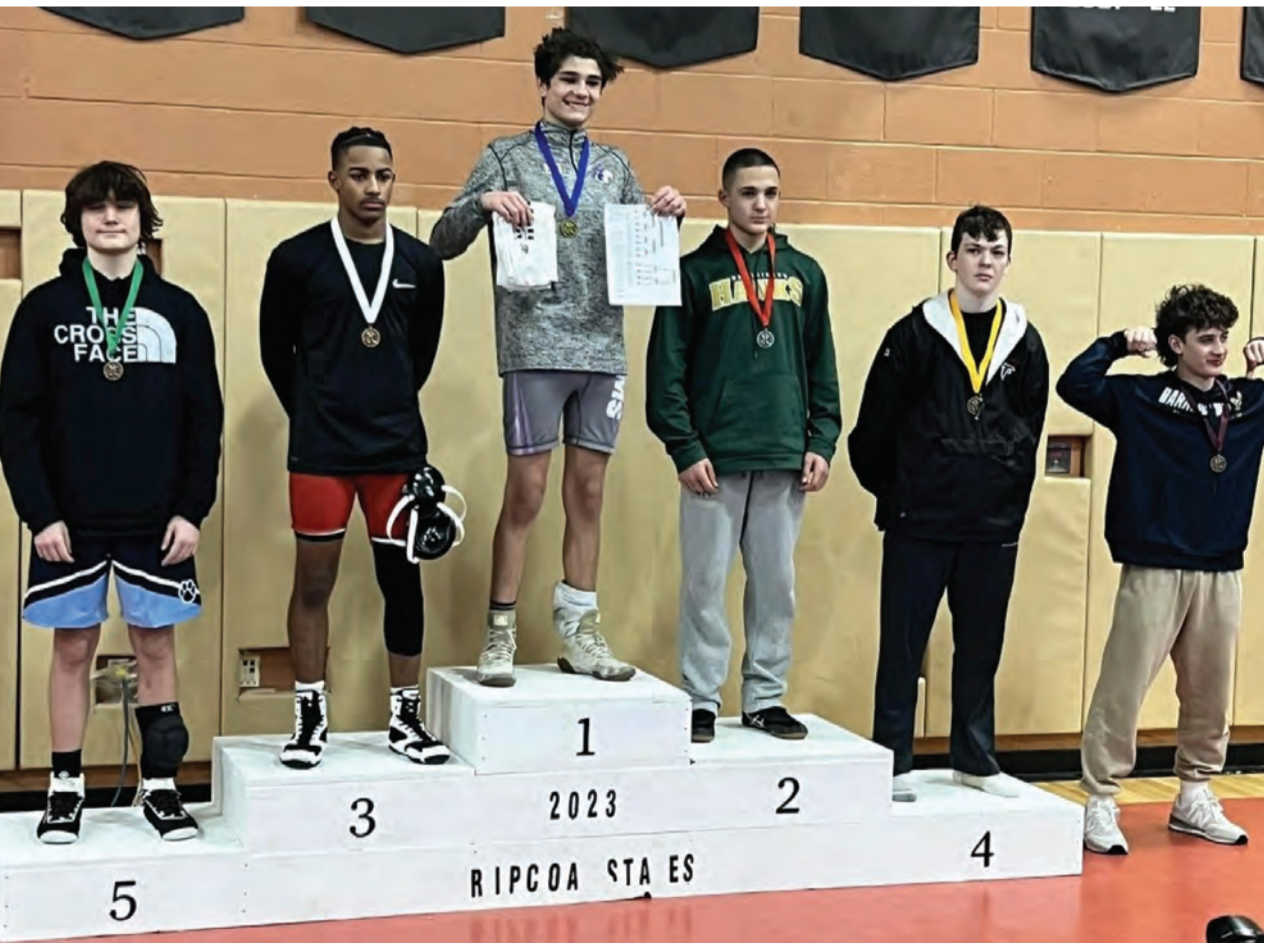
Camani Batista led Johnston with 14 points, while Salvatore added 13. Anthony Corsinetti and Neri Vasquez also scored 12 points each.

Despite the recent rough stretch, Salvatore believes that the Panthers are in good shape heading into the postseason and needed to be tested down the stretch.

"I think we're in a very good state because sometimes it's not the best thing to go undefeated. We have learned a lot from these two losses so they have only made us better," said Salvatore. "Losing to these two teams, it's only going to make us want to come back and hit harder, so there is motivation and it's good."



RUNNER UP: Ferri's Michael Cuoco accepts his second-place medal on the podium.



FIFTH PLACE: Ferri's Owen Polofsky takes the podium after taking fifth place in his division.

■ **Ferri**

(Cont. from page 16)

All three wrestlers took home medals.

In the 119-pound weight class, Michael Cuoco placed second. Owen Polofsky placed fifth at 150 pounds.

In the 112-pound weight class Ryan Morales placed seventh.

Coaches Mario Nasasi and Coach Brett Polofsky want to thank the Ferri wrestling team for their hard work on and off the mat this season.



HAND RAISED: Ferri's Ryan Morales gets his hand raised after winning a match. Morales finished in seventh place in his division.

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Debate on gas stoves continues to simmer



HE'S GOT GAS: Silvan Garcia, head chef at the Governor Francis Inn works his wonders with the help from an efficient crew at the multi-gas-burner stove. (Beacon Communications photos)

By DANIEL J. HOLMES

The debate over gas stoves continues to heat up, with legislators in some states moving to ban the appliances or, alternatively, ban attempts to ban them.

Although US Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm recently dismissed rumors of a potential federal ban on the stoves, earlier this month the agency proposed introducing more extensive regulations for the products. This comes after the US Consumer Product Safety Commission made suggested a ban on gas stoves, although that proposal was rescinded following widespread public pushback.

What ignited the debate in the first place?

There are two main talking points, both of which focus on the risk of emissions presented by natural gas. Although marketed as “clean” energy for much of the 20th Century, devices that operate by gas combustion commonly create byproducts such as methane and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), presenting both environmental risks and a potential threat to personal safety. A study published in December by the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health claims that 13% of childhood asthma cases in the United States can be directly attributed to NO₂ produced by gas stove usage, with some states (including Massachusetts) recording even higher rates of correlation.

Although ventilation hoods are designed to mitigate emissions produced by stoves, the widely-circulated study noted that the hoods “were associated with the reduction, but not the elimination, of childhood asthma risk.”

Many stoves are paired with Hepa (high efficiency particulate absorbing) filters, which do little to remove gaseous pollutants like nitrogen dioxide. A study by Harvard University of gas stoves in the Southern New England area indicated that 5% of local stoves leak gas even when not in use, although the leaks may



be so small that the human nose cannot detect the odor added to natural gas for safety. Even small leaks can expose residents to harmful carcinogens like benzene. The environmental impact of greenhouse gases like methane can also be substantial; the American Chemical Society estimates the total carbon footprint of America’s gas stoves over the past two decades to be comparable to half a million automobiles.

Approximately 150,000 Rhode Islanders currently use gas stoves, which account for 35% of the cooking done in the state. So far, no ban on gas stoves has been proposed in Rhode Island. That hasn’t stopped the state from being mentioned in the national debate, however: a fiery article by The Washington Times recently alleged that Rhode Island was among six states with government officials who had “met secretly to plot the end of gas stoves and appliances” with various environmental groups. The tabloid (which has well-known editorial ties to the Unification Church, more widely known as “Moonies”) claims that representatives

from the RI Department of Environmental Management were among those who attended a meeting in New York in 2019 laying out plans to eliminate natural gas within 30 years. Other commentators have suggested that the entire debate is fueled by outrage manufactured by political pundits and the natural gas industry. Whether or not a purported plot is in the pipeline, Rhode Island has been gradually moving to discontinue the use of natural gas.

The Public Utilities Commission met Feb. 9 to discuss plans for creating a zero-emission economy by 2050. Among the various ideas discussed during the public forum was the possibility of a moratorium on new gas hookups, similar to proposals enacted in Los Angeles and New York City within recent months. Other suggestions included the possibility of gradually eliminating natural gas distribution within that timeframe. According to local restauranteurs, the option of gradually phasing out new hookups would minimize the short-term commercial impact of transitioning.

“If they follow the bills that have already been introduced, the focus is more on residential properties,” said Mike Penta, co-owner of the two Gel’s Kitchen locations.

“It would be virtually impossible for restaurants to serve customers at any scale using all-electric appliances. I don’t even know if we’re ready to go electric just for personal use yet: people are getting cars they can’t even plug in and charge. How well do you think an electric fryolator is going to work?”

Silvan Garcia, head chef at the Governor Francis Inn in Warwick, expressed similar enthusiasm for the gas-powered appliances used at the establishment.

“We have three gas stoves with six burners each, and we have something cooking on every one of them when it gets busy,” he said. “We couldn’t keep up the pace with electric. It takes longer and the food just doesn’t come out the same.”

