

Winsor Ave solar farm redux 'If we come across a turtle ... we'll pick it up and move it'

Editor's Note: This is the first installment of a series looking at the newest iteration of the proposed Winsor Avenue solar farm. Look for part two in next week's edition. The series is expected to conclude following the Nov. 2 continuation of the Zoning Board special use permit hearing.

By RORY SCHULER

"If we come across a turtle, or any wildlife, we'll pick it up and move it," testified Joseph McCue.

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CRAVING SUNSHINE: At right, the agenda rack was picked clean at last Thursday's meeting. For a while, it was standing room only at the Senior Center. (Sun Rise photo)



Monster Melon



One last pepo in the patch

Steve Sperry shows off his final harvest of the year, soon to be known as the Sperry XXXX (the X's will be replaced by the pumpkin's weight, after this weekend's Rhode Island state weigh-in). The gargantuan gourd is estimated to weigh well over 2,000 pounds. The giant pumpkin, grown off Hopkins Avenue in Johnston, is the fourth of the season raised by Sperry. For the full story and more photos, turn to the Rhody Life section, beginning on Page 14. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

LOST: Chief Joe Razza, 54, town native, athlete, public servant

By RORY SCHULER

Joe Razza was a runner. Daily, the town native could be spotted dashing up and down the hills of Johnston while off-duty. The former Johnston police chief stepped down last year as his health declined rapidly and unexpectedly. On Friday, Sept. 29 — following the announcement of his death — Rhode Island Gov. Dan McKee ordered

the state's flags lowered in honor of the late Joseph P. Razza.

He was 54 years old. Razza had only been the town's top cop for a couple years, taking over for retiring Chief Richard Tamburini.

"He was a quiet man with a huge presence," Tamburini said Saturday. "He was not a man to ever step



EVERY DEPARTMENT: In 2021, Johnston Police Chief Joseph P. Razza showed off the department's collection of patches from every PD in the Ocean State. (Johnston Sun Rise File photo)



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Senior 'Spotlite'



BEST FRIENDS: Pat Bergantino and Gail Krikorian once worked across the hallway from each other. Now, they both volunteer at the Johnston Senior Center. As they've matured, so has their friendship. (Photo courtesy Richard J. DelFino Jr.)

Decades-long friendship forged like steel and tempered at the JSC

By **RICHARD J. DELFINO JR.**
Special to the Sun Rise

The Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" this week shines on two long-time friends, Pat Bergantino and Gail Krikorian.

Some 30 years ago, Pat and Gail found themselves working on the same floor, different divisions, for what was then the RI Department of Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals, at the Pastore Complex in Cranston.

The pair became friends, and soon after, best friends. Both credit each other for being there in their times when a best friend is so important. Many years later, as they approached retirement, they together decided to explore volunteer opportunities, which brought them here to the Johnston Senior Center, some 11 years ago.

Since that time Pat, who previously was employed as a Senior Systems Analyst, manages many of the Bingo related activities, assists the Activities Director, serves as an escort on various trips and fills in wherever she can be of assistance.

Gail, who worked in Human Resources, is primarily responsible for the front desk activities, answering the phone, and assisting members as needed. Both Pat and Gail are dedicated, hardworking, pay careful attention to detail, and bring a very appreciated professional demeanor to their respective jobs.

So important are the roles in which they serve, it was determined that because so much was being asked of them, that they are now part-time employees here at the Center. Their hours here go well beyond the hours for which they are compensated.

When not here at the Center, Pat and Gail enjoy dining out, exercising, and socializing with family and friends, which they now share mutually. When their friendship first developed, they were hallways apart.

As that relationship has grown — they now describe it their friendship as "more like sisters" — a closeness finds them at work stations directly across from each other.

In many ways, their proximity to each other, working the same hours and days of the week, is reminiscent of life's journeys and for some, the belief that a greater being places people in our life, who can contribute to our joy and provide support in those difficult times.

If you know someone who could use a friend, or just someone to share a conversation, bring them to the Johnston Senior Center where we have staff and members, whose compassion and understanding, might be just what they need. And just maybe, by chance, some where down the line, they will report discovering the greatest friendships here at the Johnston Senior Center.

Editor's Note: Richard J. DelFino Jr. serves as Executive Director of the Johnston Senior Center, at 1291 Hartford Ave., Johnston. The Johnston Sun Rise regularly publishes a senior profile, called "Senior Spotlite," submitted by the senior center.

Panther pride to shine at Homecoming

By PETE FONTAINE

It was 60 years ago this month when the Beach Boys recorded their famed hit "Be True to Your School" and the Wilson brothers – Brian, Carl and Dennis – attended famed Hawthorne High School in Wisconsin.

Although that was back in 1963, that song – which included the famed voices of Mike Love and Al Jardine – could well be what has happened this week at Johnston High School leading to Saturday's always colorful Homecoming celebration.

In fact, Panther Pride may have peaked at one of the all-time highs during Spirit Week that began with Neon Day Monday and will continue through tomorrow's Blue and White Day and excitement-filled Pep Rally.

Of course, it all points to Saturday's Homecoming Parade – which will step off at 10 a.m. from the JHS parking lot off Atwood Avenue – and will feature four colorful student-made floats followed by the Johnston Lions Club's annual Alumni Breakfast and football game vs. Mount Hope High's Huskies from Warren and Bristol and crowning of the 2023 King and Queen at halftime.

If you've never attended the Homecoming Parade – which is Johnston's version of the famed New Year's Day Rose Bowl Parade – you won't want to miss the annual line of march that will be led by the Johnston Police Color Guard, award-winning JHS Marching Panther Band, local elected officials, antique cars and trucks and many important youth and sports organizations in the town.

"It's a day when Johnston shows its unmatched pride," several school officials said while watching Salad Dressing Day and the four other Spirit Week theme days. "It's a day when Panther Blue and White shines brighter than a sparkling sunshine."

Thus, Spirit Week began – as noted – with Neon Day then moved to Mathlete vs. Athlete, Holiday Day, Salad Dressing Day and tomorrow's pep rally.

"Our students used their creativity to be as bright as they could for each day," said Greg Russo, a JHS science teacher who serves as faculty advisor for the coordinating Student Council. "Each day the number of students in each class are counted to determine the most spirited class and the winning results will be announced at half-time of the football game."

One of the day's most important events will be crowning the 2023 Homecoming King and Queen who are chosen by way of a student vote and announced at halftime of what Panther People hope is a victory over the Huskies and keep the JHS undefeated record intact.

Thus, the Royal Court includes King Candidates Donavin Quinones, Dylan Guernon, Chris Civetti, Steven Finnegan, Lucas Anderson and Jayden Testa. The Queen candidates are: Nina Laurieri, Isabella Maggiacomo, Malanya Zanni, Hannah Lavergne, Alessandra Pesare and Yandery Roderiguez.

So "huddle up" as the gridiron chants goes and be part yet another edition of Johnston High School Homecoming that is one of the most important town-wide events in Johnston's tradition-rich history book.

For more photos, check out page 10.



CLASSY COURT: The 2023 JHS Homecoming Court includes in front Queen Candidates Nina Laurieri, Isabella Maggiacomo, Malanya Zanni, Hannah Lavergne, Alessandra Pesare and Yandery Roderiguez. The King candidates are Donavin Quinones, Dylan Guernon, Chris Civetti, Steven Finegan, Lucas Anderson and Jayden Testa. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



CLEVER CREATIONS: JHS students Malikai Hopp and Channosphonn Mam came dressed as "Highlighters" for Monday's Neon Day that kicked off Spirit Week on Cherry Hill.

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STILL ENROLLING THROUGH OCTOBER 20TH

SUN RISE SCOOPS

Sun Rise Staff Reports

Oct. 6

Faith & Blue Weekend

Join the Johnston Police Department's for another National Faith & Blue Weekend celebration.

"The Johnston Police Department is excited to invite you to one of the largest police-community outreach efforts - Faith & Blue," according to post on the town's social media accounts. "This nationwide initiative brings together law enforcement and faith-based organizations to build safer and stronger communities."

Mark your calendars for Oct. 6. The police plan to be on-hand from 5 to 7:00 p.m. at the Johnston Senior Center at 1291 Hartford Ave.

"During Faith & Blue Weekend, activities and initiatives are organized to engage law enforcement officers and community members, such as 'Meet and Greet' sessions, discussions, and other community-building events," according to the JPD. "These activities aim to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve, fostering mutual understanding and support. Join us and meet with officers during congregational gatherings that will be hosted by local Johnston churches and organizations."

Oct 7

Author Talk and Book Signing

The Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library, 1 Memorial Dr., Johnston, will host au-

thor Alexia Williams, author of the children's book, "Livvloo's Quiet Morning" who will present a book talk and signing. The event will be on Sat., Oct. 7, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. All are welcome.

Oct. 14

Johnston Historical Society Yard Sale

The Johnston Historical Society has rescheduled its annual Yard Sale to Saturday, Oct. 14, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the society's Museum, 101 Putnam Pike (Route 44) in Johnston. A Sunday, Oct. 15 rain date has been set (same times). The historical society is also offering spots at the sale for a \$25 donation (one 6-foot table; bring your own). Those interested in "renting" must contact Anthony Ursillo at 401-764-5901 or aursillo401@gmail.com. The Johnston Historical Society is a 501 (3C) non-profit organization.

Oct 14

Walk to End Domestic Violence

The Walk to End Domestic Violence for the Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center will be held on Sat., Oct. 14, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. starting at Rocky Point State Park, 1 Rocky Point Ave., Warwick. The walk brings awareness to domestic violence and raises money for services which directly impact victims and survivors in the community. The Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center provides free, confidential services to over 3,500 victims of domestic violence and sexual assault each year throughout RI. For more information: ebccenter.org/walk.



HELP IS AVAILABLE: Ashlyn Harrington and Rebecca Reilly, two Rhode Island College Social Work students, will be spending the academic year at the Johnston Senior Center. (Submitted photo)

Senior Center reaches out to prospective members

By **RICHARD J. DELFINO JR.**
Special to the Sun Rise

The Johnston Senior Center, with the assistance of two Rhode Island College Social Work students, is launching an initiative to "reach out" to seniors in the community who could benefit from services here at the Center.

Ashlyn Harrington and Rebecca Reilly, both seniors at Rhode Island College School of Social Work, will spend the academic year here at the Johnston Senior Center.

They will be interacting with seniors here at the center in a variety of capacities, with a primary focus of reaching out to Johnston families, seeking to recruit new members here at the JSC. The plan involves scheduling time at the town's various housing developments, meeting with residents, and reviewing with them the programs and opportunities available here at the JSC.

It is also the hope that referrals from family and friends to the center, identifying someone who would benefit by our offerings, would receive a home visit and information packets. Our plan is "to meet you where you are" and make our visits as helpful and informational as possible. If you know someone who "finds making that step difficult," please give the JSC a call at 944-3343 and speak to Ashlyn or Rebecca about scheduling some time to talk.

Editor's Note: Richard J. DelFino Jr. serves as Executive Director of the Johnston Senior Center, at 1291 Hartford Ave., Johnston. The Johnston Sun Rise regularly publishes stories submitted by the senior center.

■ Scoops
(Continued from page 4)

Oct. 14

**Hope Historical Society
October Open Forum
"Rhode Island Memorabilia"**

The Hope Historical Society invites the community to participate in their October 2023 Open Forum meeting "Rhode Island Memorabilia." Their September meeting focused on HHS sharing artifacts and memorabilia acquired during 2022-2023 and proved such a success that HHS decided to continue the fun by encouraging HHS members and guests to display, discuss, and share their own memorabilia from Hope and its surrounding areas and Rhode Island. HHS will show a short movie "Report from Rhode Island" produced during World War II to keep up morale in 48 states. The meeting will be held on Sat., Oct. 14, at 2 p.m. at the Howland Barn, 35 Ryefield Road, Hope. All are welcome!

The "Rhode Island Memorabilia" topic is an Open Forum meeting.

Intrigued by the topic but cannot attend "Rhode Island Memorabilia"? No worries! You can still share in being part of the living history by posting a picture and/or story on our Facebook page "Hope Historical Society, Hope, RI". Pictures and stories must be posted at least 72 hours before the meeting to be included at the Open Forum. Not a Facebook user? Pictures or stories can be emailed to the HHS at hopehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.

