

## Johnston's MLL population soars

### Schools struggle to provide equitable educations to the town's booming class of multilingual learners

By RORY SCHULER

In 2015, Johnston schools counted just 113 multilingual learners (MLL) in the district. Eight years later, that number has more than doubled, to 270 MLL students in 2023, and that number continues to soar.

According to state data, only one in 10 Johnston MLL students are meeting or exceeding expectations in reading — and only one in 20 scored proficient in math.

A trend has been identified in Johnston and across most of the Ocean State. Rhode Island's public schools are tasked with educating more and more children for

whom English is a second language.

The Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC) issued their October policy brief on "Funding Challenges for a Rapidly Growing K-12 Student Population."

"I shared the RIPEC report with my administrators last week," according to Johnston Schools Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. "I pointed out the increase in MLL students. In fact, Johnston was one of the districts that saw this population triple in six years."

MLL - PAGE 8

## Breathing new life into an old school

By RORY SCHULER

The tiny backpack hooks are as empty as the hallways.

Old classroom decorations still hang on the walls, crafted by students and teachers who've long since walked out of the building following the Calef School's final bell, which rang years ago.

Joe Russo pressed his thumb to the faded 1970 fifth grade class photo hanging in the hallway. He printed it out and hung it up.

"That's me," he said, referring to a tiny little mop-top head of hair in a gray button-up picture day shirt.

Russo's one of thousands of Johnston pupils who cycled through the George C. Calef Elementary School building at 7 Waveland St. Now he's the facilities director for the organization that has purchased the building from the town for a \$1 million price tag.

Several years ago, the Johnston School District stopped filling the Calef School classrooms and hallways. They loaned the building out to North Providence until renovations wrapped at another school in the neighboring town. And now the Tri-County Community Action Agency has been breathing new life into the storied brick structure.

While the agency had leased space in Calef School, to house its Head Start program, they're now the building's owners.

"We hope to move our HR department here; maybe our IT department and call center too," said Joe DeSantis, Tri-County President & CEO.



**NEW DIGS:** Tri-County President & CEO Joe DeSantis recently gave a tour of the agency's newest acquisition, Johnston's George C. Calef Elementary School. Tri-County paid the town \$1 million in cash for the building. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



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**Warwick Rotary**  
**5k Turkey Trot**  
**Thanksgiving Day**  
 Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>



**8:00AM - Warwick City Park Ball Fields**  
 Race Day Registration begins at 7:15AM

To Benefit: The Warwick Rotary Charity Fund

**COSTUME CONTEST!**  
 Prizes awarded for: Best Costume – Most Original – Best Dressed Family | Group  
 1 non-perishable food item per person plus  
 Adults: \$25.00 | Students: (ages 6-18) \$15.00 | Children 5 & under: no charge with paid adult  
 Family (2 adults + 2 students): \$50.00 | Virtual Runner: \$25.00

Registration: [WarwickRotaryRI.com](http://WarwickRotaryRI.com)

All participants will receive a commemorative T-shirt  
 This year's t-shirt design and size will only be guaranteed for registrations received and paid by November 1, 2023.

Entries are non-refundable  
In consideration of this entry being accepted, I myself, my heirs, executors and administrators waive and release any and all rights and claims for personal or other damages against officials, walk/run sponsors, the City of Warwick, the Rotary Club of Warwick RI, Rotary Foundation DAF, Warwick Rotary Charitable Fund Account # 421 or their agents.



# Senior 'Spotlite'



**NEVER TOO LATE:** This week's Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" shines on veteran Nickolas DiTata, who at 96 has embarked on his newest adventure as an active senior center member. (Photo courtesy Richard J. Delfino Jr.)

## In the 'Nick of time'

It's never too late to check out your local senior center

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

The Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" this week shines on Nickolas DiTata.

When first meeting Nick, you are immediately impressed by his stature — he's a relatively tall man, who stands and walks very upright. And how articulately he speaks ...

What most people would not know, and what he has no problem sharing, is that shortly he will be celebrating his 96th birthday. Now that is very impressive.

When you engage Nick in conversation, you also will learn he is a very proud man. He married his high school sweetheart and was drafted at 22 during the Korean conflict. His engagement and good judgement did not go unrecognized by his superiors, as he was nominated and chosen as the "Soldier of the Week," and "Month" in the Western Area Command, comprising an area which included Germany and France.

He was always looking how to improve performance, a quality that served him well in the four years he served in the military and the 39 years he spent as a draftsman and later Supervising Engineer at Seal All in Cranston.

Upon retirement at age 62, Nick began a 20-year stretch of volunteering at the Cranston Senior Center, where he put to use his experience and ability to create efficiencies to work improving service delivery.

Nick stresses he is most proud of his daughters and grandchildren, who he credits with helping him strive to be active and healthy in mind and body.

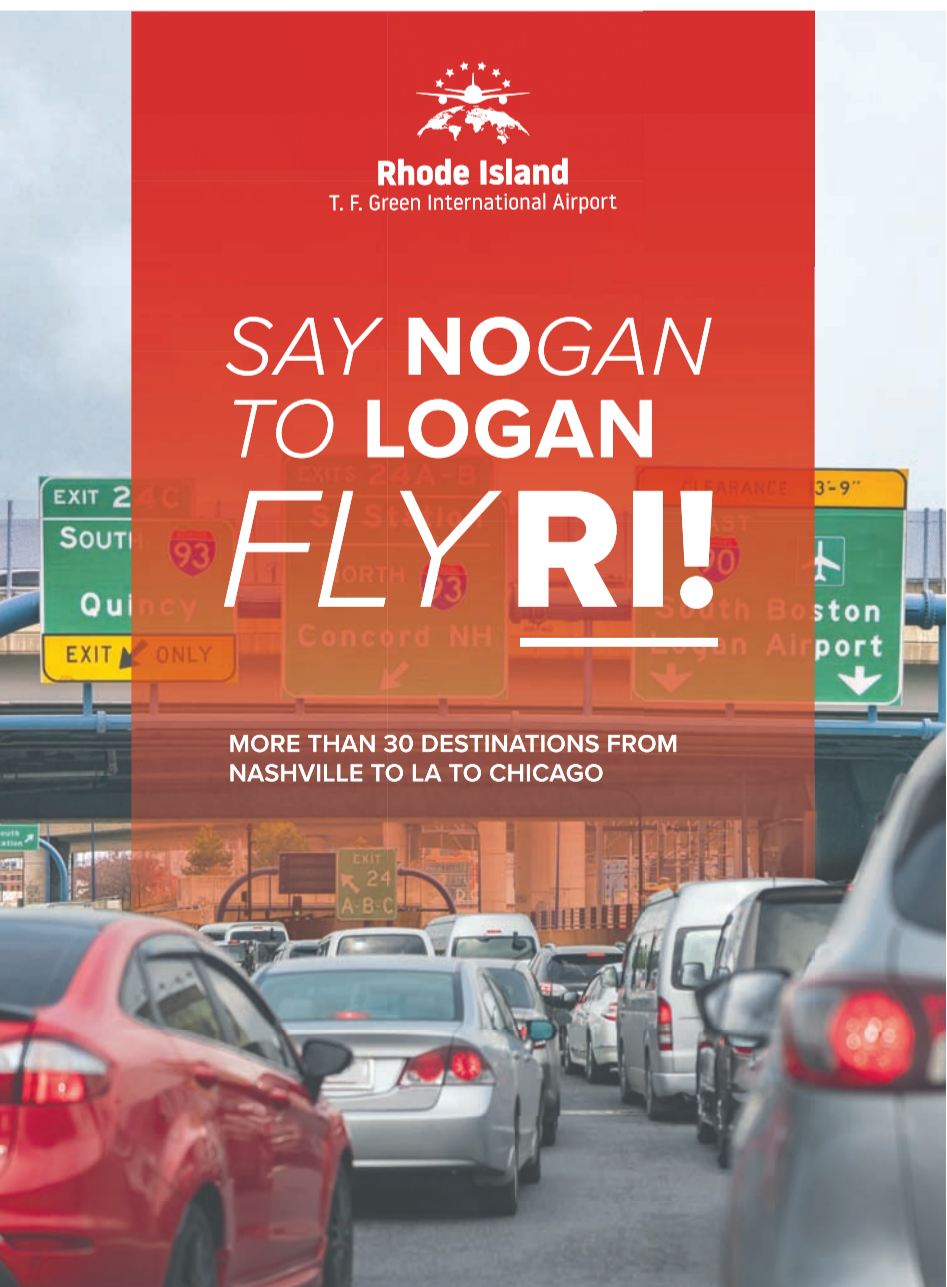
Both daughters, who live out of state, have relieved him of "any worries" so he can concentrate on what makes him engaged and happy.