Several appliance stores that spoke with the Beacon and Herald indicated that they remain on edge to see how new regulations could affect their current inventory. Recent efficiency regulations proposed by the Department of Energy could see at least half (and perhaps as many as 95%) of current gas stove models removed from the market.

Anyone interested in making the transition from gas to electric can receive a rebate through the Department of Energy as part of the Inflation Reduction Act. Consumers purchasing a new induction stove can be reimbursed up to \$840, with an additional \$500 for anyone switching away from a gas or propane stove. Cooks committed to keeping their gas stoves are advised to ensure that ventilation hoods are always turned on prior to use, and to consider opening a window to further prevent the buildup of dangerous gases. They are also encouraged to consider switching to an activated charcoal filter, which (unlike more common hepa filters) are capable of neutralizing NO₂.

Historian and Author Robert Geake to give virtual lecture in celebration of Black History Month

On Wednesday, February 22nd at 6:00 pm, the Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Battle of Rhode Island Association, and NAACP Newport will celebrate Black History Month with a virtual lecture by noted Rhode Island historian and author Robert A. Geake. Mr. Geake will focus his lecture on the Black Regiment of Rhode Island that fought with distinction during the Rhode Island Campaign of 1778 and throughout the Revolutionary War. To register for the lecture via the Crowdcast Platform follow this link: <https://www.crowdcast.io/e/historian-robert-geake/register>

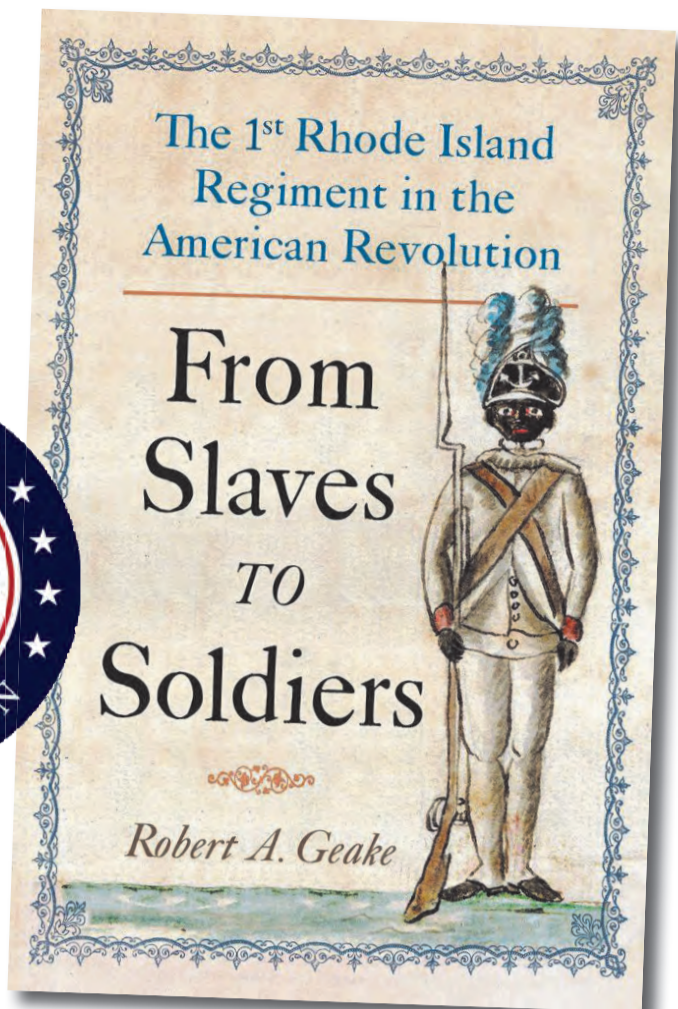
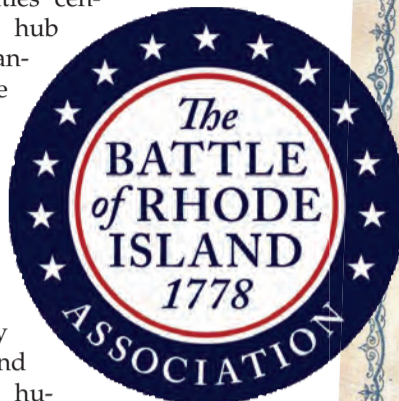
Geake is the author of 14 books on Rhode Island and New England history, including *From Slaves to Soldiers: The First Rhode Island Regiment in the American Revolution*.

Geake currently serves as the President of the Cocumscussoc Association which maintains Smith's Castle historic house museum in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. He is a contributor to three blogs: smallstatebighistory.com, rifootprints.com, and most recently, *The Cocumscussoc Review* on smithscastle.org. Geake is also a contributor to *EnCompass*, online tutorials for the Rhode Island Historical Society and the Rhode Island Department of Education.

The Redwood Library & Athenaeum is America's first purpose-built library (1747) and the oldest continuously operating in its original location. It has functioned for nearly 300 years as Newport's intellectual core, a humanities center, and civic learning hub styled after ideals of ancient Athenian culture and philosophy. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960.

NAACP/Newport's mission is to achieve equity, political rights, and social inclusion by advancing policies and practices that expand human and civil rights, eliminate discrimination, and accelerate the well-being, education, and economic security of Black people and all persons of color.

The Battle of Rhode Island Association is committed to raising awareness of Rhode Island's role in the War for Independence.



ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable

Photo credit: Handsome Dan Rescue

Are you ready to change a life? Meet Miss Ethel, she is a senior dog who finds herself in the shelter through no fault of her own! All she really wants is to be loved, give snuggles and play when she gets her burst of energy! She is quiet the character and will totally fill your home with lots of laughs and love! She is a medium size mixed breed with the best ears around! Ethel enjoys most other dogs with proper introduction. Her other likes are going for walks and munching on yummy treats! If you have been looking for a loving, loyal companion then Ethel is the girl for you! Please contact our friends at Handsome Dan Rescue for more information about how you can meet this beautiful spunky senior at 401-328-2590. Ethel will be waiting to meet you and will surely brighten your day! Let's help Ethel get out of the shelter and into a loving home, please tell all of your family and friends about her too!

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

The oak tree

The other day, we took a beautiful ride into the country. It was a little chilly, but with the heat on, the scenery was the same no matter the weather. When stopped at a long red light, I glanced out of the window and saw a large, bare oak tree. Looking at it quickly, it was just a tree. However, as I sat there longer, more details came into light. The bark was deeply furrowed in different shades of dark brown. Thick, long, naked branches rose high into the sky, sprouting out smaller branches which sprouted out smaller branches which sprouted out the smallest branches that could be seen with the human eye from inside of a car. It was quite the handsome creation!

The experience with the tree was a valuable lesson, like the old saying "you can't judge a book by its cover". Given extra time, I was able to see the amazing, natural details of this large, perennial plant with an elongated trunk that supports many branches and mini branches. It dawned on me that we should be viewing our fellow humans in much the same way I examined that tree, with appreciation for who they are as opposed to making a judgement based on what they look like.

For instance, my adult daughter, Marie, has always dressed like a boy, and is regularly called "sir". She has very short, orange hair, along with several piercings and a few tattoos, praying hands which she got after my mom died, and a dolphin, her favorite animal. Add to that the fact that she is deaf and does not speak orally except for the use of American Sign Language. People often look at her and quickly glance away, not wanting to make eye contact. If they did look a little closer, they would see a young woman who desperately wants to be accepted for who she is. She is an amazing artist who can recreate any scene in colored pencils. (The first ones she surprised me with were perfectly drawn Po Ke Man characters when she was 7 years old.) Marie has an amazing heart and will run to help someone else, a person in a wheelchair trying to traverse a step or a person with a vision impairment trying to cross the street. She knows enough to offer her elbow to be their sighted guide rather than just grab them and cartoonishly drag them across the street. She loves scary, but not gory, movies, and her favorite drink

Life Matters



with LINDA PETERSEN

at the bar is Angry Orchard, which she drinks sitting next to Hubby, who drinks beer in similar containers. She is much more than her orange hair and deafness.

An aunt of ours is in her 80's. She is generally homebound because she can no longer drive due to macular degeneration. We visit and help, of course, but until I was inspired by that tree, I had not appreciated her attributes. During her young adulthood, she was one of the Rockettes. She kept herself in beautiful shape and had a great career. The hope chest in her basement still holds many of the lavish costumes she wore. She volunteered to dance for USO shows for servicemen, (not very many servicewomen at that time.) She did not marry and have children but was a foster parent to several dogs from the shelter. Church activities kept her busy until she lost her eyesight and ability to drive. She sang in the choir and was in charge of the Christmas Bazaar. Like that oak tree I saw, this elderly woman, with gray hair who walks with a cane and has difficulty hearing is actually quite complex.

I think of my brother, Curtis, who was multiply disabled, schizophrenic, with a misshaped head and garbled speech. People were rarely friendly with him, despite his goofy grin and attempt to say "hi", often accompanied by a wave of his hand. Inside he was a good soul. He would share his Diet Coke with anyone who asked. He never complained or had a bad word to say about anyone or anything. He loved to go to the movies, with Star Trek, of course, being his favorite. He taught my children about acceptance and love.