Oct. 18

**NAMI-RI: Registration Open
Family-to-Family Course**

The Rhode Island Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-RI) is now accepting registration for their next session of NAMI's Family-to-Family course which begins Wed., Oct. 18, at 6:30 p.m. This is a free and virtual, 8-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidence-based program, which means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition. NAMI-Rhode Island's Family-to-Family course is taught by trained family members who have lived experience with a loved one, and includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises. For more information on the Family-to-Family curriculum and registration, visit namirhodeisland.org or call 401-331-3060 or email beth@namirhodeisland.org

Oct. 25

Johnston Blood Drive

Johnston plans to host a community Blood Drive, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 25, at the Johnston Senior Center Dining Hall, 1291 Hartford Ave., Johnston.

All presenting donors will receive a \$5 Target gift card. Donations by appointment (walk-ins will be welcomed if availability permits at time of arrival). Go to www.ribc.org/drives to book an appointment (sponsor code 3776).

Blood donations will help stock the Rhode Island Blood Center (RIBC).

Oct. 27

MATTOBERFEST

Save the date for an event at the Ravenous Brewing Company on Friday, Oct. 27, to support FARA (the Friedrich's Ataxia Research Alliance), in memory of Johnston's Matt DiIorio.

Ravenous Brewing Company is located at 10 Industrial Road, Cumberland. Stay tuned for more details in the near future. The event will benefit FARA, in an effort to find a cure in the fight against Friedrich's Ataxia, the disease that claimed DiIorio's life.

Oct. 28

**Annual Free Coat & Blanket
Distribution**

St. John & St. James Church will hold its Annual Coat and Blanket Distribu-

tion on Sat., Oct. 28, at St. John & St. James Church, School Cafeteria, 17 St. John Street, West Warwick, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Other clothing will be available such as scarves, gloves, mittens, etc.

Nov. 1

**Brown University: Nonfiction@Brown
Lecture Series**

On Nov. 1, at 6 p.m. as Nonfiction@Brown presents the New York Times best-seller author Ross Gay. This event is free and open to the public! Visit <https://Rossgay.eventbrite.com> to reserve your ticket. The reading will be held in Pembroke Hall Room 305, 172 Meeting St., Providence.

**NAMI-RI Offers Family
Support Groups**

The RI chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-RI) offers free support groups for families and friends of loved ones who are struggling with their mental health. The groups are led by trained facilitators who also have lived experience as family members themselves. The group meetings last about 1.5 hours, and everyone who participates in the meeting gets a chance to share. The other members of the group try to offer help and resources, when appropriate, based on their own experiences. More information and full schedule can be found at namirhodeisland.org or call 401-331-3060. No pre-registration for these monthly groups is necessary.

First Thursday at 6 p.m. IN PERSON ONLY at the Rochambeau Library in the Community Room, Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope Street, Providence (NEW-starts Aug.)

Second Tuesday at 5 p.m. IN PERSON ONLY at the Middletown Public Library in the Community Room. Middletown Library, 700 West Main Road, Middletown.

Third Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. MEETS VIA ZOOM ONLY. Please call 401-331-3060 or email info@namirhodeisland.org for the Zoom link.

Fourth Wednesday at 6 p.m. IN PERSON ONLY at the Hope Valley Grange, #71116 Main St, Hope Valley.

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

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Operation Stand Down Rhode Island needs your help. Their food pantry needs a major restocking. See a list of needed nonperishable items in the photo.

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Items can be dropped off Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at OSDRI's main office, 1010 Hartford Ave., Johnston. If you have any questions or would like more information, call the OSDRI office at 401-383-4730.

Editor's Note: Send submissions to Sun Rise Editor Rory Schuler at rorys@rhodybeat.com or Front Desk Coordinator Ida Zecco at idaz@rhodybeat.com. Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.



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Johnston Sun Rise



SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Residents held tiny flags decrying "Not In My Backyard" and urging the board to "Protect Our Trees and Wildlife."

■ **Solar**

(Continued from page 1)

The crowd burst into laughter — nervous, angry, loud laughter. One guy applauded. Zoning Board Chairman Thomas Lopardo banged the gavel up front. He called for order.

Green Development made practically the same pitch in April 2022.

Most of the same witnesses testified last year. Most of the same abutters were notified and packed the Johnston Senior Center, looking for answers and representation.

The scope has decreased slightly, but even that's up for debate, following the first round of testimony before the Johnston Zoning Board last Thursday night.

The Cranston-based solar development company's attorney, John O. Mancini, called his witness, McCue, the owner of McCue Environmental, a wetland consulting firm, to the front of the room.

"As you know, there will be cutting of trees, and these will displace the species that are using them," McCue told the board and the crowd at his back. "They can relocate either on-site; there's a large area of forest habitat off-site as well. But, we try to minimize that impact."

Planting Panels

Around 160 forested acres have been targeted for the installation of nearly 50,000 solar panels — a 19 Megawatt (MW) solar field — at 118 Winsor Ave. (AP 59, Lot 15) in northwest Johnston, about a half-mile from the Smithfield and Scituate town borders.

Green argues the 19MW proposal (down 5 MW from their previous 24MW proposal) is a "20% reduction in overall panel surface area." Landry, however, argued the total site coverage will actually be closer to a mere 5% reduction in project scope.

The proposed site, zoned for residential use, includes a historic farmstead and agricultural fields on the top of Sik-kibunkiaut Hill, a Rhode Island Historical Cemetery and isolated pockets of wetland.

Neighbors have formed an opposition group — Stop Johnston Solar. They hired an attorney, Matt Landry, to represent them in court and before the Zoning Board.

The Zoning Board members — Lopardo, and members Anthony Pillozzi, Joseph Anzelone, Charles Ainabe and Richard Fascia; as well as alternates Dennis Cardillo and Albert Colannino — sat silently throughout the testimony. They asked no questions.

Instead, Landry asked Green Development's witnesses questions.

Lopardo occasionally chastised the loudest in the crowd.

"Do you want to stay here?" He shout-

ed at vocal objectors in the audience.

As the meeting began, he spoke against jeers as he announced the meeting would conclude after three-and-a-half hours Thursday night, and continue on Nov. 2, for three-and-a-half more hours.

"They're trying to wear us down," sniped an attendee in the back of the room.

Johnston resident Paul Francis played impromptu emcee, grabbing the lectern when he objected to the proceedings. Francis demanded shorter testimony from Green Development witnesses and urged the Zoning Board to listen to the residents and allow residents to ask questions. His pleas were briefly considered by the board, but the Solicitor Joseph Ballirano, advised against taking a vote.

Back to the Turtles

McCue testified that his firm would help clear-cutters avoid wildlife casualties. He introduced the crowd to the term "turtle sweeps."

"So some of the things we do ..." McCue said. "We can schedule the cutting of trees. We can try to cut the trees outside of any general breeding seasons for wildlife. Typically the winter months are a really good time to perform that activity."

But, "outside of that," McCue suggested "turtle sweeps."

"We've done this on some projects where we perform wildlife sweeps — um, turtle sweeps," McCue said.

"On each day of cutting," McCue and his team will physically pick up and move turtles (and other found animals) out of the way of heavy machinery.

"A big part of this project, we are basically removing trees, but we're gonna add pollinator habitat," McCue said. "So we're losing one habitat type, but we're gonna switch it with another one. Pollinator seed mixes contain wildflower, and that's very beneficial for bees, butterflies and birds."

The current woodland ecosystem may be replaced, in culverts and catch basins.

"They're constructed for storm water, but the reality is they do offer habitat for wildlife and aquatic species," McCue said. "Many projects that I monitor, for detention basins, within just a few months, they can attract water fowl, amphibians — it's inevitable that they will find them."

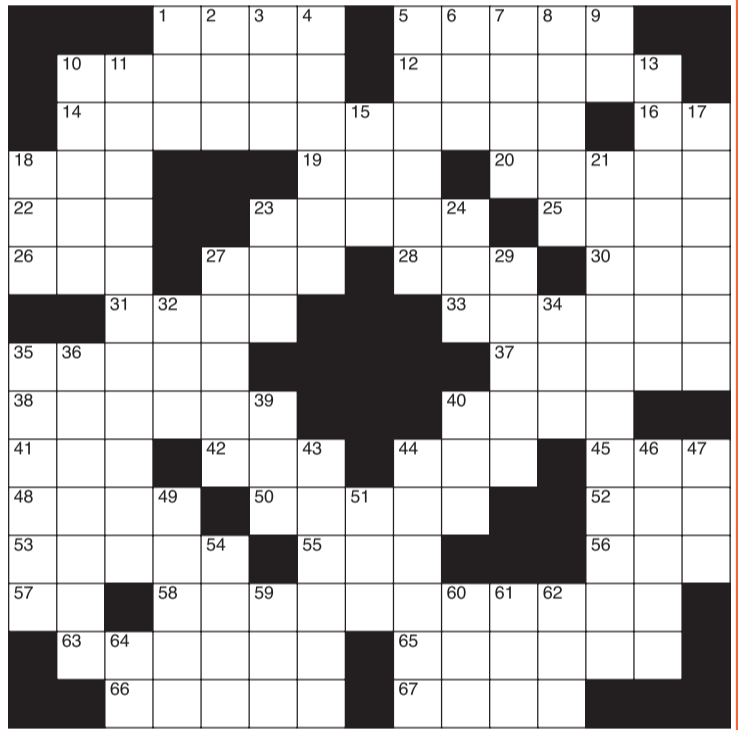
Mancini asked McCue, in regards to "environmental impact," whether the "granting of the special use permit would be environmentally detrimental to the orderly growth and development of the town of Johnston."

"Uh, yeah, I don't believe this project will be detrimental," McCue answered.

A man in the audience shouted, "Li-ar!" The crowd reacted.

We're leaving a lot of land as-is ...

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Flat tableland with steep edges
- 5. Byproduct of fire
- 10. Talked
- 12. Unique skill
- 14. Unembarrassed
- 16. Where teenagers go
- 18. Boxing's GOAT
- 19. Used to anoint
- 20. Reproductive structure found in rust fungi
- 22. Auburn great Newton
- 23. Some are for Christmas
- 25. Dried, split pulses
- 26. Self
- 27. Where to get your mail
- 28. High schoolers' test
- 30. Flightless bird
- 31. Expectorated
- 33. Practice of misrepresenting the truth
- 35. Type of patch
- 37. French river
- 38. Told on
- 40. Hillside
- 41. Peyton's little brother
- 42. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 44. Progressive country musician

- 45. Witness
- 48. Brews
- 50. Yellowish-brown
- 52. Arctic explorers (abbr.)
- 53. Mexican agave
- 55. Type of "cast"
- 56. Popular breakfast food
- 57. Atomic #52
- 58. Position north or south of the equator
- 63. Gadget
- 65. Another recording
- 66. Irregular bulges in cell membranes
- 67. Dark brown

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Licensed for Wall Street
- 2. Partner to flow
- 3. A very large body of water
- 4. Accumulate on the surface of
- 5. Central cores of stems
- 6. Angry
- 7. Spanish stew: ___ podrida
- 8. Fastened with a pin
- 9. On your way: ___ route
- 10. Soviet labor camp system
- 11. Enmities

- 13. B complex vitamin
- 15. Go quickly
- 17. Toast
- 18. A team's best pitcher
- 21. Philly culinary specialty
- 23. Small child
- 24. Unhappy
- 27. Trims away
- 29. Full of tears
- 32. Touch softly
- 34. Former OSS
- 35. A person's chest
- 36. Came from behind
- 39. Fall back
- 40. Nellie ___, journalist
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Weather
- 46. Sports broadcaster Ian
- 47. Electroencephalograph
- 49. Phenyl salicylate
- 51. Web of Things
- 54. Ship goods as cargo
- 59. The bill in a restaurant
- 60. Young female
- 61. DJ trial judge
- 62. One's grandmother
- 64. West Siberian river

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Solar
(Continued from page 6)

we're not just creating impervious area," McCue said. "We're adding plant species, we're adding pollinator mixes. We're cutting one habitat type, but we are replacing it with a habitat type."

Mancini asked McCue if the impact would be the same for a "residential development."

"No," McCue replied. "You have impervious surfaces. With residential you have structures ... you're still cutting land, but you're not letting ... you're putting structures ... you're putting impervious pavement and other structures that wildlife can't use."

McCue testified that the project would be "environmentally compatible" with

surrounding properties.