Approximately eight months ago, Nick moved into The Preserve at Briarcliff, an independent living facility here in Johnston. So, at 95, Nick began to explore what "diversions" existed in the community that he might consider.

That led to his visiting the Johnston Senior Center, where he describes everyone as "happy" and welcoming with "open arms."

Nick enjoys lunch with new friends he has met here at the Center, and especially enjoys playing HI-LO Jack on Mondays and Wednesdays, along with taking daytrips sponsored by the Center. Nick just might be the perfect candidate to serve as a profile on how it's "never too late" to find and discover a new adventure in life. Let our staff here at the Johnston Senior Center help you in your quest to find new and exciting possibilities. It's never too late to "re-start" your journey.

**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.



  
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# Fewer tricks yield extra treats



**HALLOWEEN WARNING:** As has been a terrific tradition through the years, members of Johnston High School's SADD (Students Against Dangerous Decisions) organization once again showcased their many talents by making this special and important banner leading up to Tuesday, Oct. 31 – Halloween – and reminding their classmates of some dangers that often occur with the night's events. The colorful creation, which was displayed in the cafeteria, and all the pieces were designed by members of SADD. According to Greg Russo, a JHS faculty member who doubles as the group's advisor, the scene depicts a haunted street and each of the houses is made of a lunch bag with a message written on it. Russo and SADD President Raylin Santos organized the unique project. *(Submitted photo)*

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# A dose of hope



**THEY SERVED:** From left to right, representing five branches of the service – Albert "Bert" Guarneri(Army); James Cote (Coast Guard); Spirit of Hope founder Louis Spremulli; Henry "Hank" Suffoletto (Army); Alan Yoz ura (Navy) and Leo Remillard (Air Force). (Courtesy photo)

## Spirit of Hope prepares kits for veterans in need

By **LOUIS J. SPREMULLI**  
Special to the Sun Rise

On Thursday Oct. 19, Spirit of Hope made a presentation before the Rhode Island Vietnam Veterans at the Lincoln Community Center.

Their President is Fr. Phil Salois and he welcomed us and his group did as well. This is a new program for our organization and this all started from two veteran organizations donating us a good chunk of money to support what we do. So, they really wanted to help the veterans in another way. We decided to make support kits for the five branches of the service, which are religious based. Now, that is big, because many veteran organizations do not want anything to do with religion.

This group backed us 100% and we explained how we designed the kits. The design was for those veterans who are disabled, sick, in the hospital or in a nursing home. We included religious books, deck of cards, puzzle books, military hats, writing materials and other things. This is to show appreciation as a veteran and keep them occupied due to their situation. We also wanted them to be introduced to the word of God.

For presentation purposes, we had one veteran come forward from each branch of the service to receive these kits. We told them to find a person you know in need and present the kit to them. These kits each represent about \$30 in value.

The bottom line for Spirit of Hope is to use this presentation at various churches, veteran organization and medical facilities. We want to build on support of what we do and hope to be accepted as a religious program supporting the veterans and other organizations.

Please contact us if interested in a presentation.

**Editor's Note:** Louis J. Spremulli, a Johnston resident, is founder of Spirit of Hope. The Sun Rise regularly publishes articles submitted by Spremulli and his organization. Call Spremulli at 401-374-4590 or email [louis@spiritofhope.org](mailto:louis@spiritofhope.org).

## Helping hand for eight years, and getting stronger all the time

By **LOUIS J. SPREMULLI**  
Special to the Sun Rise

If you go to Anytime Fitness on Atwood avenue you may want to see what it means to help those in need. This is what life is all about. Giving will always bring good to a situation.

Dave Gabey, who is 53 years old, suffers with a muscle disease and he shows up to this gym twice a week. He is greeted by Joe Desjardins for a 45-minute session using different machines.

Joe helps this man, with no strings attached. He just wants to help him build his muscles and endurance for daily living. They work at a slow pace and it requires patience and good direction.

This all started in 2015 and still goes on every week. When you see them you feel so grateful for what you have and how hard it is for him to get around. Dave does have great attitude and is always smiling.

Dave lives in Providence with his parents and has his brother to take him back and forth to the gym.

Joe told me that when Dave comes in he cannot move, but when he leaves he feels a lot better. The exercise does help build his muscles.

I believe this is such an act of kindness and needed to be written in the news.

Articles like this are an example to helping those in need. This is what my

nonprofit organization "Spirit of Hope" does and Joe is going to be given a community award soon.

**Editor's Note:** Louis J. Spremulli, a Johnston resident, is founder of Spirit of Hope. The Sun Rise regularly publishes articles submitted by Spremulli and his organization. Call Spremulli at 401-374-4590 or email [louis@spiritofhope.org](mailto:louis@spiritofhope.org).



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# SUN RISE SCOOPS

## Sun Rise Staff Reports

Oct. 30

### JPD Trunk or Treat

Kids of all ages are invited to the Johnston Police Department headquarters, located at 1651 Atwood Ave., on Monday, Oct. 30 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. for their 2023 Trunk or Treat event. Just stop by the front parking lot for candy and much more.

Nov. 11

### Park View Veterans Day 5K Run/Walk

The tenth annual Park View Veterans Day 5K Run/Walk and 1-mile Kids' Run will be held again this year in Cranston. This is an annual event designed to bring honor and recognition to Veterans Day. Proceeds from the event will benefit programs for the school throughout the year and as a means of giving back to a worthwhile cause, Operation Stand Down RI.

The event also includes a "One Mile Kids Run!" This event will take place in the Park on a specially designed course! This race will begin at 8:30 a.m. The race is open to all elementary and middle school students. Cost for this race is \$10! T-shirts to the first 100 entries for this race.

Start and finish of the 5k race at the Park Avenue entrance to Roger Williams Park across from Park View Middle School. The 5k starts at 9:30 a.m. T-shirts to the first 800 entries for the 5k registrations. Post-race food and beverages. Awards are given to the top male and female finisher. Awards to the top men and women in each division: 8th grade and under, high school division, 19-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80. Packet Pick up at Park View Middle School Gym: Friday, Nov. 10, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Race day registration and pickup begins at 7 a.m.

Nov. 11

### Veterans Through the Ages

The Hope Historical Society invites the community to the meeting on Sat., Nov. 11, 2 p.m., at the Howland Barn, 35 Ryefield Road, Hope. Local heroes and others who have served our country from the Revolutionary War period to modern times will be honored. Veterans will be recognized during the program. All are encouraged to bring photos, stories, and other memorabilia from the veteran's period of service. Military uniform is not required. For photos please identify the individual, the military branch in which they served, period of service, description of their service, and any honors awarded to them. All are welcome.

Intrigued by the topic but cannot attend "Veterans Through the Ages?" No worries! Post a picture and/or story on the HHS Facebook page: Hope Historical Society, Hope, RI. Pictures and stories must be posted at least 72 hours before

the meeting to be included in the program. Pictures or stories can also be emailed to the HHS at hopehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.

### 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](http://www.rifoundation.org/funds/soul-of-1971-scholarship-fund).

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

## SCOOP OF THE WEEK

Oct. 27  
Mattoberfest

Save the date for an event at the Ravenous Brewing Company on Fri., Oct. 27, for MATTOBERFEST, a fundraising event 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.



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1. Homeowners with smaller than average roofs
2. Homeowners that have replaced sections of their roof over the years, piece by piece
3. Homeowners with roofs that are less than 10 years old
4. Homeowners that have a roof in absolutely terrible condition that probably needed to be replaced many, many years ago

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# Midnight musings about Gaza

## Life Matters



with  
LINDA PETERSEN

I generally fall asleep relatively easily, but last night was the exception. As I drifted on the verge of slumber, thoughts of the war in the Gaza Strip bombarded my brain.

The Gaza Strip refers to a narrow strip of land wedged between Israel and Egypt on the Mediterranean Sea. It is only 25 miles long and 7 miles wide, just twice the size of Washington D.C. I do not really understand their reason for fighting. The Palestinians and Israelis alike consider the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea as their own, which sets up an impossible situation with neither group willing to leave the region.

Any type of war is worrisome, and my preference is to try to ignore the whole thing, but somehow this war hit home. Real people, speaking English, were interviewed on television news channels. They had homes and careers and families and children. They were not caricatures in a war movie, but real, living human beings faced with unbearable, possibly lethal, situations, and my heart aches for them. Gaza, which is one of the world's most densely populated areas with 2.3 million people, about half of which is under the age of 18. The level of destruction, the disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks which have leveled entire streets and neighborhoods, have been unprecedented.

Gaza is currently without electricity as its sole power plant closed on October 11 after running out of fuel. Hospitals have had back-up generators, but they are also running out of fuel and medical supplies. The International Red Cross has said that without electricity, hospitals in Gaza risk "turning into morgues."