Like that admired oak tree, we need to look deeper at people to be able to appreciate their contents.

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The 2023 Las Vegas Antique Arms Show



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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tables of Civil War material, Colt single actions and Winchester's if you're more into the western scene. WWII collecting has been pretty hot over the past few years, and there was a lot of that material also. Helmets, bayonets, insignia of all types.

There was a second exhibition hall that contained a lot of dealers with fine shotguns and sporting arms, expert arms engravers, and I saw some really amazing Japanese swords on a series of tables. There really is something for everyone at this show.

But as I mentioned above, for me the fun of the show is sitting with friends at the end of the day over a couple of cocktails and catching up. Maybe I'm getting old, but that is the biggest highlight for me. It's interesting to hear what people have picked up for their collections, as well as current research projects they're working on.

For the first time last year, I was actually coaxed out of the hotel to go out for a meal. Begrudgingly, I jumped in the cab, and we took off to Circus Circus. When I got there and saw this old casino filled with people and smoke, I wondered what I had gotten myself into. However, I have to say that the best steak I have ever had was from The Steak House inside of the casino. This year we went back, and I have to say the prime rib I ordered was just as spectacular as it was last year.

I'm glad that it only comes once a year as I'm still not a fan of the City of Las Vegas, but the show is good. If you find yourself bored and looking for something to do next January, think about coming to the show. Onto the next: the Baltimore Antique Arms show coming up in March!



I'm not a fan of Las Vegas. I know a lot of folks love to go there and gamble, eat, see shows, and go a bit crazy, but it isn't for me. That said, every January I go to Vegas for the antique arms show held at the Westgate Resort and it's always a great time.

Maybe I enjoy the show because I get to see friends and colleagues over a few drinks, a meal, and catch up on what they've been up to. But there are also a lot of good things to see in the exhibition halls. No matter what you're interested in, it's there. Obviously, my interests are in American Revolutionary War-era arms and equipment, and I got to see and handle a few cool pieces. But there were

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Buttonwoods Brewery counters Valentine's Day with 'Hail Yourself! Day'

By ROB DUGUAY

Valentine's Day has to be one of the most polarizing days of the year. If you're in a relationship that's going well or you're happily married, this is the time when you show your significant other how much you care for and appreciate them. If you're single, then either you're indifferent, poking fun at this occasion or absolutely dreading it, the latter especially if you just got out of a relationship that didn't work out. A few days after February 14, Buttonwoods Brewery located on 530 Wellington Avenue in Cranston will be doing something as a sort of counteraction to Valentine's Day. It's called Hail Yourself! Day and it's taking place at the brewery on Saturday February 18 from 1pm to 6pm.

The theme behind Hail Yourself! Day is self-love and self-appreciation with a macabre, gothic spin attached to it. There will be a lot of ways for one to enjoy themselves when they attend including shopping at some vendors, getting their tarot cards read, scrumptious food and live music.

"I had been toying with the idea of doing something against the typical Valentine's Day events for a little while now," says Jennie Paquin, who is the Tasting Room Manager at Buttonwoods. "The last time Vudu Sister played at Buttonwoods, I had a chat with lead vocalist & guitarist Keith McCurdy and we kind of brainstormed this idea of a Dark Valentine's/Lonely



Hearts Club type of event. I took that dark hearts theme, put a positive spin on it and decided to make this into an event to celebrate the relationship you have with you! I invited a handful of talented and unique witchy artists and makers, some new vendors and some you might recognize from our other markets. Knight Street Market creates chainmail jewelry, handmade brooms and altar tools while Resin Witchcrafts makes a variety of beautiful colorful home decor and jewelry."

"Both will be making their first appearance at Buttonwoods," she adds. "Wantsome Horror and PVD Horror will be returning with spooky art and merch and Oak Barrel Tarot will be here all afternoon doing tarot card readings."

Along with helping come up with the idea for the event, McCurdy and the rest of Vudu Sister will be performing their style of gothic folk in Buttonwoods'

tasting room from 3pm to 5pm. There will also be "Bierstacheln" where folks will be able to "toast" their beer with a hot stainless steel poker. The interesting approach gives the beer a sizzle and instantly caramelizes the sugars within. The result leaves a warm cappuccino-like head and a lightly toasted marshmallow flavor & aroma, making for an intriguing drinking experience. Buttonwoods' housemates Origin Beer Project will be pouring their own delicious brews while Nanu the Burmese Fusion food truck will be serving up flavorful grub from 2pm to 7pm.

Hail Yourself! Day is free to attend while being both a family friendly and dog friendly event. Make sure to stop by this Saturday afternoon for what will surely be the highlight of the weekend. For more information on Buttonwoods Brewery and what they'll have going on in the future, log on to their website at buttonwoodsbrewery.com.

Festival Ballet Providence presents "Up Close on Hope" and "Gwendolyn the Graceful Pig"

The Festival Ballet Providence (FBP) is bringing two back-to-back Black Box series to their theater this February.

The beloved, unique and intimate Black Box series, "Up Close on Hope," comes back with a lineup of works from FBP's own choreographers. In honor of the company's 45th season, they are turning the clock back to 1978, the year FBP was founded. Within the ranks of their company dancers, they will create pieces with themes connected to '78 and will look back four decades to find inspiration while bringing forward movement to the stage. Enjoy new works celebrating 45 years of creating dance in Rhode Island! Opening night will be Feb. 10 and will perform through Feb. 19.



The second Black Box series coming to FBP's popular chatterBOXtheatre series is "Gwendolyn the Graceful Pig" where they will bring to life this wonderful tale in partnership with Massachusetts-based Children's book author, David Ira Rottenberg. Gwendolyn wants to dance ballet and Omar wants to play football. There's just one problem, they are both pigs. Can the greatest teachers of dance in the world save Gwendolyn's dance dreams? You'll find out at their newest installation in the popular children's ballet series! David Ira Rottenberg will be present at the shows selling books and Gwendolyn-related merchandise. Opening night will be on Feb. 11 and will perform through Feb. 19.

Both shows will take place at FBP's Black Box Theater at 825 Hope St., Providence RI 02906. For tickets and show times, please visit www.festivalballetprovidence.com. For questions, please contact rosanna@rmopr.com.



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MEMOIRS
by SUSAN DEAN

We were excited. I had retired and it was the first winter that we could plan a tropical getaway - a chance to escape the snow and cold for a few weeks in February. My stepson, Brian, suggested that we try using AirBnB. He'd had luck renting for both short and long-term stays both here in the states and in Europe. He advised us on how to avoid the pitfalls and dangers of renting from private owners.

"Check the reviews," he said. "And look at all the pictures carefully."

We showed him a few online that we initially thought were fine, until he pointed out some of the details we had missed.

"This one says it's a beach-front property," Brian said. "But look - you'd need to cross a major highway to actually reach the beach."

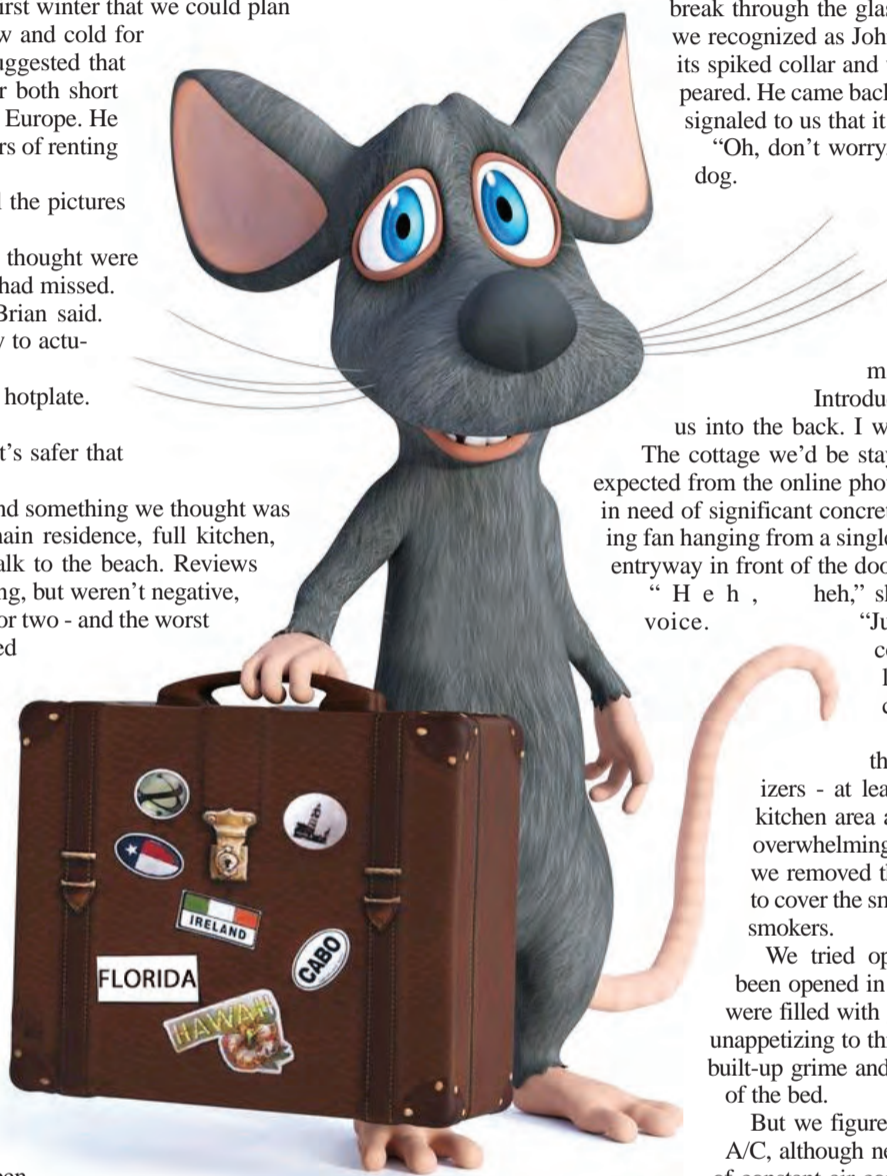
"And this one has only a mini-fridge and a hotplate. You'd have to eat out all the time."