The Turnout

Johnston residents packed the meeting room Thursday night. They filled up all the chairs and more were wheeled into the room.

Johnston Fire Marshal Tom Marcello arrived after the meeting started. He circulated around the room, counting meeting attendees. He spoke to the police detail officer and Town Planner Tom Deller about the maximum occupancy.

Marcello said he counted 179 people, but max occupancy is "224 seated." No one had to leave.

PACKED HOUSE:

Residents packed the Senior Center last Thursday. They're back to fighting a large solar development once again proposed for a residential neighborhood in town. Below, extra chairs were brought in. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

Next Week: The Johnston Sun Rise will take a look at the key term "structure," and how it applies to solar development. Email Editor Rory Schuler at rorys@rhodybeat.com if you have tips or questions.



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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local  Adoptable  Loveable



Banjo

Photo credit: @harrison_photography_lh

Husky lovers, meet Banjo! His sparkling blue eyes and his great big smile tell you all you need to know...he is personality plus! He likes other dogs who appreciate his high-energy play style but no kitties for Banjo! He is a three year old Husky/Malamute mix who loves to "voice his opinion" in true Husky fashion! To find out more about Banjo please contact Save One Soul at info@sosarl.org or feel free to visit their website at www.sosarl.org Maybe you and Banjo would make lovely music together!

If you have been thinking about adopting or know of an animal in need, please contact Karen directly at **animaltalk1920@gmail.com**



SCOOP OF THE WEEK



UNDER THE TARP: Providence's former Christopher Columbus statue, a 130-year-old work of art, will be unveiled during an event on Columbus Day in Johnston's Memorial Park. Prior to the event, the statue was covered with a blue tarp and the island has been blocked off from visitors. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

Oct. 9 Columbus Day Unveiling

Christopher Columbus has landed in Johnston's War Memorial Park. On Monday, Oct. 9, he'll be welcomed with food trucks and a re-introduction to the public. The Columbus Day unveiling event on Monday, Oct. 9, will include food trucks and begin at 11 a.m. The public is welcome.



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Opinion

EDITORIAL

Can artificial intelligence really 'know' us?

A recent story in the "Wall Street Journal" chronicled the use of artificial intelligence in a new dating app. Users snap a photo of their face — that's it — and the AI system proceeds to craft a profile of their personality, which it then tests against other generated personalities on the site and assigns a likelihood of them being a compatible match.

Whether or not it works is completely speculative and highly subjective (the author used it to assess the hypothetical compatibility with her husband of over two decades; it said they were a 55% match).

But what is more interesting about the app is how it contributes to the rapidly growing list of things tech entrepreneurs are throwing artificial intelligence at in order to possibly make the next billion dollar advancement.

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

From conquering cancer, to solving climate change, to building

Matrix-esque virtual reality video games, redesigning city highways and everything in between, AI is the conductor on a million different hype trains promising a better, more efficient and evolved tomorrow.

But at least for now, those ambitions appear to be quite a ways ahead of their time — at least in regard to areas where human intuition come into play.

Having a powerful computer algorithm analyze trillions of combinations of DNA to develop new vaccines and cures for diseases is one thing, but figuring out a stranger's intentions, ambitions, and personality through a simple scan of their face? Such work (done accurately, at least) is relegated to the world of science fiction for now.

The Achilles heel of most artificial intelligence systems today comes back to their inability to truly "know" anything. Even the most advanced AI-powered chat bots, to date, are merely sophisticated replicators of known data fed into their algorithms. Data can provide powerful indicators enabling these systems to make very accurate predictions, but data alone cannot account for the many variables that contribute towards a person making a singular decision at any various point in their lives. Humans are inherently unpredictable to a certain degree, which doesn't easily jive with the mathematical minds of computers.

This does not mean this will always be the case. As machine learning progresses and artificial intelligence becomes more powerful, there very may well come a day when a computer can spit out a dating profile that so closely matches your own interests and quirks that it will change everything we know about dating. We may soon live in a world where political debates are unnecessary, as programs could fully extrapolate and accurately predict the policy decisions a potential president will make before they're even given the chance to make them.

To say this would be a brave new world is to be a vast understatement, but for now, you're probably better off grabbing a drink and a bite to eat with a potential mate rather than waiting for them to be zapped into your inbox, eagerly awaiting their robotically chosen suitor.



LETTER

Town Republicans: 'The Mayor made the right decision'

The article "Did Johnston miss out on millions for education?" (Sept. 28 edition) in the *Johnston Sun Rise* caught our attention. After we read it, we learned that Mayor Polisena Jr. refused to check the box to commit to Governor McKee's Learn365RI which would have included Health365 and Work365 programs.

These are Government spending programs that would have provided Johnston with \$2.2 million, seemingly in the short term. However, as we all know, there's no such thing as free money. The majority of RI towns/cities did sign on to McKee's program but at what cost to RI taxpayers in years to come.

We appreciate that the mayor took the time to review the program and ask questions, even requesting the town lawyer, Allan Fung, to call the Governor's office to provide answers about the program.

Furthermore, there were questions about whether the Governor can withhold federal funds from municipalities. What strings are attached? What happens when the money runs out of these programs?

At that point, the tough decisions would be to cut or absorb the programs with an existing budget.

Signing on could have repercussions in the future. It sounded like the program could be a huge liability costing Johnston taxpayer more than it's worth.

The Johnston School Committee's budget has been in the red and on the surface, this appeared like it could be a great quick fix to help. Yet, as always, the devil is in the details.

We are pleased that Superintendent Dr. DiLullo has already purchased high quality curriculum materials for both English Language Arts and Mathematics and the services will be provided by Throughline Learning. It sounds like the Johnston schools will be working with some great new programs and is on the right track.

Finally, we believe this is one of the most conservative decisions we have seen from the mayor and support his fiscally responsible decisions.

Sincerely,

The Johnston Republican Town Committee

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NEON NICHE: These JHS students began Spirit Week – a.k.a. Neon Day – dressed in a variety of outfits and costumes.



PANTHER PRIDE: This was the scene inside JHS during Nerd vs. Athlete Day when countless students showed their creativity coming to school in a variety of garb.



We want to hear from you!
Johnston has lots of stories and we want to help you share them

Send your stories and photos to
Rory Schuler, Editor
RoryS@rhodybeat.com
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LEGAL NOTICES

Public Auction
Legal Notice

To: Virgil McKeehan 23 Winter st Wakefield, RI Navy Federal Credit Union PO Box 25109 Lehigh, PA, A public auction will be held at 100 South St Johnston RI on October 14, 2023 at 900 am. The vehicle a 2021 Nissan 5N1AT3BB9MC737743 belonging to the above, the auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

10/5/23

Say you saw it
in the
**Johnston
Sun Rise**

Razza

(Continued from page 1)

back from a challenge or let something wrong go unchallenged. He cared enough to act. Rest in peace brother Joe."

Razza was full of energy, friendly and approachable.

In 2022, the diagnosis became clear, and Razza had to step down from leading the department. He asked for privacy and it was granted.

His position was filled and Razza had been fighting. The illness moved fast and it claimed him just nine months after he was officially forced to leave his post (current Johnston Police Chief Mark A. Vieira took the chief's oath in January).

"Saddened to learn of the passing of former Johnston Police Chief Joseph Razza," Gov. McKee posted online Friday. "Our thoughts are with the entire Razza family and the people of Johnston. I've directed Rhode Island state flags to be lowered in his honor."

According to a Johnston Sun Rise personality profile published in January 2021, Razza's late father Pasco cut meat at local markets and ran "Big Ray's" Farmers Market. As a kid attending Johnston Public Schools, and even into college, Razza made extra money selling produce door-to-door.

Razza attended URI for a year, transferred to CCRI and eventually graduated from Roger Williams University, with a bachelor's in criminal justice and an associate degree in business administration.

"My parents taught me at a very early age that if you wanted to succeed in life, it required determination and hard work because nothing in life was unattainable," he told the Sun Rise in 2021.

Razza was a stellar athlete; notably competitive on the basketball court and football field. He was a Johnston High School Athletic Hall of Fame inductee.

At first, Razza struck out while applying to police departments across the Ocean State. Eventually, in 1995, he

took a job as a Juvenile Program Worker at the Rhode Island Training School. He worked in private security, but finally landed his first police post in Jamestown. He went to the academy and took his first sworn officer oath later that year.

Three years later, he moved back home to Johnston.

"I hesitantly left the picturesque shores of Jamestown for the ever-flowing traffic on Atwood Avenue," he told the Sun Rise. "Although my time in Jamestown was brief, I truly enjoyed the community and its people."

Back in Johnston, he started like everyone else, as a probationary officer. He worked graveyard shifts and earned promotions (he made sergeant after six years).

He told the Sun Rise that he liked those stripes; being a sergeant was "where the rubber hits the road."

"There is not a more important position in a police department than a frontline supervisor – the sergeant," Razza said in 2021.

By 2017, he made deputy chief.

On Aug. 31, 2020, former Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena swore Razza in as the department's eighth chief. Immediately after, his wife Mandi pinned on his badge.

"A lot of people, especially the devoted men and women who make up the Johnston Police are going to wonder what kind of chief I will be, and what I will be asking of them," Razza said as the day of his promotion. "I will tell them that integrity has been and always will be my mantra, as I will continue to lead with dedication, devotion and honor to the people of this truly great town, and I will expect the same from them."

On Friday, following the announcement of Razza's death, current Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. remembered the former chief (Polisena Jr. was vice-president of Town Council while Razza served as chief; he swore in Razza's replacement in January).

"The loss of Chief Razza, especially at such a young age, is a heavy blow to Johnston," Polisena wrote. "During his time as Chief, he was instrumental

in not just keeping our town safe but also solving everyday problems for residents. He was always available to meet with residents, listen to their issues and help improve their quality of life. The key to any leadership position in government listening (is) to those you represent. Chief Razza was the ultimate listener. It was a pleasure to work alongside him during my time on the council. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Mandi and the Chief's entire family."

As a new editor in town, Razza showed me his collection of Rhode Island police department patches, which he had framed. They hung on display downstairs at the Johnston Police Department. Those patches were far more than mere bits of fabric to Chief Razza.

"Johnston Police Chief Joseph Razza honorably served the residents of Johnston for 25 years, dedicating his life to protecting and serving the people he so fiercely loved," Vieira said. "He was born and raised in Johnston and was a true pillar of our community. His commitment to the Johnston community was unmatched as he was exceptionally accommodating to residents, business owners, and community organizations."

Vieira recounted the department's recent accomplishments, owed in large part to initiatives started under the former chief.

"Under Chief Razza's leadership, the Johnston Police Department increased its social media footprint and expanded the department's community engagement initiatives, further unifying the community," Vieira recalled. "He also served as the town's EMA Director and facilitated a successful vaccination site during the COVID-19 pandemic keeping the residents of Johnston safe. Chief Razza's resiliency, integrity, and self-motivation undoubtedly left a lasting impression on the Johnston Police Department. Chief Razza was not only my close friend, but my most valued mentor throughout my career. As a department, we will carry forward his legacy of honor, compassion, and service."



PROMOTED: Retired Johnston Police Joseph Razza posed with his wife Mandi during his August 2020 promotion ceremony when he was sworn-in as chief of the department. Razza's death was announced Friday, Sept. 29, 2023. He was 54 years old. (Johnston Sun Rise File photos)



WHERE IT ALL STARTED: Joseph Razza was sworn in back in 1998 with retired Deputy Chief Vito Scotti, Chief Richard Tamburini, his father Pasco and former Mayor Louis Perrotta Sr.

Obituaries

Chief Joseph P. Razza

February 17, 1969 ~ September 29, 2023

JOHNSTON, RI — Chief Joseph P. Razza, JPD, ret., 54 passed away peacefully at his home on September 29, 2023 in the arms of his loving wife and surrounded by his adoring family. He was the devoted husband of Mandi (McCavanagh) Razza. Born in Providence, he was the cherished son of Joan (Venditto) Razza and the late Pasco "Pat" Razza.

Joseph was a lifetime resident of Johnston and attended Johnston Public Schools. He was a stellar athlete; notably competitive on the basketball court and football field. He was an All-State football player and was inducted into the Johnston High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice and an Associate Degree in Law Enforcement from Roger Williams University. His career began with the Jamestown Police Department in May 1996. He said he "left the picturesque shores of Jamestown for the ever-flowing traffic on Atwood Ave." Although he truly enjoyed the community and respected the residents of Jamestown, Johnston was home. He joined the Johnston Police Department in 1998 and steadily rose through the ranks before becoming Police Chief in 2020. He retired in 2022 due to illness.