To absolve myself from the guilt over not doing something to stop these atrocities, my thinking switched to what I COULD do and where I could send a donation.

The Red Cross is working with the **Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory Appeal** to provide support and vital aid. They deliver food and water to families in shelters and distribute blankets and hygiene products to people who have nothing. A check can be written to our local Red Cross agency with the designation "Middle East Humanitarian Crisis" in the memo line.

The **American Near East Refugee Aid** agencies have distributed thousands of hygiene kits, food packages and hot meals on the ground in Gaza. They are currently seeking donations to go towards more food and medical supplies, such as much needed food and blood donations.

**Oxfam's International** Executive Director, Amitabh Behar, has been quoted as saying "There is no power, no food and now no water in Gaza. It risks becoming a breeding ground for cholera and other diseases. The situation for civilians is intolerable." Their agency is also accepting donations.

**IsraAid** is the largest humanitarian aid organization based in Israel which has worked in more than 50 countries worldwide, but this is the first time they have had to lead a full-scale humanitarian response in Israel itself.

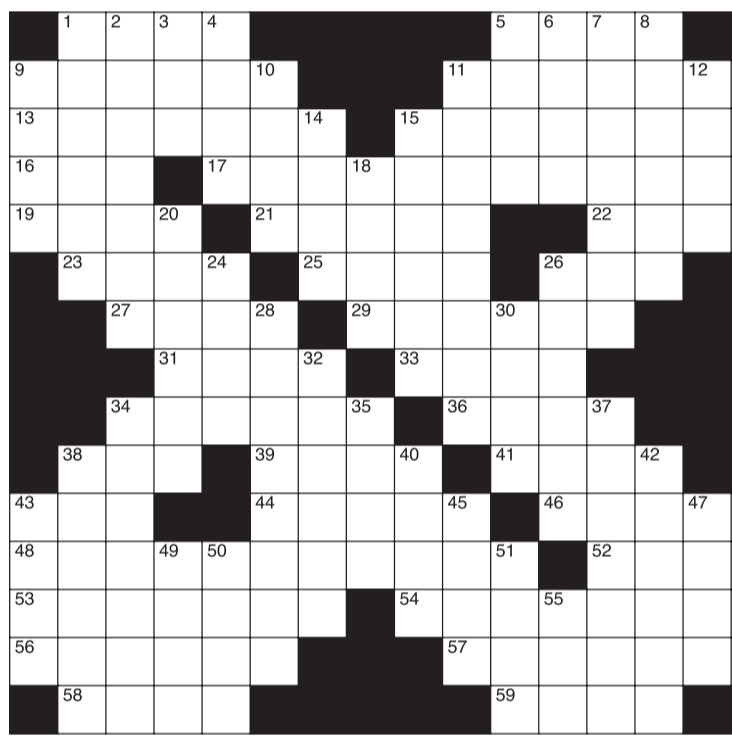
The **United Hatzalah of Israel** is the largest non-profit, fully volunteer emergency medical service organization based in Israel. Since the beginning of the attack, the group's volunteer medics have been on the front lines responding with lifesaving medical interventions. They have launched an emergency appeal to raise funds for desperately needed supplies including protective vests, helmets, oxygen tanks, defibrillators, trauma bandages and tourniquets.

The **World Food Programme** is the world's largest humanitarian organization. Connected with the United Nations, they provide food assistance. As the conflict has intensified, civilians, including vulnerable children and families, have been unable to access food supplies because the food distribution networks have been destroyed by the hostilities. This agency has been able to get food through to them.

**Doctors Without Borders** is an independent international organization that continues to provide lifesaving humanitarian aid in Israel. They donate crucial medical supplies to hospitals.

I have split up my donations among these agencies, hoping against hope that a few are able to get food and supplies to those who need it the most. Short of taking refugee children into my own home, something which Hubby has adamantly ruled against, there is nothing else I can do. I hope I can sleep better tonight.

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Male children
- 5. Robert Wagner series "Hart to ..."
- 9. Unfolded
- 11. Digestive disease
- 13. Wednesday
- 15. Malignant tumor
- 16. Conscientious investment strategy (abbr.)
- 17. Slowed
- 19. Letter of the Semitic abjads
- 21. Weights of cars without fuel
- 22. Former CIA
- 23. Asian country
- 25. Instead
- 26. Ancient Egyptian King
- 27. Privies
- 29. Shopping trips
- 31. Paradoxical anecdote
- 33. It's on the table
- 34. Ancient Persia ruler
- 36. Small American rail
- 38. File extension
- 39. Days (Spanish)

- 41. Everyone has one
- 43. South American plant
- 44. About ilium
- 46. Vanished American hoopster Bison
- 48. A type of breakfast
- 52. Uncooked
- 53. Examined
- 54. Christian recluse
- 56. Strong posts
- 57. Some are for pasta
- 58. Skinny
- 59. School-based organizations

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Ringlet
- 2. Type of complex
- 3. Midway between north and northwest
- 4. It becomes something bigger
- 5. German courtesy title
- 6. Genus of birds
- 7. Marked by public disorder
- 8. Least aggressive
- 9. Russian city

- 10. Insect repellent
- 11. Interruptions
- 12. Scoundrels
- 14. 1,000 calories
- 15. What one does overnight
- 18. Dwarf planet
- 20. Pipe
- 24. Black powdery substance
- 26. Set of four
- 28. Canned fishes
- 30. North Carolina college
- 32. Secured
- 34. A disgraceful event
- 35. Physical suffering
- 37. The home of the free
- 38. Some are boys
- 40. Satisfy
- 42. Makes very happy
- 43. South American plants
- 45. Modes of transportation
- 47. Female sheep
- 49. Type of torch
- 50. Piece of merchandise
- 51. Jump over
- 55. Wife of Amun

# LEGAL NOTICES

**CITATION**

**State of Rhode Island**  
PROVIDENCE, SC.  
Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court

**PETITION TO FORECLOSE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION PM-2023-04573**

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, and ton HEIRS -AT-LAW OF NELLIE IANOCCELLI, AMELIA RUSSO, CLARA AMICHILA, ANNA AMICHILA, LAUREN AMICHILA, TONY AMICHILA, CARLO T. IANNUCELLI, SR; DOLORES BUSSICK, GLADYS AUSTEN, JOYCE PSILOPOULOS, ELVA VANNER, ANTHONY IANNUCILLI, BARBARA A. WOLFENDEN, JOAN COMELLA, LAWRENCE IANNUCCELLI, LINDA IANNUCILLI, DONNA CATENZARO, MICHAEL IANNUCILLI, KENNETH IANNUCILLI, TAMMY M. SMITH, GAIL CARPINONE, GEORGE CARPINONE, DOMENICO IANNUCILLI, NELLINA IANNUCILLI, FERNANDO DIGREGORIO, THOMAS AMICHILA, ALBERT AMICHILA, FRANK AMICHILA AND THEIR UNKNOWN HEIRS AND ASSIGNS; and all other persons unknown or unascertained claiming or who may claim any right, title, estate, lien or interest in the real estate involved which is or might become adverse to the Petitioner's right, title or interest therein as alleged, or which

does or may constitute any cloud upon Petitioner's title as set forth in Petition.

Whereas, a petition has been presented to said Court by ANTONIO ROCCHIO and FRANCESCO ROCCHIO, of 140 RESERVOIR AVE, CRANSTON, RI and said State, to foreclose all rights of redemption from the tax lien proceedings described in said petition in and concerning a certain parcel of land situated in the Town of Burrillville and in said State, bounded and described in said petition as follows:

That certain tract or parcel of land situated in the Town of Johnston, County of Providence, State of Rhode Island, and bounded and described as follows:

Beginning as a granite bound set as the Northeast corner of the within described tract of land; thence West-erly bounding Northerly on land conveyed by this Grantor to Nicola Tella One Hundred Sixty-Three and Sixty One Hundredths (163.60) feet to a granite bound; thence Southerly at an interior angle of 95° 40' bounding Westerly on a twenty-five (25) foot right of way Two Hundred Thirteen and Forty- Four One Hundredths (213.44) feet to a granite bound; thence Easterly as an interior angle of 84° 20' bounding Southerly on other land of this grantor Two Hundred Fifteen and Ninety- four One

Hundredths (215.94) feet to a granite bound; thence Northerly by and with the line of a stone wall bounding Easterly on land now or formerly of Louis Lafazia Two Hundred Fourteen and Eighty One Hundredths (214.80) feet to the point and place of beginning, containing by estimation 40,000 square feet of land.

This conveyance is made subject to the following restriction. No fence shall be placed on said land over four (4) feet high within forty (40) feet of the street line.

Further identified as Assessor's Plat 24, Lot 7.