"And try to rent from a couple or a family - it's safer that way - you just never know," he warned us.

So we followed Brian's advice and finally found something we thought was perfect. A cottage separate from the owner's main residence, full kitchen, and it was listed as waterfront, with an easy walk to the beach. Reviews were few and mostly one-liners that weren't raving, but weren't negative, either. All were from short-term rentals - a night or two - and the worst was from a woman who laughingly described waking up to find herself sharing the bed with a rather large spider. But this was Florida, after all, so bugs, even large ones, were to be expected. And the owners were Candy and John - a middle-aged couple. We went ahead and booked it.

February arrived and after spending a week with relatives on Florida's west side, we drove across the state to the east coast. Our directions seemed wrong, however, as we seemed to be veering inland into what looked like wooded swampland.

"This can't be right," I said, as we turned onto an uphill driveway that matched the address. We made our way to the top to find a house with floor to ceiling windows. As we pulled to a stop, a very large, angry-looking pitbull threw itself repeatedly against the window barking and growling. I was afraid to open the car door in case the giant monster managed to



break through the glass. After what seemed like an eternity, a man we recognized as John appeared and grabbed the snarling beast by its spiked collar and wrestled it away from the window and disappeared. He came back a few minutes later with his wife, Candy, and signaled to us that it was safe to get out of the car.

"Oh, don't worry, that's just Baby," John said, referring to the dog.

"She's a powder puff, a mushball, all bark, a sweetie - she wouldn't hurt a fly."

Baby stood inside, nose smushed against the glass with teeth bared, glaring at us without blinking, a low rumble reverberating through the window from her massive chest.

Introductions were made and John and Candy led us into the back. I was glad to move out of Baby's line of sight.

The cottage we'd be staying in looked a bit more run-down than we expected from the online photos. We gingerly made our way across a patio in need of significant concrete repair and ducked under an old rusted ceiling fan hanging from a single frayed wire. Candy kicked something off the entryway in front of the door.

"Heh, heh," she chuckled in her gravelly smoke-damaged voice.

"Just some turtle poop. This big old tortoise comes by every other day or so and likes to leave a deposit right on the doorstep. Just check before you step out every day."

The inside looked okay, but we were hit with the putrid overly-sweet smell of plug-in deodorizers - at least six of them in the first floor living room/kitchen area and two more in the upstairs bedroom. It was overwhelming and we waited till John and Candy left before we removed them. We thought they might have been trying to cover the smell of smoke since the two of them were heavy smokers.

We tried opening windows, but they apparently hadn't been opened in years, and the ones we were able to pry open were filled with gunk and black muck around the frames. Very unappetizing to think what might be blowing in from decades of built-up grime and dirt, especially the one right next to the head of the bed.

But we figured we'd air out the house and then rely on the A/C, although neither of us particularly likes the artificial cold of constant air conditioning. But we figured we could live with it for two weeks.

CREATURES - continued next page

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■ CREATURES

There were two large-screen TVs - one in the living room and one in the bedroom. Good, we thought - a plus. We settled in and turned the one on in the living room - nothing but static. I ran upstairs and tried the TV in the bedroom - same thing. We called our hosts who explained that they only get three channels and they don't always work, oh, and by the way, there was no wi-fi, either. Great, I thought, two weeks with no TV and I can't even use my laptop. But we were on vacation, we were in Florida, we'd manage, how worse could it get? We would soon find out.

We had just settled into sleep that first night when we were suddenly jolted awake by a loud roaring, shaking, and rattling of the house. We thought we were experiencing a major earthquake.

"What's happening?" I yelled.

"I think it's a train!" my husband, Dave, yelled back.

The noise was deafening and it sounded like it was coming right through the house. Not just once, but three times that first night, and then every night thereafter - every three hours starting at midnight. The next morning we asked our hosts if we were near the railroad tracks.

"Oh, yeah," said John. "Trains come up from Miami and pass right behind our property back in the woods there."

"And speaking of woods," added Candy, "don't ever walk back there. Lots of gators, snakes, and wild pigs you wouldn't want to mess with."

"Where's the beach?" I asked. "Your ad did say 'waterfront', didn't it?"

"Oh, yes," John said. "Come on up to the top of the driveway and look over there? See the water?"

If you stood on tip-toe and scanned carefully, you could catch a small glimpse of blue amongst the brush.

"That's the beach?" we asked.

"Yup, right across the road. You can walk to it," said Candy. "But it's brackish water so you just have to watch for the crocodiles. No gators, though - they don't like salt water."

We left for the day, trying to find a real beach - one that was on the ocean, and not in a jungle filled with dangerous critters.

I was just falling asleep on the second night - the trains hadn't come by yet - when I heard a loud scratching coming from the bedroom closet, just feet from the bed. The closet door was a louvered type and closed very loosely. The scratching sounded like the claws of a good-sized animal trying to push the door open. Absolutely terrified, I woke Dave and we turned the light on. The scratching stopped. We turned the light off and it started again. Dave got up and put a

chair against the closet door.

"We can't call John and Candy now," he said. "It's too late. Just go to sleep - we'll deal with it in the morning."

"Go to sleep??" I whispered fearfully, not wanting to aggravate the thing in the closet by talking out loud.

"How can I sleep here? I think I need to sleep in the car!"

I didn't sleep in the car - I was afraid to walk past the closet to get downstairs and I was even more afraid to go outside into the night for fear of running into other monstrous creatures, or even Baby, the pitbull. The car was parked on the other side of the main house - too far away. Instead, I lay awake the entire night listening to intermittent scratching and clawing in-between the roaring of the night-time trains.

The next morning we called our hosts.

"Heh, heh," Candy chuckled. "Thought we'd gotten rid of those rats!"

Apparently, Florida is known for roof rats the size of cats that come in through the roofs of houses.

"No worries - we'll just set some traps," John said.

I began counting the days till our scheduled departure.

When we took a shower, shampoo and soap suds bubbled up into the kitchen sink. And speaking of the kitchen sink, halfway through our stay I turned on the faucet one morning to fill the coffee pot and the faucet fell off its base. Water spewed everywhere. We had to find the turn-off valve underneath the sink in order to stop the flooding. When we called our hosts about this, they came over with a case of bottled water, saying, "Oh, didn't we mention that you weren't supposed to be using the water from the faucet? The well water can be suspect. Sorry - thought we told you not to use it for cooking or drinking - guess we forgot!"

There was a wooden deck off the bedroom with sharp rusty nails sticking up everywhere through the floorboards - no doubt teeming with tetanus.

And the smell those eight air fresheners were meant to cover? Not smoke - but mold. That unmistakable and recognizable stench got worse as the days went on.

On day fourteen we were out of there at dawn, relieved to be on our way home. Brian couldn't believe all that had happened, but said that even with due diligence and research you can hit a dud occasionally. And we have had excellent AirBnB vacations since. But we all agreed that our first experience makes for a good story - a memory we can share and laugh about for years to come!

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Social Omnivores and More



RETIREMENT SPARKS
by ELAINE M. DECKER

Recently I learned a new term: Social Omnivore. It refers to someone who eats as a vegetarian when at home, but will eat anything when at a restaurant or as a guest at someone's home. The thinking is that they really prefer to not eat meat or fish, but they don't want to make things difficult for others in their social circle. If only everyone with dietary preferences would think that way.

Given the proliferation of allergies and the popularity of gluten free and other diets, this seems like an extremely considerate, or social thing to do. Of course, some dietary restrictions are medically necessary. But veganism frequently is not and vegan products have become ubiquitous. One of the items that caught my eye was a California-made vegan mattress being sold at the Fifth Avenue "experience center" of Avocado Green Mattress. I can't even...