Chief Razza was extremely honored to serve as Chief of Police. He was a good listener, a dedicated public servant and a friend and mentor to many. He had a deep dedication and commitment to the safety and well-being of the residents of Johnston. During his 30 year career, Chief Razza received six letters of commendation for excellence in policing, three department ribbons for heroism and a meritorious achievement for seizure of



stolen firearms and narcotics. Most recently he was named RI Emergency Management Director of the Year, opening the largest and most productive local Covid-19 vaccination center in the state. He was lead instructor in RI Motor Vehicle Code at the RI Municipal Training Academy and was accepted to the 285th FBI National Academy held in 2021. He also participated in the Police Chiefs Association of Rhode Island and IBPO local 307.

Chief Razza's mantra was integrity. He was devoted to public safety and the community he was sworn to serve and protect. He cared deeply about the quality of life of

the residents of Johnston and was proud of the level of service and professionalism the department provides the residents of Johnston. "Working Together — Making a Difference."

Joseph enjoyed spending quality time with his family, friends and colleagues. He loved to entertain and was a generous and attentive host. An avid runner, he could be seen daily running the streets of town. In his downtime, he took meticulous care of his yard which he enjoyed alongside a "good soak" in his hot tub. He also enjoyed going for a ride in his Corvette.

Joseph leaves behind his beloved wife of 20 years, Mandi. He is also survived by his mother Joan, to whom he was a primary caregiver. He leaves behind his sister Karen Rainone and her husband Carl and his extended loving family and friends. He was predeceased by his loyal and faithful companion, Frankie.

His Mass of Christian Burial, to which relatives and friends are welcome to attend, will be held on Thursday, Oct. 5 at 11 a.m. at Our Lady of Grace Church, 15 George Waterman Road, Johnston, followed by burial at St. Ann Cemetery, Cranston. VISITING HOURS were Wednesday, Oct. 4, from 4-8 p.m. at the Nardolillo Funeral Home, 1278 Park Ave., Cranston.

In addition to flowers, you may consider a memorial donation in his memory to The Brain Tumor Research Fund at Rhode Island Hospital (Rhode Island Hospital Foundation, PO Box H Providence, RI 02901).

Visit NardolilloFH.com for online condolences.

Obituaries

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

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- Thank you

SMALL HAUNTS



SCARY LITTLE WORLD: Mohr Library Clerk Arlene Lopardo created a miniature haunted house as a gimmick to catch young readers' attention and help persuade them to pick up a scary story this October. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

'A book a day keeps the monsters away'

By RORY SCHULER

Even if you find your kid's reading choices repulsive and scary, at least they're reading. Arlene Lopardo, a clerk at the Marian J. Mohr Library in Johnston, started saving bits from the trash and transformed them into a miniature haunted house.

She gathered some of the library's scarier works, borrowing books from the donation bins, and arranged them at the base of the tiny house.

"A book a day keeps the monsters away," Lopardo said as she lit tiny battery-powered votive candles and placed them in the little rooms.

She made shrunken cookies out of dried lentils. A table from a coffee creamer cap. Carpets and tapestries from old library due date slips.

Stop into the library at 1 Memorial Ave. to enter Lopardo's spooky little world. She hopes you'll borrow a scary story, take it home and use it to keep the monsters away.



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Johnston man shoots employee in the head & she survives

Those living in or traveling through Johnston, who wanted to kick back and chug down a few cold intoxicants, found what they were looking for at Luigi Margherita's Saloon.

Operated out of the Lafazia Building, on the corner of Morgan Avenue and Atwood Avenue, the hole-in-the-wall was usually quiet. But on the afternoon of June 19, 1907, Charles Booth decided to shoot his housekeeper there. Booth was a 53-year-old night watchman at a laundry, who resided on Knight Street in Providence. His housekeeper, 39-year-old Elizabeth Guilmette, lived with him.

Charles repeatedly had trouble with his domestic employees. During the spring of 1903, while living on Westminster Street, he filed a report one evening at the police station stating that while he was home napping that afternoon, someone had come into his house and stolen a purse containing two dollars and a valuable ring which was underneath his pillow.

A couple of days later, his housekeeper Alice Corrigan was arrested and charged with the theft. The following year, his new housekeeper, Sarah Meehan, was arrested and charged with stealing five dollars from his trunk on July 5.

Now, Elizabeth was working for him. A native of Nova Scotia, she had come to America in 1887. Her 16-year-old son James resided with her in Booth's home, despite the fact that she was a married woman with

Back in the Day



by KELLY SULLIVAN

a husband in Providence. Booth had a wife and three children of his own who were living in Canada.

On the evening of June 18, 1907, Elizabeth's friend Helena Ormsbee visited her at the Booth home and witnessed to an argument between the housekeeper and her employer. The discord seemed to have perished the following day when Charles, Elizabeth, Helena and James enjoyed a fishing trip together on Hughesdale Pond. After leaving the pond, it was decided they would all stop at Luigi's.

James, who had a very close relationship with Charles, was sent to a nearby market to purchase food for their dinner and when he returned at about 5:30, they all sat in the saloon's back room and ate. From the bar area, Luigi could hear the conversation.

Elizabeth was complaining that she had been unable to find her revolver, which she kept with her things at Charles's house. Charles re-

sponded, "I'll show you where it is."

Charles immediately pulled the gun from his pocket, aimed it at her and pulled the trigger. The bullet entered her head just over her right eye and exited through the side of her head. Luigi and another man raced into the back room to see Charles holding the still-smoking gun and standing over Elizabeth's body. James quickly grabbed a chair and lifted it over his head to pummel Charles but, before he could do so, Luigi ran toward Charles and grabbed the gun from his hand. The other man called for police. Other than a painful wound on her head, Elizabeth suffered no serious repercussions. After the attempted murder, Charles was sentenced to the Rhode Island State Prison. He expressed remorse for the shooting and explained it had been done on impulse. He died the following year, on Sept. 10, 1908, of pulmonary tuberculosis. He was laid to rest in North Burial Ground. Elizabeth became a patient at the Rhode Island State Infirmary on Jan. 19, 1925. There, she suffered a stroke on April 16, 1933 and died six days later, at 2:30 in the morning, from its effects as well as those of longstanding heart disease.

1934 US Naturalization photograph of James, who once witnessed his mother being shot by her employer.

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

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Gargantuan Gourds

IDITAROD OF GARDENING: Steve Sperry shows off what may be his largest pumpkin of the season which is estimated to weigh well over 2,000 pounds. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



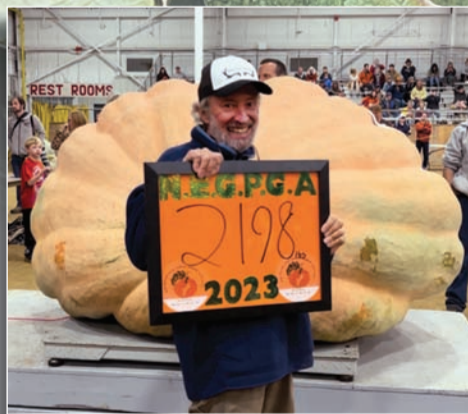
Johnston man's pumpkins capable of chasing Indiana Jones

By RORY SCHULER

Most of Steve Sperry's pumpkins weigh a ton — at least. These squash could squash most humans — they're potentially murderous monstrous melons. "Giant pumpkins are the Iditarod of gardening," Sperry said Tuesday. "You ride the rail on these things. There's a fine line between making it and not making it." Gargantuan gourds are growing off Hopkins Avenue in Johnston. "I recently placed first at (the) Topsfield Fair weigh off," Sperry said. His blue ribbon-winner weighed a whopping 2,198 pounds. The prize purse netted Sperry \$6,500.

■ GOURD - PAGE 16

BLUE RIBBON: Steve Sperry recently placed first at the Topsfield Fair weigh-off with his whopping 2,198-pound pumpkin. The prize purse netted Sperry \$6,500. (Submitted photos)




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Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular returns to Roger Williams Park Zoo



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RWPZOO.ORG

By **DON FOWLER**

For the past 22 years Jack Reckmer has been directing the Jack-o-Lantern Spectacular at the Roger Williams Park Zoo, and every year he brings something different to the special exhibit.

Jack was standing next to the entrance on opening night, greeting guests and footing the final touches on a beautiful drawing of the Taj Mahal.

With a Wanderlust theme

running through the exhibit, we are taken on a trip to Egypt, London, South America, Africa, Europe, Asia and other exotic places around the United States and the world.

There are thousands and thousands of painted and carved pumpkins surrounding you as you walk the trails. Be sure to look up, because many are looking down on you from the tall trees.

Jack has at least 20 artists and carvers on hand, working

around the clock to keep the exhibit fresh. Over the month long exhibit, most pumpkins have to be replaced. Jack has switched to LED lighting, which uses less heat, so the pumpkins will last longer.

You enter the trail and are immediately greeted by skeletons and a graveyard. It is a bit of a walk, so wear comfortable shoes and appropriate clothing. The trail is paved and accessible to wheelchairs and wagons, with a few benches along the

way to stop for a rest.

You pass the elephant enclosure and are greeted by the new outdoor giraffe area. Turn the bend and hundreds of pumpkins greet you from every angle. It is an awesome sight, reminding me of turning the bend at LaSalette Shrine and being greeted by thousands of Christmas Lights.

Like Jack Reckmer, this is my 22nd year at the exhibit, and every year I find something new and exciting.

Take your time. Enjoy the intricate drawings and carvings. Listen to the music, from classical to rock and country.

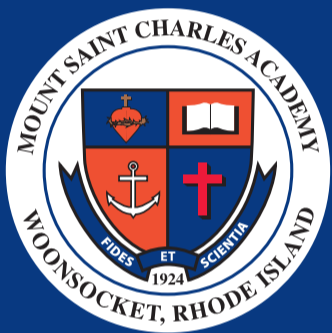
There are several food and souvenir booths that help support the park.

The exhibit is open from 6:00 to 10:30 p.m. every day Tickets must be purchased in advance on line.

Be sure to go on line at www.rwpzoo.org/jols/. The site has answers to all your questions.

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LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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Jennifer Coates, business spotlight writer

Sharing the stories of Johnston's local businesses

By JENNIFER COATES

It was once written that the soul of civic life in a state's towns and villages is the local newspaper. Residents refer to these newspapers to keep a finger on the pulse of their communities. They go to find answers to questions about local politics and to learn what's going on in the schools, the city council meetings, the town hall, the senior and community centers. They go to see photographs of their sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters as they score that goal, earn that Eagle Scout award, make their way to the Honor's list, showoff the huge fish they caught, graduate from college. They go to learn of loved ones passed.

Readers also go to find the latest information on upcoming events, promotions or services provided by their favorite businesses ~ from restaurants to tradesmen to salons to repair shops to childcare ~ the list goes on and on. Just pick up any newspaper and you will find something about your neighborhood business that you will find useful and timely.

The truth is, we need our local businesses as much as we need the local newspapers that tell their stories and survive on their advertising dollars. The newspapers may be the soul of the the city, but the businesses are the heart. Supporting these businesses is as critical to the survival of our communities as the heart is to the life of a person.

As the business spotlight writer for the Cranston Herald, the Johnston SunRise and the Warwick Beacon, I have had the privilege of interviewing the owners of these businesses for the past twelve years. It has been an enormous privilege to tell their stories and to share their goals, aspirations, and histories.

I have learned that these businessmen and women, whose walks in life are each so different, genuinely love what they do. Most have invested their every penny into their product or service. Most have sacrificed everything to be successful, and many have survived natural disasters and even



Jennifer Coates has been writing business spotlights for local businesses for over twelve years. Call sales representative Chris Peabody at 401-732-3100 at the Johnston SunRise to have your story told!

pandemics. Many of these businesses have been run by generations of family members.

Yet many have also failed, and I have felt that pang of sorrow when I drive by their shuttered stores or offices, knowing that what was lost was so much more than a business, but rather a dream ~ sometimes a lifetime of dreams.

What will keep the dreams and goals of these many diverse business owners alive is your continued patronage. Shop at your local stores. Support your local, family-run restaurants, salons, service stations, retail stores, gift shops, electricians, plumbers, doctors, dry cleaners, and so many more. They need you to stay alive. We need them to thrive.