In addition, notice shall also be given by the publication of the Citation, once per week for three successive weeks on, **October 26th, November 2nd, and November 9th, 2023**, in the **JOHNSTON SUN RISE**, and the return date shall be **November 30th, 2023**.

WITNESS the SEAL of our SUPERIOR COURT, at Providence this 18th day of October, 2023.

/s/ Susan M Diggins  
CLERK

DOUGLAS H. SMITH  
140 Reservoir Avenue  
Providence, RI 02907

10/26, 11/2, 11/9/23

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# Opinion

EDITORIAL

## RICAS scores show improvement, but not a big victory

While the newly released results of the most recent batch of RICAS test data isn't exactly a cause for celebration, they at least provide some hope that we are getting our kids back on a positive path towards better educational outcomes.

While Rhode Island 3rd through 8th graders, as a combined whole, are still devastatingly struggling in math and English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency (just under 30% in the former, and around 33% for the latter), many individual districts did see a pronounced increase in scores from last year, and the pandemic-stricken year prior to that when remote learning upended progress for learners of all capabilities and districts of all calibers.

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

Locally, Warwick's district saw an increase from 22.6% proficiency in math in 2022 to 27% in 2023 (a nearly 20% increase), and from 28.9% in ELA in 2022 to 31% in 2023. In Cranston, scores jumped from 21.7% in math in 2022 to 25.8% in 2023 (a 19% increase), and jumped half a percentage point from 32% in 2022 to 32.5% in ELA. Johnston, unfortunately, was one of the few districts to record a decrease in the number of proficient students in math, from 21.7% in 2022 to 20.9% in 2023; although ELA proficiency increased slightly from 32.2% to 32.6%.

These numbers illustrate that students are very much still in the process of recuperating from the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, which as expected has resulted in shockwaves in their academic development that have persisted long since they were fully re-integrated into physical school buildings. That recovery process can be expected to continue throughout the coming years, especially for students in these grade ranges, due to the incredibly important developmentally time period in which they were disrupted.

However, the majority of districts experiencing an upswing in scores does at least hold a silver lining of improvement, which can be built upon going forward. Solving Rhode Island's educational proficiency problem was never going to be something accomplished in a short period of time, and can only come after many years, perhaps decades, of continuing to invest in public education and educational assistance resources, and in the people who are tasked with educating our future leaders.

LETTER

## 'The land...will never recover in our lifetime'

Dear Fellow Johnston Residents,

The Johnston Zoning Board is again considering an application from Green Development to install more than 47,000 solar panels on 150 acres of woodlands, natural habitat, and former farmland along Winsor Avenue, Hopkins Avenue and Rollingwood Drive. This land is zoned for residential use and should not be used for this industrial purpose.

This solar project, known as Winsor III, along with four other projects encompassing over 320 acres (about the size of the Johnston Landfill) and over 111,000 panels were rejected by only ONE VOTE last year and there is no guarantee the Zoning Board will again deny the Special Use Permit. Green Development is counting on poor attendance and minimal opposition at this public hearing so the destruction can begin and the four other projects will likely follow soon after.

This application takes vacant residentially zoned land in Johnston, wipes out green space, and blankets the ground with solar panels. The proposed solar installation is vast and will have a devastating impact on the land that will never recover in our lifetime. If you

agree that solar panels belong on rooftops and land zoned for industrial and commercial purposes ONLY and NOT on land intended for residential use, please attend the Zoning Board meeting on Nov. 2 at the Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Ave., at 6:30 p.m.

Thank you in advance for your opposition to industrial solar development in residential areas and your support for the preservation of Johnston's quality of life; we pay more than our fair share of taxes, so the Town must take our concerns into account and deny this project. We look forward to your attendance at this very important public hearing.

Thank you from your Johnston neighbors,  
**Stop Johnston Solar**

**Editor's Note:** Stop Johnston Solar is a group of Johnston residents formed in opposition to a proposed industrial-scale solar field planned for a wooded neighborhood currently zoned for residential development. The group is looking for more members. Contact the organization at StopJohnstonSolar@gmail.com.

## RI HALLOWEEN COSTUME IDEAS!

Charlie Hall



DEFATIN' GAFE (AMO)



LEGAL SHORE WALKER



PAWTUCKET



CRANSTON ARMORY



VISITING MANATEE



WARWICK ICE RINK



BIG STUFFIE



GUV. GINA



GUV. GINA (TEACHERS' VERSION)

GUEST OP

## 'Greatest transfer of wealth in American history'

By BRIAN ARGIRO

By the year 2030, \$30 trillion in assets will pass from Baby Boomer men to their spouses and children, ushering in the greatest transfer of wealth in American history. Yet while women currently make 85% of all household financial decisions, research shows that only 45% feel confident when it comes to investing. Understanding financial planning, investments and estate planning, among other topics, is vital to managing wealth and creating financial stability.

To increase financial literacy and confidence among Baby Boomer women — those born between 1946 and 1964 — Citizens has equipped its Financial Advisors to better understand this population's unique needs and engage them in a conversation that can be life changing.

A year ago, I was part of this new program, which emphasizes saving and growing financial assets, while creating financial stability. It is important work that can protect Rhode Island women and their families and help them feel secure when it comes to money matters — now and in the future. I've seen what a difference a sense of self-assuredness and know-how makes in the lives of these clients, especially when it relates to major fiscal decisions.

By working together as a team and closely partnering with clients, our experienced advisors deliver smart ideas, creative solutions, and personalized help to ensure our clients navigate and grow in changing circumstances. As this innovative training underscores, we are always listening and evolving; there is no finish line.

We are also helping women at the beginning of their financial journeys by launching a new app called Wellthi that invites millennials to learn about financial management in a fresh way. This first-of-its-kind, all-in-one social platform combines community with financial education. Already 3,000 users have downloaded this easy-to-navigate app.

With Wellthi, which is available in iOS, users can learn from each other and from certified financial advisors, as they start planning for their short- and long-term financial objectives. Anyone — not just millennials — can download the app to ask questions, discuss experiences and explore the many available financial tools, products and services. Users can even set goals for themselves, motivate friends and family to be part of a shared goal, and promote accountability.

I encourage all Johnston residents to expand their knowledge of the ins and outs of responsible spending, saving and investing at every stage of their lives.

When it comes to financial planning, I am thrilled to be a part of a team that is taking an innovative approach to growing and protecting generational wealth for residents of Johnston and beyond. Our personalized advice grows with clients through every step of their journey, whether someone is just starting out or identifying ways to pay for a home or a child's education or considering how their family can build generational wealth.

**Editor's Note:** Brian Argiro is Vice President, Private Client Senior Financial Advisor for Citizens Private Client.



<b>Publisher</b> John I. Howell Jr. - JohnH@rhodybeat.com	<b>Circulation</b> Leslie Paz
<b>Advertising Director</b> Donna Zarrella - Donna.Z@rhodybeat.com	<b>Credit Manager</b> Lynne Taylor
<b>Editor</b> Rory Schuler - RoryS@rhodybeat.com	<b>Bookkeeping</b> Leslie Paz
<b>Sports Editor</b> Alex Sponseller - AlexS@rhodybeat.com	<b>Production Manager</b> Lisa Bourque Yuetner - LisaB@rhodybeat.com
<b>Journalists</b> Pete Fontaine	<b>Production Staff</b> Monique Rice - MoR@rhodybeat.com
<b>Advertising Representative</b> Christine Peabody - ChrisP@rhodybeat.com	<b>Spotlight Profile Writer</b> Jennifer Coates - JenniferC@rhodybeat.com
<b>Classified Advertising</b> Ida Zecco - Classifieds@rhodybeat.com	<b>Tel.</b> 401-732-3100 <b>Fax:</b> 401-732-3110

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# MLL

(Continued from page 1)

The district's already facing belt-tightening measures and pending top-to-bottom financial reviews following an attempt by the town's mayor to launch a financial "takeover" of the school system. Administrators have had to account for every taxpayer cent spent, and educating a swelling group of MLL students has required significant investments.

"Due to the increasing MLL registering students, Johnston added two additional MLL teachers at the elementary level this year," DiLullo explained. "I see this trend continuing in the next few years and districts will require additional funding to support these students."

### The State House

Legislators have started to respond to skyrocketing data by allocating more money to local school districts for MLL education, according to Speaker of Rhode Island's House of Representatives K. Joseph Shekarchi, a Warwick Democrat.

"The needs of the student population is always changing and we do our best to respond to student needs in real time," Shekarchi said. "For example, we have addressed MLL needs for the last three years while I've been Speaker by increasing funding for MLL students."

State Rep. Enrique Sanchez (D-Dist. 9, Providence) worked as a Spanish teacher at city high schools like Providence Central, Mt. Pleasant and Dr. Jorge Alvarez High.