But I want to return to the social side of this realization. It got me thinking about other things that I do in a social environment that I don't do when at home. The comforts of home allow me to ignore so many aspects of my appearance that I pay attention to when we go out. Or at least when I expect to run into friends or neighbors when we go out.

Take for instance shoes. I used to be a shoe-aholic. When I worked in Manhattan, I had so many pairs of shoes, my coworkers called me Imelda Decker. It was a head nod to Imelda Marcus. (Look her up.) Now I spend most of my time at home in socks. I put shoes on when I go out. Unless I'm going someplace fancy or if I expect to run into someone who might notice my feet, I wear basic, serviceable, easy on-and-off footwear with my socks. In a social setting, I'll trade my socks for some type of sheer hose and I'll consider a shoe that has at least a bit of a heel. I guess I'm no longer a shoe adopter. I'm a Social Shoe Adapter.

Since I'm on the topic of what I wear when we go out vs. at-home comfort, let's talk lingerie. Right up there with my socks, I favor cotton tank undershirts instead of bras. I don't get a draft across my midsection with tanks. Likewise, cotton underpants that would never be confused with anything sexy are what fill my dresser drawer. But I'll admit to being a Social Lingerie Gal. My mother always made me wear my best underpants when I left the house. "What if you get hit by a truck and they have to take

you to the hospital?" "What if?" indeed. Never happened in the five decades she and I shared on this planet. But it ingrained in my head the notion that I should consider wearing some nicer lingerie if I planned to be going very far from home or would be out for any length of time. Not sexy, but at least stylish. OK. Maybe not even stylish. But without holes and with elastic that isn't stretched out.

Something else that I do rarely now that I'm retired is wear makeup. I had a friend who wouldn't even leave her bedroom until she put on her face. I, on the other hand, still have makeup left from weddings I attended that ended in divorce decades ago. These days, when I say I'm going to put on makeup, it means some eyebrow pencil, mascara and a touch of blush on my cheeks. And you've probably guessed by now, that I do that so seldom that it definitely makes me a Social Face Painter.

In a totally different vein, my last item is one that brings me back closer to the socially considerate nature of the Social Omnivore where this essay started. When I'm out of the house, I try to watch my language more carefully. When I traveled on business years ago, I spent a lot of time in the field with the sales force. Let's just say that none of those guys would ever have called me a goody two-shoes. These days I try to leave my four-letter-word lexicon at home. Instead of a potty mouth, I guess you could call me a Social Sweet Lips.

I'm sure there are other social activities that I follow when we're out, but these are the ones that come to mind right now. If you give it some thought, I'll bet you'll come up with a list of socially motivated behaviors of your own.

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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

Zoom Your Way to Healthy Living



AARP - RHODE ISLAND
by CATHERINE TAYLOR

AARP is committed to helping people take control of our health as we age. We provide tools, resources, and information that will inspire, inform, stimulate, activate and create an environment where our members can lead their healthiest lives possible in mind, body, and spirit.

As COVID changed the way we connect with members and the general public, AARP Rhode Island developed virtual programs to enhance our health through the choices we make now and every day, including getting regular exercise, and to demonstrate that proper food choices, food preparation, and food awareness can have transformative effects.

Here's the good news: Healthy Living is as much about making small changes to your everyday routine as it is about making big life-changing behavioral commitments.

When it comes to your health as you age, you have more control than you might think. AARP wants you to make Healthy Living part of how you redefine aging.

So, here's an invitation to try out our three FREE AARP Rhode Island monthly programs via Zoom that can help you live a healthier life.

Everybody Dance!, hosted by Rachel Balaban, takes place at 1 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month.

This dance class features a wide range of inspiring music and can be enjoyed in sitting or standing positions. Routines are designed to increase coordination and flexibility, lessen body tension, improve balance and gait, and strengthen the core.

The goal is to help you feel supported as you explore dance within a joyful and friendly community. Please consult your physician before beginning any new exercise regimen.

Rhode Island Healthy Cooking Demo, hosted by Chef Mary Weaver of Newport Cooks, serves up delicious, nutritious, healthier recipes at 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month.

We help you prepare healthier meals without sacrificing the flavor and heartiness of entrees and desserts that you and your family long for. And you may be introduced to dishes you've never tried before. The secret is in technique and ingredients. Chef Mary walks you through the process right from her own kitchen. March 16th, Mary will present Part 2 of her Basic Knife Skills demo. Learn to properly and safely chop, slice, dice, julienne, chiffonade, brunoise and mince, while making two vegetable and herb focused recipes for Ratatouille and Aloo Gobi. When you register, we'll send you recipes ahead of time so you can cook along with Mary. Also, all past Healthy Cooking Zooms (including February's Basic Knife Skills, Part 1) are available to watch any time at www.aarp.org/RIReplays.

Tai Chi/ QiGong: Workout for the Body and Mind, hosted by Master Wen-Ching Wu, is presented at 4 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

The ancient practices of tai chi and qigong combine slow, meditative martial arts movements with breathing and stretch-

ing techniques. The experience of hundreds of years – and the findings of numerous studies – suggest that practicing the meditative movements and focused breathing of tai chi and qi gong may have multiple beneficial effects on health, including lowering blood pressure, alleviating joint pain, reducing anxiety and stress, and improving balance and coordination.

The low-impact exercises will be conducted from both standing and sitting positions. Again, please consult your physician before beginning any new exercise regimen.

These programs receive praise from participants far and wide.

"'Everybody Dance' is all about movement. Rachel uses different genres of music that make you want to keep moving (and singing) at your own level. Her smile is infectious. Her forte is engaging with all participants and she responds to questions and comments leaving us all wanting more!" – Shirley

"I found the AARP virtual programs a big crutch throughout the pandemic. I especially enjoy Chef Mary both for her excellent presentation and helpful cooking hints. She is very easy to follow and watch!" – Joan

"Chef Mary Weaver is incredibly knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She's also very organized and breaks down the cooking process into manageable steps. Interesting recipes and creative tips guarantee success for every home cook. RIReplays is a treasure trove of interesting and educational videos; there's something for everybody!" – Julia

"Master Wu never disappoints. He's able to teach a full class with modifications for every level. The audience continues to grow with each class, with requests that this becomes a more frequent event." – Marianne

Take advantage of all these great online resources. Register at www.aarp.org/RIEvents, where you'll also find listings for webinars, tele-town halls, Movies for Grownups and more – and keep an eye out for Laughter Yoga, coming up in March.

It's AARP Tax-Aide Time

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provides in-person and virtual tax assistance to anyone, free of charge, with a focus on taxpayers who are over 50 and have low to moderate income.

Each year, Tax-Aide volunteers prepare returns for more than 7,000 Rhode Islanders at locations spread across the state -- part of a nationwide network of volunteers trained and IRS-certified every year.

If you feel you qualify, I urge you to gather your necessary year-end statements and start early on your 2022 taxes. Don't wait until April when there are limited remaining Tax-Aide appointments before the tax deadline.

Learn more at www.aarp.org/RI Tax-Aide.

Catherine Taylor is AARP Rhode Island State Director.

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Get With the Program!

Keep those New Year's health & fitness resolutions! Make plans to join us online every month for free RI Healthy Cooking, Everybody Dance! and Tai Chi/Qi Gong sessions. Check out our topical webinars, Movies for Grownups and watch for AARP member discounts as well.

There's plenty to discover!

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SENIOR RESOURCE GUIDE

I Stand On Their Shoulders

February 21 marks my 74th birthday. The (nearly) three-quarters of a century milestone provides some insight and perspective of not only who I am and how I



MY SIDE OF THINGS
by LARRY GRIMALDI

got here, but also what I have been fortunate enough to accomplish. *I am humbly aware that I stand on the shoulders of my parents.*

Like many other neighborhood wives, my mother often strung, assembled, glued, or carded costume jewelry at our kitchen table for larger manufacturers. The women were paid by the piece. Many weekends, my mother also worked as a waitress for a local caterer.

Their dream was to give me a better life than they had. They succeeded spectacularly. First and foremost, Anne and Lawrence Grimaldi taught me the value of family, faith, friendship, and hard work. Those values served as simple, but extremely powerful principles for life. My family, my spirituality, a determination to overcome adversity with the work necessary to grow and prosper, and the support of close friends have sustained me during life's inevitable challenges. My wife, Kathy, and children Kate, Matthew, and Ben have always respected and loved me unconditionally. *I stand on their shoulders.*

The money they earned helped to put me through URI Journalism School and my sister through the URI School of Nursing. Thanks to their determination, dedication, and hard work, both of us have enjoyed financially and professionally rewarding careers. *I stand on their shoulders.*

I retired seven years ago and have traveled, written a few books, and enjoyed our grandchildren, due in large measure, from Anne and Larry's desire to see us succeed. My sister is looking forward to retirement in a couple of years. We both own our own homes (we always lived in rented flats growing up), with grassy yards where our kids played, we had two cars, went on numerous family vacations, and benefited from a great education. *I stand on their shoulders.*

My friends often say that their children do not appreciate their relatively easier lifestyle. They are 100 percent correct. My children never lived in a cold-water tenement heated only with a kitchen stove to warm us during the frigid winter months. We didn't have a washing machine or dryer. On Saturday mornings, and occasionally on weeknights, we trudged to the local laundromat. My children didn't see frozen clothes resembling scarecrows reeled in from the line strung from our bathroom window and placed next to the stove to dry. Our "air conditioning" during sultry summer months was the open windows as we sat and watched our black and white TV.