Gourd

(Continued from page 14)

But Sperry still has one more pepo left in the patch.

Split Decisions

When your pumpkins swell over a thousand pounds, a multitude of factors can make the fruit split, or "blow up," as they say among the elite members of the planet's global giant pumpkin cultivating network.

"A set of twins in the UK grew a 2,907 — but it split," Sperry said. "The goal this year is 3,000 pounds."

Giant pumpkin growing is a high-work, high-risk, high-reward endeavor. The English twins — Ian and Stuart Paton — grew a whopping 2,656.1-pound (1204.8 kilogram) pumpkin in 2022. This year, the Paton twins had six monsters swelling toward potential world-record status.

"But they all blew up," Sperry said. "That's the thing I admire most about pumpkin growers. They can get kicked to the curb, but they get back up and do it all over again. It speaks to their character."

Sperry's been growing giant, competitive pumpkins for more than two decades. His recent harvests are gaining notoriety across New England. Last week he placed first at a Massachusetts fair. And later this week he plans to pick his fourth and final giant jack-o'-lantern of the season.

"I've got one pumpkin left in the patch that will be picked this week for our state weigh off," Sperry said earlier this week.

Backyard Shift

Massive pumpkin cultivation can be a full-time job.

"I fertilize daily out of two 50-gallon drums," Sperry explained. "Spray insecticide and fungicide weekly. All vines are pruned and buried every three days. I am retired and put in 30 hours a week from second week in June until second week in August."

For 23 years, Sperry has been studying the art of profound pastoral pumpkins. He works out of his backyard, but requires heavy machinery to harvest, hoist and transport his masterpiece melons.

"Our weigh off is scheduled for Saturday at Pasquale Farm," Sperry said Tuesday. "We may change the date to Sunday due to rain. We'll make the call on Wednesday."

He usually picks on Fridays. Each pick is a production packed with logistical hurdles. Each harvest requires a herd of helping hands.

Baby to Behemoth

"I grow four pumpkin plants in an area (70- feet by 70-feet) in my back yard; one pumpkin per plant," Sperry explained.

He started his seeds inside on April 12 and pollinated female flowers in mid-June, with the harvest expected "approximately 100-110 days later."

So far in 2023, Sperry has placed fourth at the Durham Fair (1,525 pounds), first at Topsfield (2,198 pounds) and first place at Ridgefield (2,154 pounds). He's excited to measure the true girth of this season's final harvest.

So far, his ultimate pumpkin is thoroughly ribbed and robust.

"These plants are old," Sperry said. "They've given everything they have. They're six months old."

The 2023 growing season has been dramatic.

"This has been a very challenging year," Sperry explained. "We would normally water 100-125 gallons per plant; that was last year. This year, with all the rain we had, there's very little watering."

At their peak, pumpkins can gain 40-50 pounds per day. Too much rain can be fatal for Sperry's bountiful behemoths.

"They will split, too," he said. "This year's numbers are way down and way off. A lot of people have lost pumpkins."

Lots of factors can "blow up" a pumpkin.

"Too much water; too much fertilizer," Sperry said.

Even traumatic weather can cleave a colossal pumpkin.

"Unfortunately, we had all these tornadoes around us. Like four of them," Sperry recalled. "Over in Scituate, on 295, at the graveyard — they've been all around us. I had nine inches of rain in a week, which, if you get that between day 30 and day 40, you're doomed. They're all gonna split. But because, it was like two-three weeks ago, and I was ramping down, fortunately nothing happened. Then it's off and running."

World Shaped Like a Giant Pumpkin

Sperry's an active member of a "network of growers throughout the world." He belongs to, among other organizations, the Giant Pumpkin Commonwealth (GPC), a governing body that sets the rules and regulations for giant pumpkin growing and competitions throughout the world.

According to official rankings, Sperry's in fourth place in the world "at the moment."

His competitors, however, are pledging to harvest some humongous pumpkins this weekend. He expects to slip in the rankings.

"The big ones are going to the scale this weekend and next," Sperry said. "I only have one left. I'm not going to get my ass kicked but I'm going to get beat."

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Gourd
(Continued from page 16)

The world record pumpkin was raised by an Italian farmer, Stefano Cutrupi, in 2021, and weighed 2,702.9 pounds (or 1226 kilograms). The American record was set by Travis Gienger in Minnesota in 2022 — weighing in at 2,560 pounds (according to www.giantpumpkin.com).

And Sperry said he expects another giant from Minnesota this weekend.

For the union's smallest state, Rhode Island has more than its fair share of giant pumpkin papas.

A one-time world record holder hailed from North Scituate. And quite a few fantastic fruits have been sprouted in Coventry. Richard Wallace, of Warren, held the state record since 2016, with his legendary 2,261.5 pounder.

"We don't have a lot of growers in Rhode Island, but we're very competitive with the rest of the world," Sperry said. "We've had Top 10 averages in the past."

Giant Pumpkin Godfather

However, Sperry credits the "Godfather of Pumpkin Growers" John F. "Sonny" Castellucci, of Smithfield, who died in 2017 at age 88.

"John was an avid gardener and in 1993 he grew the largest pumpkin ever in Rhode Island weighing in at 532.5lbs," according to the "Godfather's" obituary. "Shortly after, he was instrumental in establishing the

RI Pumpkin Growers Association and hosted many weigh-offs and festivals at his farm in Smithfield."

Castellucci believed "a man's best hours are spent in his garden." Sperry agrees.

Sperry got started in the giant gourd game after attending a weigh-off at Castellucci's house more than two decades ago. Then he fell down the "rabbit hole." Now he, and the rest of the Ocean State's RIPGA members, compete to win the coveted Castellucci Cup, which goes to the grower of the state's biggest pumpkin.

Last Batch From the Patch

He's been measuring his last remaining pumpkin. It's covered in a protective canopy. He tends to it like a new father with a really huge, thirsty orange infant.

He measures the circumference, from side-to-side, and from blossom to stem. Sperry finds the dimensions on a chart to estimate the pumpkin's likely median weight (he said it's "usually" accurate within 5 percent).

So far this year, Sperry's harvests have been coming in heavy.

"The Topsfield pumpkin went over-chart by 9 percent — a desirable characteristic," he said.

Later this week, he'll use a tripod with 16-foot legs and a girdle made of seatbelt straps.

With some help, he'll carefully raise the ton of orange flesh onto the back of a flatbed.

"Our pumpkins no longer fit



MONSTER MELON: Most of Steve Sperry's pumpkins weigh a ton, literally. Here he hoists one of his monsters from his backyard garden. The pumpkin went on to win first place at the Topsfield Fair in Massachusetts. (Submitted photos)

in the back of our pickup trucks," Sperry said. "We rent a trailer."

When they arrive at the weigh-in destination, they remove the massive pumpkin with a forklift.

"You got to be very careful," Sperry warned. "You don't go underneath it when we're lifting it."

The Need for Seed

Contrary to popular belief, giant pumpkins sprout from "regular-sized" seeds.

"I get asked that all the time," Sperry laughed. "People wonder if the seeds are the size of your hand. They're not."

But prized pumpkin seeds can fetch big bucks.

The giant pumpkins raised by competitive growers hail from "controlled populations," according to the Johnston farmer.

"It's not genetic engineering," he said. "It's just selective pollination."

Sperry's pumpkin patch will be bare by next week; its final "old man," now 105 days old,

plucked from its massive, hairy vine. He described his final pick as "ribby" and difficult to measure. On Sept. 21, he said the chart estimate predicted a 2,142-pound plumper. That was two weeks ago. The old man was still growing, and it hailed from a "heavy seed" (the offspring of a former fair winner — this year's hot seed, the 2365 Wolf).

Sperry's final pumpkin grew about four feet high, five feet wide and nearly five feet long.

A set of Sperry's seeds (one seed from each of this season's four giants) can fetch \$30-40 (for four seeds). They'll be named after the grower, preceded by the weight of the pumpkin — the smallest, "1525 Sperry"; his number two, the "2154 Sperry"; and the Topsfield winner, the "2198 Sperry."

The last one?

"Whatever this thing weighs with my last name," Sperry said. "Those four seeds will go into the Sperry package. If they pop some 2,000 pound pumpkins, they'll get some attention.

I've got some real good crosses."

Championship pumpkin growers can fetch as much as \$800 per seed, based on past auction results.

Pumpkin Retirement

The final fate of Sperry's giant orange offspring varies.

Sometimes he sells them. Some are hacked and transformed by artists for the Roger Williams Zoo's Jack-o'-lantern Extravaganza.

"I built a snow man on top of one one year," said Sperry, a dedicated home-gardener, who not only grows giant, sturdy pumpkins, but also tiny, fragile mushrooms.

He raises both with a hearty mixture of love and labor.

Searching for a photo of one of his giant pumpkins carved and on display at the zoo, Sperry joked: "On my phone — most people have pictures of kids — I have pictures of pumpkins and mushrooms."



LA ULTIMA PEPO: Steve Sperry has one more monster to harvest. "The big one, I hope," he said earlier this week. The final harvest and weigh-in is planned for this weekend. Only then will he know where his giant pumpkin growing skills rank in the world.

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Sports

JHS tennis eyeing playoff berth

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston girls tennis team has been in the thick of a playoff hunt as it approaches the midway point of its regular season schedule and is eyeing not only a postseason berth, but a late-season surge as well.

Johnston has an experienced roster with seven seniors and has enjoyed some early success, especially from the singles spots. Johnston entered the week with a 3-3 overall record.

"It's a fair start, it's a good start to the season. I think we'll improve and finish strong in the end. Everybody's improving," said coach Ryan Barrette.

Leading the way is senior captain Hannah Lavergne, who sits at 4-2 overall at the top singles spot.

"She's been in every match and she's very consistent. She's very competitive," said Barrette.

Fellow captain Alessandra Pesare has held down the second singles spot, and a breakout player for the Panthers this fall has been Lauren Dixon. Dixon



PANTHERS ON A PLAYOFF HUNT: The Johnston girls tennis team takes a group photo. (Submitted photo)

■ TENNIS - PAGE 21

Battle of the Badges raises \$2,600 for unified sports

By PETE FONTAINE

Although only a half dozen people took part in the check presentation, the 1st Annual Battle of the Badges charity basketball game was an event that filled Johnston High School's Edward DeSimone Gymnasium and is expected to become even larger in the years to come.

"The event was a huge success," assessed Johnston Fire Department Rescue Lt. Mark Livingston who co-organized the unique fundraiser with JPD School Resource Officer Lou Cotoia. "A total of \$2,100 was collected at the door and (JFD) Local 1950 and the Johnston Police Local 307 each donated \$250 each for a total of

BADGES - PAGE 19



FANTASTIC FUNDRAISERS: Among the people taking part in presenting \$2,600 to the JHS Unified Sports Special Olympics Programs were: Athletic Director Justin Erickson, JFD Fire Rescue Lt. Mark Livingston, JFD Fire fighter John Wooley holding the check, JHS teacher Savannah Bissitt, Assistant JHS Principal Rachel Salvatore and Assistant Supt. of Schools Ed-da Carmadello. (Submitted photo)

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PREXY'S PALS: President Jack Judge joins Tracy and Dewy Uriati to hold the sign for the \$500 Hole-in-One Prize prior to the annual Co-Ed Memorial Golf Tournament. Unfortunately, no one carded an ace.

Badges

(Continued from page 18)

\$2,600."

After which Livingston announced was given to the award winning JHS Unified Champion School Sports Special Olympics Program for future use.

"It was great to see the camaraderie between the different departments of the town," added Livingston "And to especially get behind a great cause like the unified sports program."

The near standing room only sellout crowd seemed like a "Who's Who in Johnston" and as School Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo emphasized: "The Battle of the Badges was a great success; the attendance was remarkable; the excitement in the gymnasium was off the charts. Johnston School's partnership with our Fire and Police Department has been very much appreciated through the years."

DiLullo also wanted it known: "Both Chief Mark Vieira and Chief David Iannucilli have always responded favorably to the needs of the schools and are committed to the safety and well-being of our staff and students. Both departments support our

schools and especially our students on a regular basis have been impressive. These special events that benefit our students is the icing on the cake. I cannot thank the two chiefs and their departments for their support and look forward to our continued work in partnership."