He's seen first-hand packed Providence classrooms, full of young primarily Spanish-speaking students struggling to get attention from the district's shrinking teaching staff.

"It's very complex," Sanchez said Monday morning. "There is an education crisis in the city. It comes down to a number of mechanisms that need to be adjusted. We're dealing with a mass overflow of teachers who have left the school district."

Providence alone accounts for more than half of the state's multilingual learners (MLL), estimated at 50.6%.

In a massive hemorrhage of experience, according to Sanchez, more than 300 teachers have left the Providence school system over just the past few years.

Adequate education for MLL "costs a lot of money," Sanchez said. "And the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) really isn't providing that."

Many classrooms now have up to 30 students per educator.

"How do you make sure every student in class is getting attention?" Sanchez asked. "We need to change our curriculum as well."

### The Surging Trend

Each school year, more Rhode Island students require MLL support.

More than 90% of all MLL attend schools in just 10 Ocean State school districts, according to RIPEC.

This year, the Central Falls School District made state history, officially becoming the first district in Rhode Island "with more than half its students classified as multilingual learners," the report states.

RIPEC estimates the state's MLL student body swelled 9,372 to 15,260 students in the past eight years (a 62.8 percent increase, 2015-2023). Overall, 12.5% of the state's public school students classify as MLL (up from 7.2% in 2015).

The vast majority of the state's MLL speak Spanish at home (80.1%) — Creole and Pidgin (4.2%), Portuguese (2.6%), Arabic (1.3%) and Chinese (1%). Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) reports 142 different languages spoken in the homes of Rhode Island's MLL students.

"Every day, many people arrive from many countries around the world," Sanchez said, rattling off a long list of countries and continents, like Ukraine, Asia and Africa. "The more students there are, it becomes more and more work for the school district and RIDE to address."

Johnston State Rep. Deb Fellela amplified the call for more educators, but acknowledged the challenges inherent in asking seasoned educators to go back to school to learn a new language.

"Right now we see a lot of graduates not going into the education field," Fellela said. "As I've seen in Providence the administration is requiring that teachers have that degree to teach those students. Maybe an incentive for college students going into teaching if they would consider getting MLL certified with either a stipend or something that will attract folks to this field once again. That is difficult as a teacher may be close to retirement and now, she is mandated to go back to get that degree and is burdened with the cost associated with taking courses."

### Across the Board Increases

The multilingual learner population of North Providence increased 341.8%, soaring from 91 MLL students in 2015 to 402 in 2023.

RIPEC cites the Nation's Report Card — the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) — which offers "some evidence that (MLL) in Rhode have worse educational outcomes than (MLL) in the nation overall."

Test scores show 60% of the Ocean State's MLL students were below basic math proficiency and 71% fell below reading proficiency standards. The proficiency gap in exhibited by eighth grade data shows similar trends, both trailing the nation by about 12%.

According to RIDE report cards, South Kingstown schools are beating the trend, their MLL students scoring 51.1% proficient in reading (the only district majority proficient).

Near the middle of the pack, Johnston schools are only reporting 9.2% reading proficiency among the district's MLL population. Central Falls fell to the bottom of the chart, with only 1.2% of MLL students reading proficient.

Coventry Schools topped the state's math proficiency (for its MLL population) rankings, with 50% (the only district reaching the halfway mark).

"I have proposed legislation for the past several years that would create 'Language Academies' as a language-proficiency element to our public schools," explained House Minority Leader, state Rep. Mike Chippendale. "In short, a child not proficient in English would be taught in the standard educational curriculum, but in a separate classroom or building where immersive language learning would occur while still encompassing the other classroom subjects."

Chippendale serves as an Ex-Officio member of all House Committees and represents District 40, which includes Coventry, Foster and Glocester.

"Once a child tests proficient in English, they would simply matriculate back into the classroom or school that they would ordinarily attend," he said. "This model has been successful across Canada, in New York City, and in several other US States and is extremely beneficial to the child that lacks the language skills, and the rest of the student body as a whole because the language barrier and the accompanying communication issues are removed from the classroom setting."

Johnston's MLL math scores measured at 5.5% proficient, and West Warwick ranked lowest, with just 1.8% scoring proficient. The town received Title III: Limited English Proficient Allocation for MLL during FY2023 in the amount of only \$33,344, despite a precipitous surge in MLL student enrollment.

According to RIPEC, "other districts have seen fast growth in the number of (MLL) since 2015, including

Cumberland, East Providence, Johnston, Newport, North Providence, and Warwick. Collectively, they saw their numbers nearly triple, from 656 to 1,763 between 2015 and 2023 and these districts now make-up 11.6% of all multilingual learners in the state"

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. suggested "simplicity" over complicated solutions.

"I'm not an educator, but from the little I do know, the best way to help MLL children is simplicity and unhurried learning," Polisena explained last week-end. "First, shared reading, either in ... large or small groups, may help. Second, it would be also be helpful to label everything in the classroom with a picture and a word. Third, implement tools and strategies like graphic organizers, word mats, sentence stems and sentence frames."

The mayor suggested that a few changes in the classroom may go a long way in helping to accommodate the MLL population.

"Some strategies which are little less formal may help too," Polisena argued in an emailed response. "Good seating charts that reduce disruption, learning students names in their native language (when I was a public defender I always wrote the clients phonetic spelling of their name next to their name and tried to pronounce it as best I could), interesting visualization of lessons that can keep all children, particularly MLLs, engaged. Lastly, maybe translanguaging can help so MLLs don't feel forced for a full English answer and can try and use the translanguaging to fill in any gaps."

Education Week defines "translanguaging" as "the ability to move fluidly between languages and a pedagogical approach to teaching in which teachers support this ability."

Warwick Schools' MLL students reached 7.8% reading proficient and 9% math proficient. Cranston Schools' MLL population hit 7.3% reading proficient and 9.1% math proficient. Both city school districts lingered in the bottom half of the state's public rankings for MLL performance.

"Rhode Island's most recent state assessments similarly show that multilingual learners are failing to meet or exceed expectations in math or reading in alarming numbers," according to RIPEC, basing their conclusions on data provided within RIDE Report Cards.

### Statewide Change

The state only started providing funding for MLL, specifically, in 2017.

Over the past eight years, state funding for "high-cost multilingual learners was based on 10% of the state share of the per pupil core instructional amount but was also subject to appropriation," according to the RIPEC report

In the latest state budget, however, the General Assembly made a pair of major changes to MLL funding.

Legislators "increased the formula factor to 15% of the per pupil core instructional amount and made the funding no longer subject to appropriation," according to RIPEC. "These changes resulted in a large increase in categorical funding, with \$16.8 million allocated to districts in FY 2024 (\$1,169 per pupil), up from \$4.5 million (\$307 per pupil) in FY 2023."

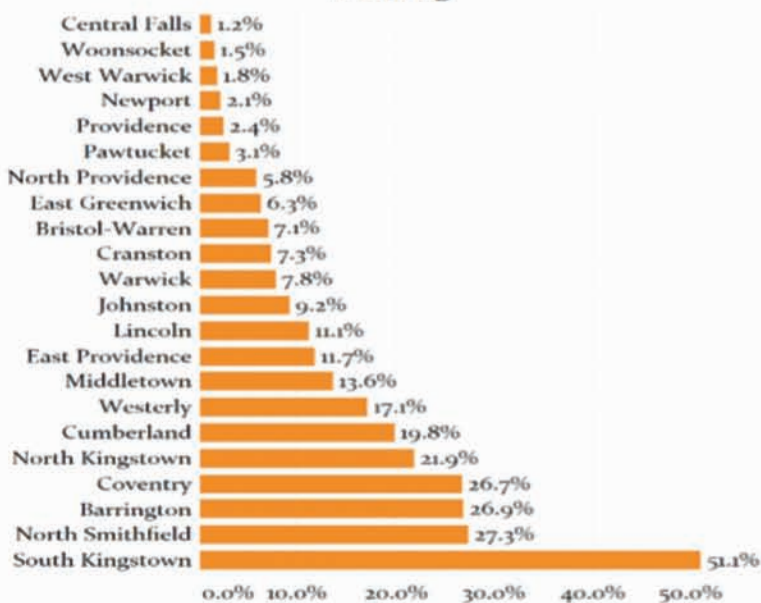
RIPEC recommends the state base MLL funding on "the most recent student data, and improve data collection efforts."

"Rhode Island is behind the curve when it comes to funding for multilingual learners," said RIPEC President & CEO Michael DiBiase. "The dollars simply haven't matched the growth in this student population, and despite substantial increases in state funds appropriated for the current fiscal year, Rhode Island still trails its neighbors and the nation by a wide margin. Multilingual learners make up a substantial and rapidly growing portion of our students, so the improvement of public education in Rhode Island hinges on their success."