Their children, and mine too for that matter, started life from our middle-class status. They lack a frame of reference necessary to understand our experiences. As I reach my 75th year, I realize one indisputable fact. *I stand on the legacy of Anne and Lawrence Grimaldi.*

Larry Grimaldi is a freelance writer from North Providence. Many of his previous PrimeTime columns have been re-issued in the 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 lvgrimaldi49@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Consumers familiar with the disparity in price between organic fruits and vegetables and conventional alternatives may be curious if that difference in price pays off with healthier foods. According to a 2014 study published in the British Journal of Nutrition, it does. Researchers behind the study concluded that the antioxidant compounds in organic fruits and vegetables deliver between 20 and 40 percent higher antioxidant activity. That's a significant benefit, as the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health notes that antioxidant-rich fruits, vegetables and legumes are associated with a lower risk of various diseases, including cardiovascular diseases and cancer, and deaths from all causes. In addition, the Mayo Clinic notes that organically grown produce has traditionally had lower levels of pesticide residue than conventionally grown alternatives, though safety measures governing conventional produce and residue levels have changed in recent years and reduced that gap. AG233761

For most of their lives, my parents worked in one of the ubiquitous costume jewelry factories that dotted the landscape and encircled our tenement in South Providence. My father was a plater and later a foreman in factories. Since there was no Occupational, Safety and Health Administration until the early 1970s, plating departments were not air conditioned, nor were the fumes from acidic and poisonous chemical solutions properly ventilated. On humid summer days, my father would come home physically drained. He climbed the stairs to our second-floor apartment slowly, and then sat in a cool bath for a very long time in recovery from the day's labor in what quite literally was a sweat shop.

In his subtle way, my father was also a career counselor. One summer, I was given cushy job in the produce department of our local Almacs supermarket. I was scheduled for a 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. shift, Monday through Friday. I had afternoons, nights, and weekends free! Since my father walked to work every day, I conspired to commandeer the family roadster and spend afternoons at the beach. I proudly announced my grown-up decision at dinner one evening. The next night, my father informed me that he had a new job for me, working a 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekday shift in the plating department of his shop. (You probably guessed that my "crest fell" at the "news.") The object lesson conveyed with spending summer afternoons in temperatures hovering at about 110 degrees, while working the cleaning and plating racks of costume jewelry, was enough to inspire me to finish school! *I stand on his shoulders.*

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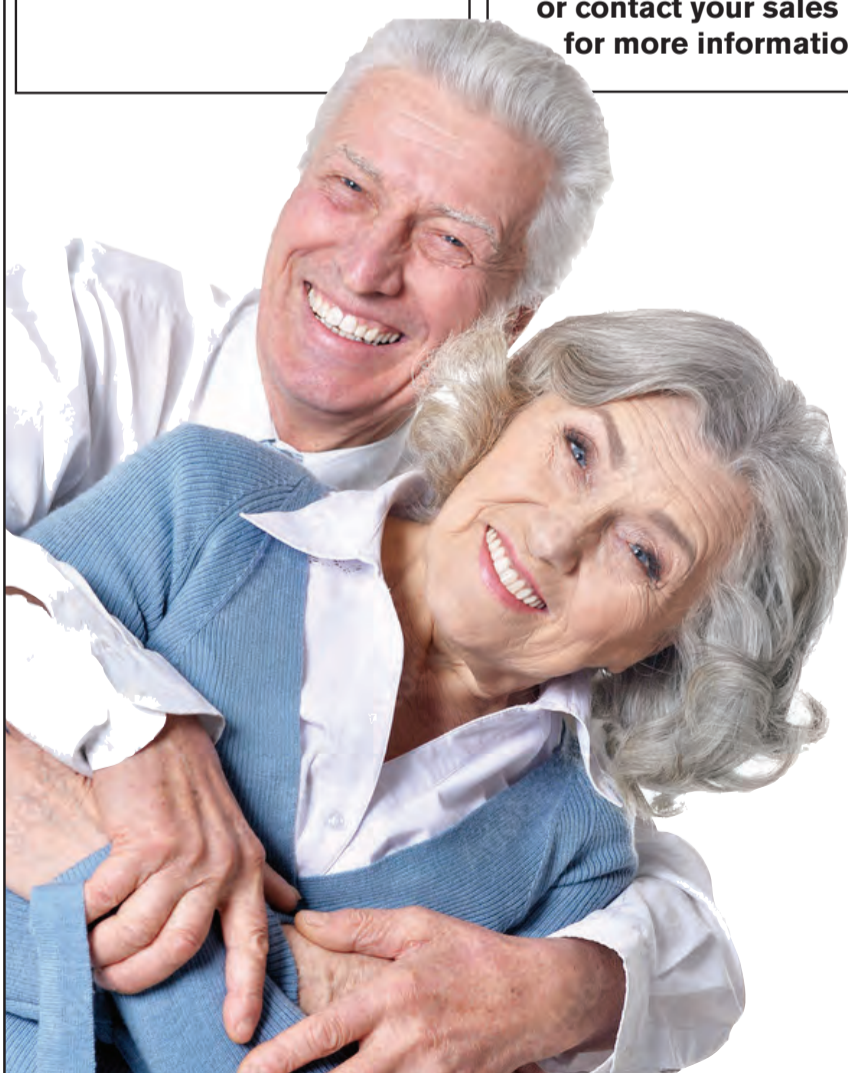
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Essentials for a Healthy Heart

FAMILY FEATURES

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States and globally. Studies throughout the past two decades indicate more than 80% of all cardiovascular events may be prevented by a healthy lifestyle and management of risk factors.

To help Americans measure their cardiovascular health and make meaningful lifestyle changes, the American Heart Association introduced Life's Essential 8, a checklist that explains eight habits and health measures that affect heart and brain health and overall well-being.

The checklist incorporates knowledge gained from more than 2,400 scientific papers on cardiovascular health published since it was originally introduced as Life's Simple 7 more than a decade ago. It has been expanded to apply to anyone age 2 and older, and now includes sleep as the eighth cardiovascular health component, reflecting findings that healthy sleep is essential for optimal heart and brain health.

"The idea of optimal cardiovascular health is important because it gives people positive goals to work toward at any stage of life," said Donald M. Lloyd-Jones, M.D., Sc.M., EAHA, president of the American Heart Association and chair of the department of preventive medicine at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. "We felt it was the right time to conduct a comprehensive review of the latest research to refine the existing metrics and consider any new metrics that add value to assessing cardiovascular health for all people."

Start making positive changes to improve your heart and brain health with these eight essential steps:

Eat Better

The checklist offers a simple questionnaire to assess your eating pattern. A heart-healthy diet encompasses a high intake of fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes; whole grains and fat-free and low-fat dairy; lean protein; and low intake of sodium, red and processed meats and sweetened foods and drinks. Eat whole foods and rely on healthy non-tropical oils (like olive and canola) for cooking.

Get Active

For most adults, the target level of moderate physical activity (such as walking) is 150 minutes or more per week or 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity physical activity. Kids ages 6 and older need 1 hour or more of play and structured activities per day.

Quit Tobacco and Nicotine

Nicotine makes your heart rate and blood pressure skyrocket while carbon monoxide and tobacco rob your heart, brain and arteries of oxygen. There are about 4,000 chemical components found in cigarettes; at least 250 of them are harmful to your health. Reducing your health risk means eliminating exposure to any form of nicotine, including cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vaping devices, as well as limiting your exposure to secondhand smoke.

Get Adequate Sleep

Getting a good night's sleep is vital to cardiovascular health. Measured by average hours of sleep per night, the optimal level is 7-9 hours daily for adults. Ideal daily sleep ranges for children are 10-16 hours per 24 hours for ages 5 and younger; 9-12 hours for ages 6-12; and 8-10 hours for ages 13-18.



Maintain a Healthy Body Weight

Although the measure of body mass index (BMI) is not a perfect metric, it is easily calculated and widely available; therefore, BMI remains a reasonable gauge to assess weight categories that may lead to health problems. A BMI of 18.5-24.9 is associated with the highest levels of cardiovascular health.

Manage Cholesterol Levels

Non-HDL ("bad") cholesterol, rather than total cholesterol, is a reasonable predictor of cardiovascular risk. Non-HDL cholesterol can be measured without fasting, which means it can be assessed at any time of day and reliably calculated.