To which Assistant School Superintendent Edda Carmadello added: "The entire community including many alumni and students turned out for this fun event. Everyone enjoyed Touch-a-Truck and food trucks before the game and the special halftime game between out high school teachers and students."

Moreover, Carmadello – who is steeped with success in the unified sports programs – said: "The district is grateful to the fire and police departments for planning the basketball game and donating the money to the Special Olympics program. The money will support the unified basketball, volleyball and cross-country teams."

Livingston then heaped praise for every person who made a significant contribution to the night's success and said, with enthusiasm ringing in his voice: Stay tuned for future fundraisers toward this same great cause; especially in the coming months!"

JMCE continues to give back

By PETE FONTAINE

People are still abuzz about the annual Johnston Memorial Cancer Events' Co-Ed Memorial Golf Tournament played at pristine Gloucester Country Club in Chepachet.

First and foremost was because 64 golfers – who are mostly members at the historic lakeside layout – disregarded the rain and wet conditions and still played nine holes and wound up raising \$10,000 for Hasbro Children's Hospital

"This one was extra special!" exclaimed Linda LaFazia, one of the JMCE founders "and especially since September was Curing Children's Cancer Month."

Ever since the JMCE, which is made up of a close-knit group of friends who love playing golf and began raising money to help children who have been stricken with cancer, the unique non-profit has raised nearly a half-million dollars to fund various programs at Hasbro Chil-

dren's Hospital.

From the time Tracy Uriati and Cynthia DiBlasi began checking in golfers until the post-tourney dinner was over, the JMCE as LaFazia and Co-Chair Judi Graham emphasized: "Due to all the sport we received from our sponsors, friends and members here at Gloucester Country Club were able to raise \$10,000."

Perhaps the most impressive thing about the extraordinary fund-raising is that the GCC has adopted Hasbro Children's Hospital as its designated charity and thus that further boosts the JMCE coffers.

"This tournament is always special," several golfers offered while admiring their jackets which were this year's gift. "No group does it better than the JMCE!"

The foursome of Troy Hewes, Judy DiIorio, Mary Wiggins and Jesse Wiggins was the low gross winners while Walter Gerk Michy Nanni Tracy Uriati and Dewey Uriati took home the low net prize.



WARM WELCOME: Tracy Uriati and Cynthia DiBlasi were a two-person greeting team that registered and welcomed 64 golfers to the annual JMCE Co-Ed Memorial Golf Tournament. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

CHAMPS CORNER: GCC Ladies Champion Lisa Adler (left), Men's Champ Charlie Melvin who is a student at La Salle Academy and Ladies Net Champion Robin McFaden were among the 64 golfers who enjoyed the recent JMCE Co-Ed Memorial Tournament.



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Waterways stocked with trout

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is conducting fall trout stocking, in advance of the Columbus Day holiday weekend, in selected areas in Rhode Island from Thursday, Sept. 28 and continuing through Friday, Oct. 6. Brook and rainbow trout are being stocked in the following waterways:

- Barber Pond, South Kingstown.
- Barberville to Wyoming Pond, Richmond, Hopkinton.
- Blackstone River, Lincoln.
- Bradford Fishing Area, Westerly.
- Breakheart Pond, Exeter.
- Browning Mill Pond, Exeter.
- Carbuncle Pond, Coventry.
- Carolina Trout Pond, Richmond.
- Cronan Landing, Richmond.
- Eight Rod Farm Pond, Tiverton.
- Grantville to Rt. 95, Hopkinton.
- Hope Valley Fishing Area, Hopkinton.
- Kings Factory Bridge, Charlestown.
- Lower Shannock, Charlestown.
- Meadow Brook Pond, Richmond.
- Olney Pond, Lincoln State Park, Lincoln.
- Rt. 165 to Barberville, Exeter, Hopkinton.
- Round Top Ponds, Burrillville.
- Shippee Sawmill Pond, Foster.
- Silver Spring Lake, North Kingstown.
- Spring Grove Pond, Gloucester.
- Stafford Pond, Tiverton.
- Upper Pawtuxet, (Hope), Scituate.
- Willet Pond, East Providence.
- Woodville, Richmond, Hopkinton.

Visit DEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife's Facebook Page, www.dem.ri.gov/fishing, or call 401-789-0281 or 401-539-0019 for more information on stocking.



STOCKED TROUT: Steve Burstein with Andrew Stevens and his father Jim Stevens of Warwick with fall tautog brutes they caught at General Rock, North Kingstown in November. (Submitted photo)

The more you fish, the better your mental health?

Last week a Fox News article by Melissa Rudy cited a study published in the July issue of *Epidemiologia* that showed men who enjoy fishing as a hobby may have better mental health. The study Mental Health and Recreational Angling in UK Adult Males: A Cross-Sectional Study was conducted by Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, Ulster University, and Queen's University, Belfast.

The study, found that fishing on a regular basis contributed to a lower risk of depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and other mental health conditions. Researchers polled 1,752 males

about their fishing activities, as well as other factors including previous mental illness, exercise and overall well-being. The participants who said they fished on a regular basis were nearly 17 percent less likely to have experienced mental health conditions compared to men who did not fish frequently.

The Fox News article quoted Dr. Mike Trott, one of the study researchers from the Centre for Mental Health Research at the University of Queensland. "We were expecting to find that angling in general has positive effects on mental health — however, we did not expect that the more often you fish, the better the benefits are," said Dr. Trott.

Unfortunately, the study only included men, so the findings cannot be generalized across genders.

Shore or boat, tautog fishing still a good bet

Tautog fishing continues to be very good. Here's what one expert has to say.

Neil Hayes of Quaker Lane Bait & Tackle said, "If you are fishing from shore and not getting bites you must keep moving and try different spots every couple of minutes. You move much more so than fishing from a boat." Boats move as they swing back and forth on anchor due to wind and current. But when you are on shore you are

stationary, not moving, so you have to find the fish. Hayes said, "Put that crab in front of the fish, the big mistake many shore anglers make is staying in one spot too long."

"Conventional high/low rigs work best because there is a lot of heavy structure when fishing from shore. Small jigs get tied up more frequently as there are a lot of cracks and crevices for them to fall into compared to convention rigs."

"Some of my favorite places to fish for tautog from shore include Ocean Drive at Brenton Reef, Newport as well as Ft. Wetherill, Ft. Getty and of course Beavertail Point, Jamestown. Black Point in Narragansett is a good spot too," said Hayes. "From a boat the Bay provides a multitude of places to fish. There's structure all around compared to our sandy beach coastline. Favorite places include Plum Lighthouse, Whale Rock, and rock piles off Narragansett at the mouth of the Narrow River and ledges off Beavertail Point."

Where's the bite?

Striped bass, bluefish, false albacore and bonito. After the storm last week anglers were treated to large schools of striped bass in Greenwich Bay. Angler Dave Hanuschak caught multiple bass to 29 inches using a white SP Minnow and Yo-Zuri crystal minnow fishing Sunday morning in Greenwich Bay.

Dave said, "The bass were on the surface just about everywhere feeding on peanut bunker."

Striped bass have mainly been targeting mullet and peanut bunker in our area. Last week when had some favorable boat conditions. The Albie bite has been great and there are still some bonito around. As conditions improve after this weekend, the inshore fishing should pick right back up with bass and bluefish migrating along

the beaches," said Declan O'Donnell of Breachway Bait & Tackle, Charlestown.

Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence, said, "Bass of all sizes are being caught in the Providence and Seekonk Rivers with Capt. Rene Letourneau of On The Rocks Charters reporting a great false albacore bite off Newport after the storm on Sunday."

"Tautog fishing has been good with anglers catching keepers throughout the Bay, however, not many have had a chance to fish with high winds and turbid water last week," said Henault of Ocean State Tackle.

"Fishing has been improving. Most boats have been able to catch their limit but had to work to find bigger fish," said O'Donnell.

Tuna. "The offshore bite was good this past week with some nice size bluefin and yellowfin being caught," said O'Donnell. Tuna fishing opened for giants once again this week.

Henault of Ocean State Tackle said Monday morning at 7 a.m., "We just got a report that Capt. Rob Taylor of Newport Sportfishing Charters. They hooked and landed a giant bluefin tuna off Narragansett. So no doubt the bluefin bite for giants is still good."

Freshwater. Largemouth bass fishing is good but if you are interested in fishing with the family, DEM stocked twenty-five waterways with brook and rainbow trout this week. See above article.

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



BASS ON THE SURFACE: Angler Dave Hanuschak caught multiple striped bass to 29 inches that were feeding Sunday on the surface in Greenwich Bay.

All eyes on Saturday

The Johnston High School community is gearing up for this Saturday's Homecoming celebration, where the football team will take on Mt. Hope for a 1 p.m. kickoff. Leading the way for the Panthers will be captains Neari Vasquez, Steven Finegan, Nathaniel Smith and Alex Fedorchuk, who will also be wearing their new, all-blue uniforms. (Submitted photo)



TOP SINGLES: Johnston senior Hannah Lavergne returns a shot. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

Tennis

(Continued from page 18)

was bumped from doubles to the third singles spot and has fared very well, boasting the team's best record at 5-1. The team's top doubles performer has been Riley Guenette.

The Panthers took on Scituate on Tuesday but the results were not available at press time. The team's next match will be Thursday afternoon when it heads to Pawtucket to face Shea.

Barrette has had fun coaching the talented Panthers and believes that they will have a chance to find a groove down the stretch and emerge as a top team in the division.

"I'm hoping for the playoffs. We got off to a fair start so I believe that the playoffs are in our future," said Barrette. "As long as we have a consistent attendance then we'll be fine. They're an enjoyable bunch of girls to coach to have around, that's a plus."



CAPTAIN: Johnston's Alessandra Pesare.

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Real Estate Transactions

Cranston

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
24 Riverfarm Rd	Michailides, Jonathan P and Zelano, Tammy M	Anderson, Justin and Pennacchia, Stefanie	9/13	\$385,000
25 Plaza St	Massotti, Jeffrey	Gupta, Sandeep	9/12	\$462,500
30 Poplar Dr	Casparian, Gloria and Homonoff, Marvin	Corsi Jr, Robert	9/14	\$240,000
32 Shirley Blvd	Mellor, Donald F and Mellor, Thomas R	Beaulieu, Susan E	9/15	\$410,000
37 Old Oak Ave	Vaccaro, Margaret	Reynolds, David	9/11	\$335,000
39 Meadow Ave	Aronne, Victoria J	Contreras, Daisy	7/21	\$330,000
40 Oakland Ave	Bennett, Jeffrey R and Bennett, Evan M	Fitzsimmons, Kathrin and Fitzsimmons, Connor R	9/12	\$420,000
42 Sunset Ter	Winch, Anne E	Chybowski, Faith S and Chybowski, Steven R	9/15	\$375,850
45 Wakefield Ave	Czerwein, Clovis	Ortiz, Leonicio E and Suero, Yisi M	9/15	\$1
45 Wakefield Ave	Czerwein, Clovis	Ortiz, Leonicio E and Suero, Yisi M	9/15	\$1
46 Cliffside Dr	Reddy Firt and Poyton, Colleen P	Alexandre, James	9/15	\$540,250
55 Amy Dr	Mckeon, Barbara J	Guadagno, Nicholas H and Guadagno, Danielle M	9/15	\$679,900
76 Boxwood Ave	Yuok, Phalla and Thach, Vutha	Burbank, Michelina M and Picardi, Janice	9/14	\$360,000
84 Summer St	Cloxtou, David L	Polanco, Jamyle I	9/12	\$405,000
86 Magnolia St	Paquette, Germaine and Ferschke, Laurie A	Tow, Yanna	9/14	\$378,000
125 Belmont Rd	Virginia M Bazin T and Bazin, Virginia M	Stacey, Brian and Stacey, Kelley	9/15	\$479,900
148 Fountain Ave	Deespinal, Alexandra V	Soler, Huascar V and Estrella, Emelyn S	9/13	\$570,000
156 Lambert St	Ball William L Est and Ball, Stevan W	Levesque, Stephen and Levesque, Cheryl	9/15	\$130,000
157 Vallette St	Bella Casa LLC	Gilman, Colbylyn and Wilson, Michael	9/11	\$565,000
167 Midvale Ave	Cordeiro, Diana F and Addressi, John P	Lao, Tony Y and Hok, Victoria	9/15	\$335,000
1234 Cranston St	Dail, Dennis R and Dail, Donna M	Victoria, Marlon R	9/15	\$335,000
East Greenwich				
1 Olsons Way	Albuja Ponce, Ana C and Davila, Mauricio V	Hawkins, Daniel and Hawkins, Amanda	9/15	\$740,000
1 Squirrel Ln	Salvator, John	Simmons, Alexander F and Simmons, Kaitlin F	9/13	\$910,000
15 Valley Rd	Oneil, Michael J and Morrell, Jenah L	Zhong, Binqiang	9/12	\$579,000
16 Locust Dr	Irene Boutote Irt and Boutote, Robert	Procopio, Andrew M and Procopio, Laura D	9/15	\$497,000
25 Franklin Rd Lot 4	River Farm Place LLC	Mazzeo, James	9/11	\$520,000
60 Deep Meadow Ln Lot 60	Roby, Mark S and Roby, Joan M	Toubman, Gary B and Toubman, Susan B	7/26	\$730,000
140 Westwood Dr	Lillian B Klanian Lt and Klanian, Lillian B	Mazzeo, Christine	9/11	\$545,000
153 Pine Glen Dr Lot 153	Nathanson 2nd, Joseph G	Simon, Kevin W and Simon, Rhonda H	9/12	\$750,000