## Multilingual Learners Who Meet/Exceed Expectations

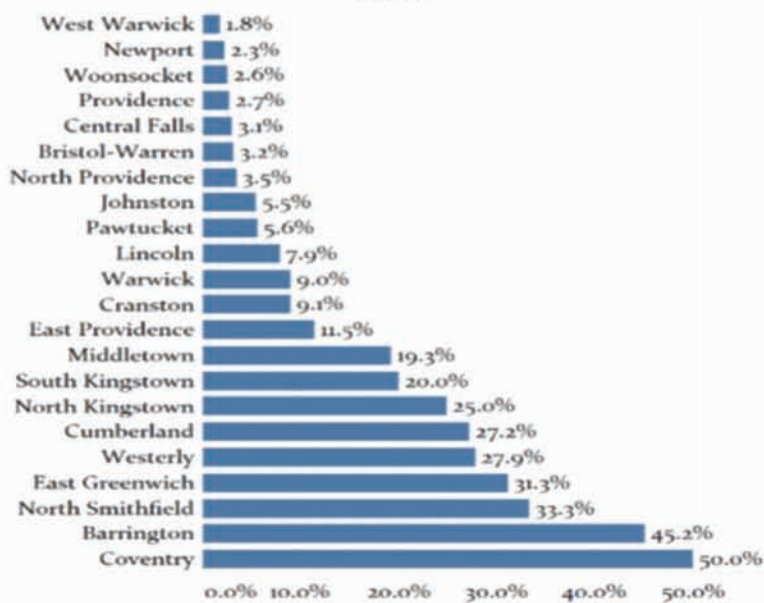
2021-2022

### Reading



Source: RIDE Report Cards

### Math







■ **Calef**

(Continued from page 1)

Tri-County's headquarters at 1126 Hartford Ave. have nearly reached capacity so the organization has expanded into the vacant school.

"We paid cash for it," DeSantis said. "This strategic move demonstrates Tri-County's commitment to expanding its services and providing improved facilities for the community it serves," according to a statement provided by Tri-County's Director of Communication and Corporate Compliance, Jennifer Papagolos. "The purchase of the Calef Elementary School building was finalized through negotiations with the Town of Johnston, marking a significant milestone for Tri-County."

The Calef School acquisition will help the "agency to enhance its outreach and support initiatives, particularly within the Head Start program, which will benefit greatly from this new facility," according to Tri-County. "Head Start and Early Head Start programs offer early childhood education classrooms, and home learning opportunities for children from birth through age 5."

On a recent morning, DeSantis and Papagolos provided a tour of the building. Some classrooms are currently packed with Head Start youngsters. They sat quietly munching breakfast at their desks while a teacher surveyed the room. Soon their numbers may grow and the space around them will evolve and expand.

"Tri-County Community Action Agency has earmarked the first floor of the Calef Elementary School building for the expansion of its renowned Head Start program," according to the agency. "This expansion will serve to consolidate several existing Head Start classrooms into the newly renovated space, ensuring a safer, more efficient space for children to receive vital

early childhood education and support services." DeSantis loves the new building's ample parking and what he sees as "the potential for future expansion, allowing Tri-County to better meet the evolving needs of the community."

The second floor of the Calef Elementary School building is under renovation, and will Tri-County eventually hopes to utilize the space "to house staff dedicated to various social service programs, as well as administrative personnel, including IT staff."

"This strategic allocation of space will enable the agency to streamline operations and better serve the community by having essential staff located under one roof," according to the agency.

"We are thrilled to announce the acquisition of the Calef Elementary School building, which will play a pivotal role in our mission to empower individuals, families, and communities in the Tri-County area," DeSantis said. "The expansion of our Head Start program and the consolidation of services in this new, safer, and more accessible location will enable us to make an even greater impact in the lives of those we serve."

Tri-County thanked the town of Johnston for "its cooperation and support throughout this acquisition process."

"Together, they are forging a stronger, more resilient community that is better equipped to face the challenges of the future," according to the agency, which has delivered a wide range of programs and services at 16 locations across the state since 1965.

DeSantis recently celebrated a half-century with Tri-County.

The Calef School facility will help to serve eight northern Rhode Island communities, including Johnston, North Providence, Foster, Glocester, Scituate, Burrillville, North Smithfield and Smithfield. For more information about Tri-County CAA and its services, visit [www.tricountyri.org](http://www.tricountyri.org), or contact the agency at 401-351-2750.

**PASSING TIME:** Tri-County facilities director Joe Russo now helps maintain the Calef School, the same building where he attended the fifth grade. At right, he pointed his face out from a photograph of Miss Templeton's class. Tri-County recently bought the building, hoping to expand Head Start services to the region. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



# Obituaries

## Robert J. Pincins

Robert J. Pincins passed away on February 4, 2023, in Louisville, Kentucky. Born on August 8, 1951, he was the son of the late Armand F. and Dorinda M. Pincins of Johnston, Rhode Island. Robert was the long-term partner of Ms. Dani Parrish of Shelbyville, Kentucky.



Robert is survived by Gerald Pincins of Johnston, R.I., David Pincins of Cranston, R.I., Donald Pincins of Glocester, R.I., Ms. Arlene Oliver of North Providence, R.I., Mrs. Ronald Oliver of Johnston, R.I., and many nieces and nephews.

Robert had recently retired as a Professional Racehorse Trainer. Starting as a teenager at local horse racetracks, such as Lincoln Downs and Narragansett Park, he developed a love for horses and the racing industry. In the early 1970's, he moved to Ohio and then to Kentucky to enjoy a successful horse racing career logging up 339 first place finishes.

Robert also enjoyed New England sports teams earning him the nickname "Boston Bob" for his support of the Boston Red Sox and the New England Patriots.

A Memorial Service will be held on November 1, 2023, at 10:30 am at Highland Memorial Park, 1 Rhode Island Ave. Johnston Rhode Island.



**TENDER HOOKS:** Tri-County President & CEO Joe DeSantis recently gave a tour of the agency's newest acquisition, Johnston's George C. Calef Elementary School at 7 Waveland St. Tri-County paid the town \$1 million in cash for the building. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

## Obituaries

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

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

— Thank you



# LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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The talented staff at Dreamland Learning Center work diligently to make sure that everything is arranged to encourage optimal learning, fun, and play, including this colorful, cozy, and imaginative space!

## Dreamland Learning Center

Check out their many programs at [www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com](http://www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com)

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Johnston, RI 02919  
**NOW ENROLLING**  
6 Weeks - 12 Years Old

By JENNIFER COATES

For young children, life is about playmates, hands-on learning, and adventure. It is about friendships and familiar routines; it is about engaging in organized activities which also allow for spontaneity and incidental learning; it is about sensory experiences that involve movement, creativity, music and so much more. For young children, they can find all of these things ~ and more ~ at Dreamland Learning Center in Johnston.

and caregivers alike happy, and, with all the programming and fun it is known for, make children happy too! Children ages six weeks through age 12 are welcome here. This family of centers truly embrace the words of Nelson Mandela: "Education is the most powerful weapon which we can use to change the world" ~ which they do one child at a time.

Every space in this center is thoughtfully planned and designed to be developmentally appropriate and purposeful. Child-size furniture makes each room feel comfortable and adapted to the needs of pint-sized early

learners while shelves are filled with toys and walls are strewn with art projects. Centers are set up for imaginary play, arts & crafts, building, science, music, and story time. The outside playgrounds provide the perfect place for youngsters to run off all that childhood energy. The after-school room is complete with long tables for homework and study time.

The curriculum and staff-to-child ratio requirements here meet the strict standards of the state while all staff are licensed, and CPR certified. The staff here work as a team with one goal in mind and that is to enrich the lives of the children over whom they have been given this special stewardship. In fact, the whole facility is Bright Star® rated for excellence.

Parents and children who come to this busy and nurturing learning center on Hartford Avenue will find that the changes that were implemented to protect the health and safety of its students in the days of the

pandemic are still in place. At the same time, the daily programming for the children who attend Dreamland is still packed with fun, activity, friendships, and play.

If you are looking for childcare this fall ~be sure to register for before and after school care for children up to 12 years of age. Dreamland is even open during school vacation. For some school districts, transportation is provided to and from elementary school. Homework assistance and age-appropriate, supervised activities are always planned.

Dreamland Learning Center is now accepting enrollment for children ages 6 weeks through age 12. It is located at 1253 Hartford Avenue. For more information, call 401-280-1400 or visit their website at [www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com](http://www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com).

Be sure to check out the other members of the Dreamland family of childcare centers in West Warwick (401-828-8200) and Pawtucket (401-655-1000).