Manage Blood Glucose

When there is not enough insulin or the body does not use insulin efficiently, blood glucose levels accumulate in the bloodstream. Hemoglobin A1c readings measure your long-term blood glucose control. A normal A1c is below 5.7%; between 5.7%-6.4% indicates pre-diabetes.

Understand Blood Pressure Readings

An optimal blood pressure is less than 120/80 mm Hg while hypertension is defined as a 130-139 mm Hg systolic pressure (the top number in a reading) or 80-89 mm Hg diastolic pressure (bottom number).

For more ideas to achieve optimal cardiovascular health, or to assess your health and lifestyle risks, visit heart.org/lifes8.

Magazines In My Life From Highlights To AARP



ACCORDING TO DON
by DON FOWLER

My first magazine was Highlights, a terrific kids' magazine that turned me on to reading.

My sister would take me to the library every Saturday morning and I would check out back issues and spend hours reading them and doing their puzzles and projects.

My parents couldn't afford magazine subscriptions, so I would comb the neighborhood on junk day and find piles of magazines to bring home.

My favorites were "Saturday Evening Post", "Life", and "National Geographic". They had a lot of pictures.

I joined the Boy Scouts and waited patiently for my subscription to "Boys Life" that came monthly to my house in MY name.

I waited patiently every month for MAD Magazine to hit the corner store and read it over and over until the pages were dog-eared.

In college it was "Psychology Today", and of course, "Playboy". I liked the interviews.

Magazines were always an integral part of my life, a reflection of my interests.

Later in life I took a course in Magazine Writing from Doug Riggs, the editor of the now deceased "The Rhode Islander".

Fortunately, he liked my writing and bought several of my articles.

My favorite was "My Mommy Says She's Not Home", based on experiences knocking on doors while running for Cranston City Council.

I always enjoyed reading "Yankee Magazine" and felt that they needed more articles on Rhode Island.

When I received an unwarranted parking

ticket, I contested it in court and won my case. (And it wasn't Judge Caprio). Yankee bought the story.

I discovered that there were magazines for just about every hobby, organization and subject imaginable.

Using my career in the Boy Scouts, I wrote about the many Merit Badges that boys earned on their way to becoming Eagle Scouts. (Archery, Boating, Stamp Collecting, Swimming).

Years later I joined AARP and realized that I had come a long way from Highlights to a national magazine for Senior Citizens. Like Highlights was to a young person, AARP Magazine was to this senior, who found interesting and helpful articles every month.

I went from submitting many freelance articles for a multitude of magazines (many rejected) to writing a monthly column for "Prime Time" Magazine. I had to explain to my friends that "Prime Time" was not a TV magazine, but a monthly Rhode Island periodical about those of us in the Prime Time of our lives.

When your neighbor's schoolkid knocks on your door selling magazines, look at the long list of choices and buy some. You'll not only enjoy reading, but you'll also be helping the school.

They took the magazines out of the doctors' offices during the pandemic and most of them have yet to return. Encourage your doctor or dentist to resubscribe to "Time" "Golf Digest" or at least "People" so you have something to read while listening to the receptionist tell you that "the doctor will be with you soon."

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FAMILY FEATURES

Farm-fresh is what many families desire. Straight from the farm to your table is one of the best ways you can ensure you're delivering a nutritious and delicious meal for family or friends.

Wholesome meals can bring everyone together around the dinner table; even little ones can enjoy flaky, baked fish, a nutritious potato-based side dish and a trendy-twist on a farm-fresh beverage with these fun, flavorful recipes.

Find more farm-fresh recipes at Culinary.net.

DELIGHTFULLY BAKED FISH

When it comes to baking fish, flaky and fresh can make for a great combination. For a classic meal with a seasoned flare, try this delicious baked fish with lemon pepper seasoning and onions. Find more traditional, tasty recipes at USDA.gov.

Baked Fish

Recipe courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture
Servings: 4

- Nonstick cooking spray**
- 1 pound fish fillets (whitefish, trout or tilapia)**
- 1 onion, sliced**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper**
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil**
- 1/4 teaspoon lemon pepper seasoning (optional)**

Heat oven to 350 F.

Place 12-inch piece of foil on counter. Coat foil with nonstick cooking spray. Place fillets in middle of foil. If fillets have skin, place skin-side down.

Spread sliced onions, salt, pepper and oil on top of fillets. Add lemon pepper seasoning, if desired. Fold foil over fish.

Place foil pouch on baking sheet and place in oven. Bake fish 15-20 minutes until fish reaches a minimum internal temperature of 145 F on a food thermometer and is flaky when tested with fork.

Divide into four portions and serve.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

SIMPLY Savory MEALS

**A SENSATIONALLY SIMPLE SIDE DISH**

When you're looking for a delicious and nutritious side dish to complement any meal, look no further than this Fingerling Potato Salad. Made with nutrient-rich Wisconsin Potatoes and topped with a lemon dressing, this simple potato side packs plenty of flavor. Find more potato recipes at eatwisconsinpotatoes.com.

Fingerling Potato Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 6

- 1 1/2 pounds mixed Wisconsin fingerling potatoes**
- 2 large lemons, divided**
- 2 cups water**
- 2 tablespoons coarse kosher salt**
- 3 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar**
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 1/2 teaspoons whole cumin seeds**
- 3/4 teaspoon whole coriander seeds**

- pepper, to taste**
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced**
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh dill**
- salt, to taste**
- 2 cups baby arugula**

In large pot of boiling, salted water, cook potatoes until just tender when pierced with fork, about 15 minutes. Drain and cool slightly.

Slice one lemon into 1/8-inch-thick rounds. In small saucepan, combine sliced lemon, water and kosher salt; bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until lemon slices are tender, about 10 minutes. Drain lemons then coarsely chop.

Cut remaining lemon in half and squeeze out 2 tablespoons juice. In small bowl, mix chopped lemons, lemon juice, white balsamic vinegar and oil. Coarsely crush cumin and coriander seeds using mortar and pestle. Mix seeds into lemon dressing. Season, to taste, with pepper.

Cut lukewarm potatoes in half lengthwise. Place in large, shallow bowl. Mix in green onions and dill. Pour lemon dressing over and toss to coat. Season, to taste, with salt and pepper. Add arugula and toss gently. Serve lukewarm or at room temperature.

Farm-Fresh Festivities

Themed parties can be challenging, especially when you want everything to be perfect for your guests. Make your party simple and festive with these tips for planning your own farm-to-table gathering.

Mason jars

A farm-to-table classic, mason jars can be used for drinks or even to fill with flowers to make a beautiful, seasonal centerpiece for the table. Mason jars are clean, cute and easy to wash when the gathering is over.

Rustic vibe

Adding some rustic decor can help spruce up your table or serve as an accessory for your farm-to-table dinner party. Also consider adding a bit of fall-flare with decorations such as pumpkins, squash and brightly colored leaves.

Seasonal fare

It's easy to get inspired with the variety of things you can find at your local farmers market. Ingredients like onions can be used in this Baked Fish recipe while a batch of locally sourced potatoes is the perfect foundation for a Fingerling Potato Salad.

**FROM FARM TO GLASS**

Many may be surprised to learn that milk is one of the original farm-to-table foods, typically arriving on grocery shelves in just two days (or 48 hours) from many family-owned and operated dairy farms. For a trendy twist on the farm-fresh beverage kids already love, try this DIY flavored milk recipe as a tasty start to the morning. To learn about milk's journey from farm to glass, visit MilkLife.com.

Chocolate Banana Milk

Servings: 1

- 8 ounces fat free milk**
- 1/2 large banana**
- 1 teaspoon unsweetened cocoa powder**

Place 8 ounces milk, large banana and unsweetened cocoa powder in a blender and blend until just smooth. Enjoy!

Nutritional information per serving: 140 calories; 0 g fat; 0 g saturated fat; 5 mg cholesterol; 9 g protein; 29 g carbohydrates; 2 g fiber; 105 mg sodium; 306 mg calcium (30% of daily value).

YOUR TAXES

by MEG CHEVALIER

Free Tax Help

More than 50 free tax preparation sites are open in Rhode Island this year as the Internal Revenue Service continues to expand its partnerships with nonprofit and community organizations. The sites provide vital tax preparation services for low- to-moderate-income and elderly taxpayers.

The IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program offers free tax help generally to people who earn \$60,000 or less. The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program offers free tax help to taxpayers who are 60 and older.