Exeter

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
22 Robin Dr	Murray, Mikayla B	Murray Jr, Michael J	9/15	\$375,000

Johnston

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
1 Enfield St	Bazar, David N and Robinson, Steven A	Philippe, Monet J	9/19	\$285,000
11 Traver Ave Lot 3	Greene, Steven	Horowitz, Steve	9/14	\$1
23 Woodcrest Dr	Feole, Stephen and Feole, Nichole L	Morales, Isamar	9/13	\$435,000
26 Mills Dr	Golderese, Stephen	Ferreira, John	9/15	\$398,000
30 Rotary Dr	De Duran, Evelyn P	Corsetti, Karen A and Corsetti, Kenneth A	9/12	\$531,000
133 Borden Ave	Angelo Gallo T and Gallo, Mario	Herrington, Lester	9/15	\$369,900
1023 Atwood Ave	Anniston Leasing LLC	Mackenzie Rose Est	9/15	\$1
1139 Hartford Ave Lot 5B	Philippe, Mone J	Dutra, Luann	9/18	\$205,000
1167 Plainfield St	Amy Realty A Rigg	Cabrera, Claudia J and Cabrera, Axel	9/19	\$1

Warwick

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
10 Cartney Dr	Callary, James R and Apostolico, Joan	Chella, John T and Searcy, Katrina	9/12	\$370,000
10 White Ave	Civil Process	Marzullo, Marissa A	9/11	\$1
11 Liverpool St	Dalomba, Adrian	Varras, Nicholas	9/15	\$310,000
12 Bucklin Ave	Brushneck Cove Invest LLC	Desmarais, Heather L	9/13	\$1
12 Ironwood Ct	Cabral, Brendan C and Cabral, Chloe A	Santello, Christopher N and Lepage, Emily	9/8	\$415,000
15 Beacon Hill Dr	Chery, Kathleen V and Chery, Josny	Jimenez, Juan B	9/11	\$702,500
15 Wilcox St	Mailhot, Janice	Raines, Guy M	9/13	\$150,000
19 Phillips Ave	Post LLC	Desmarais, Heather L	9/13	\$1
20 Princeton Ave	Dinardi, Christine R	Ambeault, Leslie and Ambeault, Jaime	9/11	\$248,000
24 Pequot Ave	West End Dev Corp	Duffy, Norman D	9/5	\$1
25 Forbes St	Barker Paula Est and Redman, Eric	Sipaque, Abigail	9/7	\$352,000
28 Buttonwoods Ave	Fernandez, Delvis A	Sidell, Andrew	9/13	\$335,000
34 Flagg Ave	Laurel A Lancia RET and Lancia, Laurel A	Tichy, Christopher M and Fitzgerald, Kerri A	9/14	\$431,000
39 Blake St	Evolution LLC	Keith Jr, Steven and Keith, Rachel	9/11	\$639,000
50 Haley Rd	Keith Jr, Steven and Coughlin, Rachel	Damico, Sage M and Damico, Alec J	9/8	\$465,000
50 Lemac St	Green, Jared R and Topkin, Jaimee L	Gordon, Austin W	9/11	\$470,000
52 Stillwater Dr	Morales, Isamar	Desir, Sabine and Francois, Mantchury	9/13	\$450,000
55 Dundas Ave	Phillips Sally S Est and Costello, Pamela A	Phillips Jr, Kenneth W and Sawyer, Amanda L	9/15	\$294,000
62 John Wickes Ave	Dorsey, John A	Helping Hands Cmnty Prtnr	9/5	\$50,000
69 Delwood Rd	William P Guenther RET and Guenther, William P	Riffel, Steven and Hunt, Maria	9/15	\$320,000
72 W Shore Rd Lot 2	Viola, Brennon and Viola, James	Barry, Stephen	9/5	\$98,000
74 Lloyd Ave	Hanna, Roseann	Scenic Prop Solutions Inc	9/8	\$120,000
87 Wendell Rd	Ives, Michael J and Ives, Aubrey L	Maguire, Patrick	9/7	\$360,000
88 Alger Ave Lot 88	Horn, Lynore I	Liebrich, William J	9/8	\$254,500
93 Spencer Woods Dr Lot 93	Leonard J Dileone T and Dileone, Leonard J	Stabile, Stacey A	9/6	\$512,000
94 Toll Gate Rd Lot 4	Sondra J Catalano Irt and Catalano, Steven G	Gireesh, Arvind	9/5	\$294,000
96 Abbey Ave	Dunn Frances A Est and Dunn, John T	Snow, Brian	9/15	\$322,000
96 Pender Ave	Cole Alice C Est and Cole, Walter A	Roderick, Stephen	9/5	\$281,000
98 Blade St	West Warwick Town Of and Otis, Nicholas	Vasquez Props	9/12	\$2,064
98 Longwood Ave	Spirito, Ryan A	Schmitz, Drew and Schmitz, Mckenzie	9/15	\$552,500
101 Everleth Ave	Gavin, Patricia E	Carlone, Brian	9/13	\$330,000
113 Pender Ave	Davis, Diane A	Keelan, Ryan A and Keelan, Alesia E	9/7	\$460,000
131 Hollis Ave	Demaio Ft and Demaio, Anthony J	Harvey, Amanda C	9/8	\$330,000
138 Massasoit Dr	Gibbons, Mary E	Masefield, Shawn K	9/14	\$380,000
148 Howie Ave	Lacourse, Donna M	Pedroso, David and Pedroso, Cortney B	9/15	\$340,000
150 Wharf Rd	Roosevelt Assoc	Shm Greenwich Bay LLC	9/11	\$1
168 Shenandoah Rd	Chelo, Zackery	Laflamme, Michelle K	9/5	\$600,000
181 Highland Ave	Mandeville, George	Caulfield-Mciver, Susan and Mciver, Edward M	9/5	\$591,900
181 Narragansett Bay Ave	Pisaturo, Carlo E and Pisaturo, Gertrude M	Danowski, Ellen A and Junge, Michael	9/5	\$740,000
185 Tidewater Dr	Danowski, Ellen A	Oliveira, Stacy A and Fragopulos, Kathleen A	9/5	\$495,000
188 Gainsville Dr	Patenaude, Sandra J and Patenaude, Frank J	Dunhill, Nichole L and Dunhill, Brandon M	9/8	\$375,000
222 Parkside Dr	Orouke, Darcy A	Karoway-Waterhouse, N and Mills, Adam D	9/8	\$435,000
285 Elm St	Roosevelt Assoc	Avery 3rd, John W and Avery, Cheyenne J	9/7	\$1
319 Longmeadow Ave	Karter-Cronin, Sheba	Martini Holdings LLC	9/15	\$260,000
345 Nausauket Rd	Federal Home Loan Mtg Cor	Federal Home Loan Mtg Cor	9/14	\$251,157
426 Strawberry Field Rd	Cicillini Anna M Est and Fugere, Joanne M	Santana, Cristina C	9/11	\$340,000
430 Beach Ave	Kucinski, Tomasz and Kucinski, Marta	Pettigrew, Naomi J	9/8	\$400,000
478 Nausauket Rd	Gomeau, Kelli P	Meservey, Andrew P and Meservey, Roberta	9/6	\$550,000
490 W Shore Rd	Muratore Sr, Vincent and Curtner, Jerald L	Muratore, Vincent and Muratore, Elaine	9/12	\$300,000
495 Gauvin Dr	Francisco, Paul and Francisco, Lori A	Buckley, Sean R and Buckley, Jacquelyn C	9/8	\$599,900
1058 Narragansett Pkwy	Creamer Ft and Creamer, Charles M	Zerio, John D	9/15	\$350,000

West Greenwich

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
20 Nipmuc Trl, Tuchon, Kimberly	Brigg LLC		9/14	\$185,000
52 Pine Tree Ln	Cassano, Nicholas	Nawaz, Samaira and Ahmed, Sohail	9/13	\$550,000
140-C Victory Hwy	Dantas, Elias and Lucchese, Maria	Siener, Molly E and Siener, Zachary C	9/12	\$785,000

West Warwick

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
9 Snells Ct	Scott, Brian	Williams, Alane L	9/14	\$249,900
70 East St	Desilva, Josephine M and Dacruz, Arnaldo O	Dutra, Dannalea A	9/15	\$325,000
78 Coit Ave	Paliano, Cynthia	Berude, Michael A	9/15	\$305,000
139 Pawtuxet Ter	Orouke, Jennifer	Belasco, Zachary	9/15	\$345,000
1903 New London Tpk	Pacheco, Lynn	Laliberte, Lisa	9/15	\$435,000



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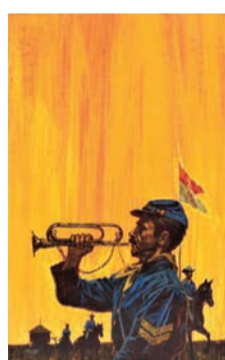


John McDermott

Artist, Illustrator, Writer, Film Maker



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



John McDermott was a man of many talents who accomplished a great deal over the course of his career. Born in Pueblo, Colorado in 1919 and raised in Hollywood, CA, McDermott showed interest in illustration and animation in his youth. After his graduation from high school in 1936, and despite having no formal art education, McDermott secured a job at Walt Disney Studios as an inbetweener or “tweener.” In a large animation studio, a lead artist would create the principal frames and poses. The job of the inbetweener was to create the necessary action in between these principal frames, connecting and making the animation flow. McDermott worked as an inbetweener and effects animator on several Disney productions including *Pinocchio* and *Fantasia*.

In 1942, McDermott enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was assigned to the III Amphibious Corps as a “Pistol and Palette” Combat Artist. Documenting the war in the south Pacific was an experience that honed McDermott’s skills as an

anyone would want. My work changed dramatically during this time and I’m sure it was due to constant drawing, every single day, from life, just putting down what I saw around me. In a few instances, it was a dangerous kind of scholarship.”

McDermott’s wartime work was published in *Leatherneck* magazine and several other newspapers and publications. Today his work is displayed in art museums, The National Museum of the Marine Corps, and the Pentagon.

After the war, McDermott moved to New York where he worked as a freelance illustrator. He quickly became known for his dramatic illustrations of various action and adventure tales. His work appeared in many magazines including *Argosy*, *Blue Book*, and *Outdoor Life*, as well as the covers of many pulp fiction novels.

In the 1960’s, McDermott began writing novels under the

pen name J. M. Ryan. His first novel, *Brooks Wilson*, was adapted into the movie *Loving*, starring George Segal and Eva Marie Saint. His novel *The Rat Factory* was a satirical story based upon McDermott’s experiences during the 1941 Disney animators’ strike.

Another activity pursued by McDermott was amateur film making. Armed with a 16mm movie camera, and using friends and family members for the cast, he would create reenactments of historical battles. One of his films, *Pickett’s Charge*, was used by PBS in their *Odyssey* TV series, and in 1958 it was aired on CBS with an introduction by Dwight D. Eisenhower and Sir Bernard Law Montgomery.

McDermott, a tall man with piercing eyes, was well liked and people enjoyed being around him. Always a beehive of activity, he was referred to as “an ongoing fireworks display.”