# JHS Battle of the Classes pits under vs. upper-classmen

By LOGAN MARTINS  
Special to the Sun Rise

Last week on Wednesday, Oct. 18, Johnston Senior High School hosted their annual Battle of the Classes. Each graduating class composed a team of 18 members, nine boys and nine girls. These members were picked from members of their respective float committees. All of the class presidents were picked for their teams, and along with their advisors, had the task of deciding what events each team member participated in. In the end, it was all worth it because the night turned out to be a great success.

The competition was composed of 14 different games. The most well-known games include the Mile Relay, Walk the Plank, Hula Madness, Get Low, and Tug of War.

The mile relay was made up of a team of eight, four boys and four girls, and they combined to run a mile exactly. The seniors ended up taking the event, the beginning of a successful night for the class.

Later on, the iconic Walk the Plank began. This event required 16 members, with four different teams of four members. As the song "Walk It Out" played, the students were off to the races, working cohesively to bring the two planks 25 yards down the field. By the end of this lengthy game, the sophomores crossed the goal line first, with the juniors coming in a close second.

After a couple of games in between, it was time for Hula Madness. In this game, the teams must navigate a hula hoop around the entire team that is enclosed in a circle. After reaching the person who started with a lei around their neck, the lei is then passed to the next person, as one by one, the removed person runs to the end zone. Many students would attest that the most difficult part is the very end when the team must run 100 yards while keeping the hands locked together. After a tight race to the other end zone, the juniors picked up the win by just mere yards, which would be one of the closest finishes of the night.

This year, there was a brand new event introduced to the agenda of games. The game was called "Get Low" and was introduced by senior class president Alessandra Pesare. The event had a team of 8 members with 4 males and 4 females. The bar was slowly lowered with each round, and in the end, the seniors won the event with 3 members of their team left standing.

To finish off the night, the classes went head to head in Tug of War. Each team had a combined weight of 1000 pounds, give or take 40 pounds. First up were the seniors and the juniors, with the seniors taking the win. Then it was time for the sophomores and freshmen to battle, with the sophomores coming out on top. Thus, the clash for first place ensued. The sophomores and seniors went back and forth, but the seniors earned a hard-fought victory.

All in all, the event was a huge success, filled with a packed crowd of students and families there to support the competitors.

Of course, this event would not have been able to run so smoothly without help from the staff. Many teachers volunteered their time to help run the games. A group of students led by Student Council President Alexia Dilorenzo and Corresponding Secretary Matthew Clements played a vital role in the success of the night. Also, shout-out to Paul Desrochers for making food for all of the teacher volunteers. Additionally, a thank you to Mr. Russo for all of his help in making sure everything ran smoothly throughout the night.

Due to an unusually early Homecoming this year, the results of Battle of the Classes will be announced at Senior Sendoff in June 2024.

**Editor's Note:** Logan Martins serves as Johnston High School Junior Class President. The Johnston Sun Rise regularly publishes stories submitted by members of JHS Student Council.

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# THE VOTING BLOCK



**COMING UP EMPTY-HANDED:** Ken Block, left, talks with Warwick Rotary Club member Tony Bucci following his presentation last Thursday to the club. He said after extensive research of voting data, he concluded there was not a sufficient amount of voter fraud to alter the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election. (Beacon Communications photo)

## Software guru hired by Trump confirms 'no voter fraud' sufficient to change election results

By RORY SCHULER

Former U.S. President Donald J. Trump's campaign paid a software engineer and former third party Rhode Island gubernatorial candidate \$750,000 to scour the 2020 presidential election results for evidence of fraud.

"I can't get much deeper into any of the particulars of what I did for the Trump campaign right now, because these are still ongoing legal matters," Ken Block told the Warwick Rotary Club last week. "There's probably a 50/50 chance I'll have to go testify in one or more trials. They have all my documents so they don't need me to testify."

Block, a long-time critic of the established two-party system of government, owns Warwick-based Simpatico Software Systems. In the wake of the pandemic he closed the office and has been working remotely. He was sought out by some of Trump's lesser-known lawyers and determined to be an honest, non-biased broker capable of pouring through voter data to determine if Trump's loss was valid or if systemic fraud had stolen the election (as claimed repeatedly by Trump since his loss to current President Joe Biden).

"It would be pretty compelling story-telling to have the guy who was paid to look for voter fraud in-person say there was no voter fraud," Block explained. "So I'm expecting I'll have to do that at some point. I don't want to, but I'm not going have a choice in that matter."

The founder of the Moderate Party of Rhode Island, the Ocean State's third-largest political party, Block unsuccessfully ran for governor in 2010. He's been a vocal political gadfly, buzzing around issues from the 38 Studios bailout debacle to the fight against Sakonnet River Bridge tolling. He also worked with Warwick activist Rob Cote in auditing Warwick firefighter overtime and vacation pay, finding firefighters received \$400,000 in excess pay.

Block said he was drafted into the post-election drama "the day after the 2020 election."

"My cell phone rang," he recalled. "It was a top lawyer for the Trump campaign, who asked me if I would very kindly look to see if there was voter fraud involved in the outcome of the 2020 election. It was a very difficult decision, to decide to do it or not to do it. Ultimately I convinced my family that I should do it — that I was one of the few people capable of doing it in an unbiased way."

Block had "a decade of experience, working with national voting data from all over the country."

"It would be OK," he told himself. "It would be low-key."

Block had hoped to stay out of the national media spotlight.

"As I negotiated the contract with the campaign, the decision was made to shield me from all political pressures," Block said. "My identity wasn't going to be known, particularly to the White House, or anybody outside of the small group of lawyers who were con-

ducting this audit."

The Trump campaign told Block they were desperate. He accepted the assignment.

"So, we started what became a very intense month of looking at voter data from everywhere," Block recalled. "Not only was I looking on my own, to determine if we could discover whether fraud had occurred, one day after the contract was signed, I was then being asked by the campaign to assess claims of voter fraud that came from literally everywhere."

According to Block's contract, he was "only tasked with looking at the claims of voter fraud whose foundations were in data." He wasn't hired to investigate claims of hidden boxes of ballots or other human malfeasance. He was hired to examine the data and answer a set of very specific questions.

"Were dead voters voting?" Block recited the questions aloud for the Rotary audience seated in the Post Road Chelo's banquet room. "Did people vote multiple times in different states?"

Block said some of the "claims of voter fraud" he encountered "were very complex."

"My work and these issues are in front of Jack Smith's court case in D.C. right now," Block said.

On Nov. 18, 2022, U.S. Attorney General Merrick B. Garland appointed Jack Smith as Special Counsel authorized to investigate interference with the peaceful transition of power following the 2020 presidential election (including the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection riots and storming of the U.S. Capital building).

Eventually, Block's role with the Trump campaign was exposed by a series of stories by The Washington Post. The newspaper discovered that Block had received a subpoena from Smith requesting all the documents related to his work for the Trump campaign.

"Two weeks after that, I got a knock on my door, and I received a subpoena from a different legal matter that nobody knows about, because they had seen The Post's stories, and they asked for all of my materials for that legal matter," Block said. "And after that ... I got a subpoena from the Fulton County Georgia prosecutor's office asking me for all of my materials, related to my work for the Trump campaign in that legal matter."

While he avoided revealing specifics from his investigation, Block offered a potent summation of his work.

"So, without telling you anything that hasn't already been discussed in the media, what I can say without hesitation and with firm conviction, is that there was no voter fraud of any sort of sufficient quantity to have changed the result of any election in 2020," Block said last week. "No state's results could be overturned based on fraud determined by looking at voter data. And that's a pretty important statement. I don't know if that statement has ever been formally spoken the way I just did. I arrived at these results because I was paid by the Trump campaign to look for them. And there's no quibbling about them. This isn't opinion. This is fact."

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# Sports

## JHS inducts 42 Panthers into athletic HOF

By PETE FONTAINE

As the classic credo that Johnston High School's new athletic director Justin Erickson, who has pumped new life into the Blue and White's storied sports program goes: "It's a great day to be a Panther!"

That was especially true Sunday afternoon when 42 alums were inducted into the prestigious Johnston High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

During a lively and historic happening held inside the famed Edward L. DiSimone Gymnasium, long-time induction officer/one-time teacher Allan McGillivray, who was assisted by David Taraborelli and John Graham, read what he called the "remarkable resumes" of each member of the Class of 2023.

Within the span of 60-plus minutes, members of the 1995-96 Boys Basketball Class C State Championship team and 19 former Panther greats received what has become the traditional Lucite award bearing each inductee's name and applause from a small yet appreciative audience that included proud family members, friends, former teammates and long-time JHS supporters.