Taxpayers need to present the following items to have their returns prepared:

- Proof of identification (photo ID)
- Social Security cards for you, your spouse and dependents
- An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) assignment letter may be substituted for you, your spouse and your dependents if you do not have a Social Security number
- Proof of foreign status, if applying for an ITIN
- Birth dates for you, your spouse and dependents on the tax return
- Wage and earning statements (Form W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, 1099-Misc) from all employers
- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1099)
- A copy of last year's federal and state returns, if available
- Proof of bank account routing and account numbers for direct deposit such as a blank check
- To file taxes electronically on a married-filing-joint tax return, both spouses must be present to sign the required forms
- Total amount paid for daycare services and the daycare provider's tax identifying number such as their Social Security number or business Employer Identification Number
- Forms 1095-A, Affordable Health Care Statement, if applicable
- Copies of income transcripts from IRS and state, if applicable

Trained and certified community volunteers can help eligible taxpayers with credits, such as the EITC, Child Tax Credit or Credit for the Elderly. The EITC is one of the federal government's largest benefit programs for working families and individuals. Workers must file a tax return, even if they do not have a filing requirement, and specifically claim the credit to get the benefit.

As part of the IRS-sponsored TCE Program, AARP offers the Tax-Aide counseling program at more than 25 sites throughout the state. Trained and certified AARP Tax-Aide volunteer counselors help all taxpayers with special attention to people age 60 and older.

In addition to free tax return preparation assistance, sites will file returns electronically for free. E-file, when combined with direct deposit, is the fastest way to get a refund. The IRS expects to issue more than nine out of 10 refunds in less than 21 days. It takes longer to process paper returns and due to a reduction of personnel, it will likely take an additional week or more to process paper returns meaning that those refunds are expected to be issued in eight weeks or more.

Taxpayers who file electronically also can opt to file now and pay later. If taxpayers owe, they can make a payment by April 18, 2023, using one of many secure methods, like the IRS Direct Pay free service or by choosing an approved payment processor.

For taxpayers who want to prepare and file their own tax returns electronically, there is IRS Free File. Everyone can use Free File, the free way to prepare and e-file federal taxes either through brand-name software or online fillable forms. Individuals or families with 2022 adjusted gross incomes of \$73,000 or less can use Free File software. Free File Fillable Forms, the electronic version of IRS paper forms, has no income restrictions. For either service, taxpayers must go through www.irs.gov/freefile to access the programs. Also, MyFreeTaxes is available at www.myfreetaxes.com with up to three free state tax returns.

Local VITA site information is available by calling the United Way number 2-1-1. Also at IRS.gov - search the word "VITA" and then click on Free Tax Return Preparation for You by Volunteers. To locate the nearest AARP Tax-Aide site, visit aarp.org, or call 888-227-7669.

SOCIAL SECURITY

by CHERYL TUDINO
SOCIAL SECURITY PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

SSI: 50 Years Of Financial Security

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program helps support many American families. As we celebrate 50 years of SSI, it is a great time to briefly share the history of SSI and information on how to apply.

On October 30, 1972, President Nixon signed SSI into law. In January 1974, we began paying

SSI to people who met the eligibility requirements. Fifty years later, SSI remains a lifeline program for millions of people and households with limited income and resources. SSI also helps children and adults under age 65 who have a disability or are blind and who have income and resources below specific financial limits. People age 65 and older without disabilities—who meet the financial qualifications—may also receive SSI payments.

You can let us know that you want to apply for SSI online at www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/start.html.

This process only takes about five to ten minutes, and no documentation is required to start. We will need the following basic information about you or the person you're helping:

- The name, date of birth, Social Security number, mailing address, and phone number of the person who

is interested in applying for SSI. (Providing an email address is optional.)

- If helping another person, we need your name and phone number. (Providing an email address is optional.)

Once you provide this information and answer a few questions, we will schedule an appointment to help you apply for SSI. We will send a confirmation with the appointment date and time by mail and email (if provided). In some cases, we may call you to schedule the appointment.

If you're unable to begin the process online, you may schedule an appointment by calling 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time, Monday through Friday. You may also contact your local Social Security office. You can find the phone number for your local office on our website.

Once your SSI application is submitted, you can check the status online by creating a personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. SSI will continue to support families for many years to come.



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ELDER LAW

by DON DRAKE
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Estate Administration from Beginning to End

“In a nutshell, estate administration is the process by which a deceased person’s financial affairs are wrapped up and their property and assets are distributed to the beneficiaries as defined by the instructions in the will. That’s the quick definition, but there is certainly much more to this that we will explore in this blog,” stated certified elder law Attorney RJ Connelly III. “However, if a will does not exist, actions are taken to comply with state intestacy laws.” So, what is Intestacy?

“Intestacy refers to the condition of an estate of a person who dies without a will who owned property with a total value greater than that of their outstanding debts,” explained Attorney Connelly. “Additionally, a will that covers only part of an estate sometimes is intestate. In either of these instances, the probate court often distributes the assets of the deceased.”

“The individual responsible for managing the estate administration process is called the personal representative or the executor. Estate administration can be done with or without the oversight of a court, depending on the type of estate planning strategies made in advance,” continued Attorney Connelly.

The Estate Administration Process

Typically, estate administration typically involves multiple steps which include the following:

- Probating the will.
- Obtaining a death certificate.
- Obtaining a tax identification number for the estate.
- Identifying and locating the deceased person’s assets, including bank accounts, investments, individual property, real estate, and other assets.
- Notifying creditors and paying any outstanding debts, taxes, and other liabilities from the assets of the estate.
- Obtaining a court-issued document called letters of testamentary or letters of administration, giving the personal representative or executor the authority to act on behalf of the estate.
- Inventorying and appraising the assets of the estate and keeping accurate records of all transactions.
- Filing any necessary tax returns and paying any taxes due on the estate.
- Distributing the estate’s assets to the beneficiaries according to the terms of the will or state laws of inheritance.
- Closing the estate by submitting a final accounting to the court and obtaining court approval to distribute the assets of the estate.

“This process can vary slightly depending on the size of the estate, the complexity of the issues involved, and if the case is probated or non-probated,” said Attorney Connelly. “A probate court action may be necessary for larger estates to confirm the legality and validity of the will and to provide oversight during the distribution of assets. Non-probated estates are usually smaller and therefore have far fewer legal requirements.”

Estate planning can help avoid probate and its complications, and in some cases, estate administration can occur outside of probate court (non-probate administration). It is best to consult with an experienced elder law attorney who can help explain the specific laws and regulations of the relevant state.

State Law and Estate Administration

“With limited exceptions, estate administration is governed by state law in this country,” explained Attorney Connelly. “Each state has unique laws and regulations regarding the probate process and the distribution of a decedent’s assets. These laws can vary significantly, so it is essential to consult with an elder law attorney who is familiar with the laws of the state where the decedent resided.”

At the federal level, the estate adminis-

tration must comply with Internal Revenue Codes that address estate taxes, gift taxes, generation-skipping transfer of assets (gifting to grandchildren) and special valuation rules.

“The state probate process includes appointing a personal representative, inventorying and appraising assets, and distributing assets to the beneficiaries,” said Attorney Connelly. “Individual state laws may also dictate the methods for challenging a will or contesting the appointment of a personal representative or executor.”

Probating an Estate

“The time it takes to probate an estate is dependent on the estate’s size and the complexity of the issues involved, locating beneficiaries, and working through family disputes or challenges to the will,” said Attorney Connelly. “Generally, the probate process can take anywhere from several months to a year or more to complete. If the estate is small and there are no challenges or disputes, the process can move through the courts at a faster pace. Larger and more complicated estates will take more time as well as those that are being disputed.”

The non-probate process is usually faster and can take several weeks or months to complete, so comprehensive estate planning often centers on minimizing the potential for probate.

Potential Problems

As stated previously, there are several problems that can occur when administering an estate. These include:

- Beneficiary disputes – If the decedent’s will is unclear or there are multiple beneficiaries, disputes may arise over who is entitled to receive any assets.
- Challenges to the will – Challenging a will can occur for several reasons, such as lack of capacity, undue influence, or even fraud.
- Lack of assets – If the decedent’s debts and liabilities exceed the value of their assets, there may not be enough to pay off creditors and beneficiaries.
- Probate process delays – The probate process can be time-consuming and may create delays due to missing or incomplete documentation or beneficiary disputes. Prior estate planning can avoid much of this.

Closing the Estate

Estate administration concludes when the following occurs:

- The personal representative distributes all assets according to the terms of the will or state laws.
- The personal representative closes any financial accounts, such as bank and investment accounts, which belong to the estate.
- The personal representative files all final tax returns for the decedent and the estate.
- The personal representative files a final report with the probate court, including an accounting of all assets and debts of the estate, and any beneficiary distributions.

The personal representative obtains court approval and discharge, closing the estate’

Once these tasks are complete, the estate administration process concludes, and the deceased person’s assets have been properly and legally distributed according to the decedent’s wishes or state laws.

“While estate administration has a general roadmap and set of rules to follow, each estate is unique, and ensuring all formalities are properly addressed can be daunting tasks and, in some cases, extremely time-consuming,” said Attorney Connelly. “Seek advice from an elder law attorney to help structure the approach you will take and create a list of tasks which can help the personal representative track all the necessary elements needed to navigate this process with minimal problems. A systematic and organized plan with appropriate attorney oversight will help make the estate administration run smoothly.”

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