John McDermott died in 1977 at the age of only 57, leaving a wife and two daughters. Editorially, he was remembered as “a creative genius of wide-ranging talent.” If you are interested in collecting some of his work, we’ve got many available in our Illustration Art Auction on October 14th!



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Rhody Health & Wellness

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Where does the word "midwife" originate?

Middle English, meaning "with women," or someone who assists in childbirth.

What is the historical context of midwives?

The practice of midwifery can be traced back to the Paleolithic era (40,000 BC). Traditionally, midwives were community members with experience caring for people during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum. The role was often viewed as a calling and a powerful role in indigenous communities.

In the nineteenth century, obstetrics and midwifery as professions evolved in Europe, with midwives focusing on normal birth and physicians on complications. In the United States, medicine began to incorporate childbirth by the early 20th century, and physicians actively opposed midwives who were prohibited from practicing without a means for formal licensure.

The United States saw a shift from most births occurring at home to most occurring in the hospital by the 1950s. Midwifery was rebranded as a nursing profession in the United States between the 1920s and 1950s. The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) was incorporated in 1955 as the professional organization for certified nurse-midwives (CNMs). CNMs first became licensed in Rhode Island in 1978.

How prevalent are modern-day midwives?

Midwives have slowly reintegrated into maternity care in the United States, attending about

12% of births in 2021. Worldwide, birth-related outcomes are best in regions where midwives greatly outnumber OB/GYNs. For example, there are about 4 midwives and 11 OB/GYNs per 1,000 live births in the U.S. compared to 66 midwives and 12 OB/GYNs per 1,000 live births in Sweden.

At Women & Infants Hospital, approximately 30 nurse-midwives work within several different practices, attending births for private groups and training residents in OB/GYN, Family Medicine, and Emergency Medicine, and medical students.

What is the education for certified nurse-midwives?

Most CNMs earn a bachelor's degree followed by a master's degree in nursing (MSN), specializing in nurse-midwifery. At a minimum, the pathway requires 2 to 3 years of graduate-level education. Some midwives go on to obtain a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) or a PhD.

What types of care do nurse-midwives provide?

CNMs can independently provide care during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum; sexual and reproductive health; gynecologic health; family planning services; primary care from adolescence throughout the lifespan; and newborn care up to 28 days of life. Most CNMs choose to work within collaborative settings where they can readily consult or refer to physicians when medically indicated to offer the most comprehensive care. CNMs and OB/GYNs base their practices on the same scientific research, however, there may be a difference in philosophy and ap-

Staying Healthy



by JULIE KNUTSON, CNM, WHNP, DNP
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, WARREN ALPERT SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, BROWN UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

proach.

What are some benefits of seeking care with a midwife?

Midwifery is founded on person-centered care and empowerment of individuals; advocacy and shared decision-making; cultural safety; and promotion of pregnancy and birth as physiologic processes that benefit from non-intervention in the absence of complications. Midwives strive to provide a cocoon of safety and comfort surrounding what can be very intense and life-changing events. People sharing this perspective of normalcy surrounding pregnancy and birth may find their values align best with midwifery care. Others seek midwives for continuity of care, the power to make choices and participate in their own health-care, and to feel heard.

Midwives may care for people with certain medical complications, those undergoing induction of labor, and those opting for an epidural. However, midwives are specialists in supporting physiologic birth, or the naturally unfolding process of labor and birth without medical interventions. As such, people seeking a low-

intervention birth benefit from midwifery care. For example, at Women & Infants, those admitted to the Alternative Birthing Center (ABC) experience an average vaginal birth rate of 96%, compared to a national spontaneous vaginal birth rate of about sixty-five percent. People choosing the ABC meet the criteria for medically low-risk pregnancies and plan labor and birth without anesthesia/epidural.

Are there different types of midwives?

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) are the most prevalent among midwives in the U.S. Since the 1990s there exist other pathways to midwifery that do not require a nursing background; certified midwives (CMs) are credentialed through the same organization as CNMs, while certified professional midwives (CPMs) achieve credentialing and training through different professional organizations.

Where do midwives attend births?

Midwives can attend births in the hospital, at freestanding birth centers, or at home. In 2021, about 90% of births attended by midwives in the U.S. were attended by CNMs or CMs, and of these, 94% occurred in hospitals, 3% occurred in freestanding birth centers and 3% at home. Amongst CPM-attended births, which account for 10% of midwife-attended births in the U.S., a majority occur at home. In 2017, about 0.5% of births in RI occurred at home. As of 2023, RI does not have any freestanding birth centers, however, Women & Infants has the Alternative

Birthing Center and is working toward an in-hospital accredited midwifery-led unit that follows birth center regulations, otherwise known as an Alongside Midwifery Unit (AMU).

When do midwives consult with or refer to obstetricians?

Most states allow independent midwifery practice. Facilities that employ midwives have practice guidelines that specify when providers should collaborate or refer care. A successful midwife and OB/GYN professional relationship is based on collaboration and trust and can provide supportive care, care access, and positive outcomes in inpatient settings. Within team-based care settings such as the academic practice at Women and Infants, a group of providers includes a CNM, an experienced OB/GYN, and first- through fourth-year resident OB/GYNs in training care for patients together. Within community practices, a midwife or physician may provide care for a person expecting a vaginal birth, and the midwife will consult with the physician if problems arise such as a need for a forceps-assisted birth or a cesarean section. Midwives are not surgeons; however, they may receive additional training to assist during cesarean births.

Where can I learn more?

This report by the National Partnership for Women and Families provides additional context for the state of midwifery in the United States and ways to support access to midwifery care. For more information, visit www.midwife.org.



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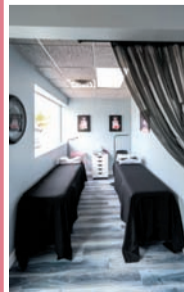
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The prevalence of mental health issues garnered significant attention in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people acknowledged lockdowns and other restrictions and uncertainties were adversely affecting their thoughts and outlook. Though those restrictions were ultimately lifted and life returned to something closer to normal for people across the globe, mental health has remained both a hot topic and a concern.

The organization Mental Health America reports that, as of 2022, just under 20 percent of adults in the United States are experiencing a mental illness. The issue of mental health is perhaps an even bigger concern in Canada, where a 2022 report from the Angus Reid Institute noted one in three Canadians indicated they are struggling with their mental health.

Such statistics are troubling, though increased public dialogue surrounding mental health has done much to remove the stigma long attached to conditions such as depression and anxiety. That stigma affected certain groups more than others, including women. In fact, a 2017 report from the United Kingdom-based Mental Health Foundation indicated that women are three times more likely than men to experience common mental health problems. And that problem is worsening, as the MHF notes that women were two times more likely to experience such issues as recently as 1993.

Learning the developing signs of mental health issues may compel women to take action more quickly. Prompt treatment can increase the likelihood that women overcome mental health issues, which could lead to more positive short- and long-term results. The American Psychiatric Association notes that it can be useful to contact a mental health professional if several of the following symptoms are occurring.

• Changes in sleeping habits or appetite changes. Changes in sleep and appetite can be dramatic or may contribute to a decline in personal care.

• Mood changes marked by a rapid or dramatic shift in emotions or depressed feelings. Individuals may also become notably irritable.

• Emerging mental health issues may be marked by recent social withdrawal and a loss of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed.

• An unusual drop in functioning at school, work or social activities, such as quitting sports, failing in school or difficulty performing familiar tasks.

• Mental health issues can contribute to problems with concentration, memory or logical thought and speech. These problems can be hard to explain.

• A heightened sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells, or touch. Some people even avoid over-stimulating situations.

• Mental health issues may contribute to apathy marked by a loss of initiative or desire to participate in any activity.

• Some people experience a vague feeling of being disconnected from oneself or one's surroundings; a sense of unreality also may develop.

• Illogical thinking is another potential sign of an emerging mental health issue. This thinking many involve unusual or exaggerated beliefs about personal powers to understand meanings or influence events. Adults may exhibit an illogical or "magical" thinking that is more typical of a child than an adult.

• A sense of nervousness characterized by a fear or suspicion of others. A strong nervous feeling also may be present.

• Some people with mental illness exhibit odd, uncharacteristic or peculiar behavior.

• A change in school or work marked by increased absenteeism, worsening performance and/or difficulties in relationships with peers and coworkers.

Data indicates women are more likely to experience mental illness than men. That makes recognition of mental health symptoms an especially significant component of personal health care for women across the globe. WT235918

7 ways to reduce breast cancer risk

Many women are concerned about the potential for developing breast cancer in their lifetimes. Breast cancer is the second-most common cancer among women in the United States and Canada. Despite that prevalence, there are ways for women to reduce their risk for breast cancer.

While it is impossible to change family history or genetic markers like gene mutations that increase breast cancer risk, the following are seven ways women can lower their risk.

1. Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight. Physical activity and monitoring calories can keep weight in check. The Mayo Clinic recommends at least 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity. Strength training at least twice a week also is recommended. Being overweight or obese increases a woman's risk for breast cancer.

2. Consume a healthy diet. The link between diet and breast cancer risk is still



being studied. However, research suggests that a diet high in vegetables and fruit, and calcium-rich dairy products, but low in red and processed meats may lower breast cancer risk.

3. Avoid or limit alcohol consumptions. Alcohol increases risk of breast cancer, even in small amounts. For those who drink, no more than one alcoholic drink a day should be the limit. The more a woman drinks, the greater her risk of developing breast cancer, states the Mayo Clinic.

4. Undergo genetic counseling and testing.

Women concerned about a genetic connection or family history of breast cancer can speak to their doctor about testing and counseling that could help them reduce their risk. Preventive medicines and surgeries might help those at elevated risk for breast cancer.

5. Limit hormone therapy. Combination hormone replacement therapy for post-menopausal women may increase risk of breast cancer, indicates the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Similarly, taking oral contraceptives during reproductive years may

increase risk. Women can speak with their physicians to weigh the pros and cons of taking such hormones.

6. Breastfeed children, if possible. Breastfeeding has been linked to reducing a woman's risk of developing breast cancer.

7. Learn to detect breast cancer. Women should get to know their bodies so they can determine if something is awry as early as possible. Early detection of breast cancer increases the chances that treatment will prove successful.

Women can embrace various strategies to reduce their risk of developing breast cancer. TF22A364

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Home Care Helps Seniors Age in Place Longer

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When elder loved ones begin to require more care and attention, families immediately turn to nursing homes and assisted living facilities. But there are many more options available that allow seniors to remain at home while receiving attention from qualified healthcare workers.

With home care, families can hire a trained professional to provide support as little or as often as needed. From a visiting companion who checks in on their wellbeing to a skilled nurse, there are a wide range of services available.

"Many families are looking for ways to deliver professional care for their loved one without moving them into a nursing facility. Home care offers a way to extend their stay at home, the place where they are most comfortable and at peace and feel safe," said Caroline Rumowicz, the Director of Saint Elizabeth Home Care, formerly Cathleen Naughton Associates.

More and more, seniors are planning to remain in their home for as long as they can. And home care is one of the tools to make that possible.

Services cover a wide range including physical, occupational and speech therapy, nursing, bathing and personal care, meal preparation and light housekeeping, shopping, assistance with exercise, transportation and errands and, of course, companionship.

Rumowicz told the story of a client from Narragansett who retired from the Coast

Guard and still loves the ocean. A Certified Nursing Assistant cares for him in the morning beginning with a drive to Dunkin Donuts to pick up a coffee. Then they ride to the beach together. After, she takes him to the YMCA where he participates in a group exercise class.

The CNA provides care and companionship to the client who lives on his own since his wife passed. She attends to his health and wellness, provides a valuable check-in and offers the opportunity to socialize and enjoy a much-loved activity.

In addition, many organizations, like Saint Elizabeth Home Care, offer specialized care for people experiencing memory-related conditions like Alzheimer's or motion and movement challenges from diseases like Parkinson's.

Home care is also a great resource for anyone recovering from surgery or an illness. In the comfort of their own home, patients can work on the recovery process and regain their strength and mobility.

Health insurance plans often provide coverage for home care. The amount varies by provider. Based on a client's eligibility, a care manager will work to coordinate the services they need as well as the frequency and scheduling.

No matter where a client is located, there is an agency that serves that community. For a complete list, visit: <https://health.ri.gov/healthcare/providers/homehealthagencies/>



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