"This is just like one big family reunion," several people suggested. "Everyone here



**MILESTONE MEMORIES:** These are the sports superstars who made up the Class of 2023 and Sunday were inducted into the prestigious Johnston High School Athletic Hall of Fame that the late teacher, coach and administrator Gary V. Mazzie founded in 2012. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

■ HOF - PAGE 14

## Battle of the Classes boasts another fun-filled event

By PETE FONTAINE

Super school spirit, fun and fantastic food were the ingredients featured during Johnston High School's always popular and special Battle of the Classes held last Wednesday night inside nearly full and cheer filled Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Stadium.

The event started under beautiful skies and later featured a total of 64 JHS undergrads from four classes competing in unique and classic competitions ranging from the traditional one-mile relay

■ CLASSES - PAGE 14



**SENIOR SPECIAL:** JHS Class of 2024 students Willow Andrews, Cameron Ferrara, Malanya Zanni, Elise Connors and Isabella Maggiasco who are standing behind their banner that read "Senior World One Last Ride" and displayed on the bleachers at the Battle of the Classes. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

## Panthers claim 2nd seed

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston football team clinched the second seed in the upcoming Division III playoffs last week when it topped visiting Pilgrim 29-14.

The Pats led 14-13 heading into the fourth quarter, but the Johnston special teams unit would come up with big plays to propel the Panthers to the win.

Michael Carlino would boot a field goal from 34 yards out to give Johnston the 16-14 advantage with 9:23 remaining, then the Panthers recovered a Patriot



**SECOND SEED:** Johnston receiver Michael Carlino last week against Pilgrim. (Photo by Alex Sponseller)

■ SEED - PAGE 13

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# The fish are winners in Rhode Island

By **CAPT. DAVE MONTI**

ing used to fund climate change fisheries research. This language would hamper the ability of NOAA Fisheries to undertake climate research and adaptation efforts.

**Where's the bite?**

Striped bass, bluefish, bonito and false albacore. Striped bass fishing has been remarkable this fall just as it has been good all year. Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence, said, "Big striped bass are being caught all over the Bay and up into the Providence River. Anglers are chunking Atlantic menhaden and using white soft plastic lures with success. Bonito and false albacore are still around too as the water is still 60 degrees in the Bay."

"Stripers were exploding from Patience Island to Conimicut Point. One customer caught three keepers in the slot (28" to <31") in just a few minutes," said Tom Giddings of the Tackle Box, Warwick.

Anglers are catching fish from shore and boats. This week the bite was on in Greenwich Bay with fish being taken on swimming lures of all types both casting to fish on the surface and trolling them. Declan O'Conner of Breachway Bait & Tackle, Charlestown, said, "Striped bass fishing has been very good from the local beaches and Breachway with lots of surface action during the day, plugs, eels and jigs producing well at night. Schools of smaller bass were around this week with a few 40 inchers being pulled out along the south shore. There have been large schools of bait moving along the beaches with bass and a few blue-



**TAUTOG BITE:** Chris "Higgie" Higgins with the 13.56-pound tautog he caught this week off Newport with Capt. Mike Littlefield of ArchAngel Charters. (Submitted photo)

fish in pursuit. The bait mostly includes mackerel, bunker (peanuts anywhere from 1-5 in) bay anchovies, and mullet. Schools of false albacore continue to pop up from Napatree Point to Narragansett and those anglers targeting them are managing a few."

John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, said,

"This is the best striped bass season in some years with customers catching slot and school bass at Sabin Point as well as from the Barrington Bridge when tautog fishing. One customer caught a 35-inch striped bass. The fishing is great in the Providence River and the Seekonk River all the way to down-

town Pawtucket. Al Gag's white soft plastic lures are working well."

Tautog fishing has been producing for anglers all over Narragansett Bay, off Newport and along our southern coastal shore.

"The key to a good bite this week was fishing when the tide was moving. Customers that strug-

gled to get their limit with a lot of shorts were not able to sit on top of a group of chewing tog. Most of the action seems to be coming from areas in 20 to 40 feet of water and there have been some cod and black sea bass mixed in," said O'Donnell of Breachway Bait & Tackle.

**Seed**

(Continued from page 12)

fumble on the ensuing kickoff to set up shop at the Pilgrim 11-yard line. Quarterback Matt Clements rushed for a score just over a minute later to extend the lead to 23-14.

NeAri Vasquez put the finishing touches on the win when he later rushed for a score to make it 29-14 with 6:33 left.

"We know that we've got one of the best special teams (units) in the state. We knew we'd get some good (field position), too. Tonight we proved it," said Johnston captain Steven Fine-

gan.

Finegan was a factor on both special teams and offense. Finegan would give the Panthers a 13-8 lead at halftime when he returned a kick all the way to the Pilgrim 13-yard line and then scored moments later.

Dean Paris scored Johnston's first touchdown in the first quarter, but Pilgrim responded when quarterback Chace Roberts tossed a touchdown to Dylan Roberts. Justyn Murphy hauled in the 2-point play for Pilgrim. Roberts later connected with Cole Bigelli to give Pilgrim the 14-13 lead in the third quarter.

Although Pilgrim had multi-

ple chances in the fourth quarter on offense, the Johnston line consistently pressured Chace Roberts up front.

"We were not picking up blitzes, not giving enough time in the pocket to see the field and complete the passes to give us a chance. The fumbled kickoff hurt us, too," said Pilgrim coach Blake Simpson on the team's fourth quarter struggles.

After dropping a tough loss to West Warwick the previous week, Finegan and the Panthers were hoping to get back into the win column fast.

"It helps a lot. Last week was a tough loss, we went in there thinking we were going to roll

through them but they played great football. Today, Pilgrim played a great game, but we got hyped up. We started a little slow and knew we had to play a great second half and we did that," Finegan said.

The Panthers have also developed one of the top offenses in the state to this point, boasting a lineup with playmakers in both the running game and passing attack.

"Matt Clements stepped up, we've got a couple of new receivers, NeAri moved to wide receiver, Cam Walker is another big target, Mike Carlino in the slot. Everyone is helping and it's all coming together. We've

got great chemistry this year," Finegan said. "We're just going to keep it rolling. We plan on doing big things."

As for Pilgrim, the Pats will host Moses Brown on Friday night. The winner will claim the final seed in the playoffs while the loser will be headed home. Zeroing in on Moses Brown's electric running back Myles Craddock will be key, according to Simpson.

"They've got Myles Craddock, he's the best running back in the state. So hopefully we can stop him and control the clock to give us a chance to win a playoff berth," Simpson said.



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## Classes

(Continued from page 12)

to a Plunger Pass as well as three other unique contests and concluding with Eat and Run which this year featured a picnic theme and participants having to eat a pickle.

But that was just the start of that event as contestants had to eat a hot dog, a bun and apple pie and the final team member had to funk his or her head into a vat of pudding to retrieve a sponge with the year of graduation carved out. Also, a new event this year was Get Low which was a limbo contest that drew cheers and jeers from the crowd and contestants.

The grand prize winner? "We can tell everyone that each of the four JHS classes won at least one event and even the freshmen won the popular Plunger Pass. The final results will be announced at the annual Senior Sendoff Dance in June.

However, Greg Russo – a popular JHS faculty member and advisor for the sponsoring Student Council – mused: "We can tell you that the Class of 2024 won the Tug of War."

Thus, other events were the Saran Wrap Wrap, Sack Race, Walk the Plank, Hula Madness, Animals on the Run,

Over Under, Reindeer Run and Dizzy Izzy.

To qualify for a spot on each team students had to be active members of the float competition that this year built four beautiful, colorful, creative and unique floats that have always been the traditional trademark of Johnston High's unmatched Homecoming. Each class is represented by a team of 18 students which includes eight boys and as many girls as well as an alternate for each.

As noted, the JHS Student Council coordinates the entire event and this year was led by Russo, and President Alexia DiLorenzo who chaired the event with student Council Corresponding Secretary and Panther football standout Matt Clements as well as sisters Nicole and Noelle Patenaude, Chantel DeJesus, Isabella Liang, Charlene Manaho and Isabella Paulson.

The Desrochers – Paul and his wife Josie – were the unsung heroes MVPs – Most Valuable Players – as they put together a mouth-watering menu that ranged from soup, pulled pork and meatball sandwiches that impressed and as many people who visited the stadium concession stand concurred: "This food is fantastic – just like tonight's super special school spirit!"



**CLASSIC CUSTOMERS:** Among the many people who visited and enjoyed food prepared and served by Paul and Josie Desrochers at the concession were Julie Forte, Anthony Fellella, Vanessa Faiola, Isabella Russo, Jeff Pasilra, Ryan Barrett and Patty Lombardo.

### LINKED LEADERS:

Long-time JHS faculty member/student council advisor Greg Russo is joined by Student Council President Alexia Maggiamo and Corresponding Secretary/football stand-out Matt Clements who helped lead the way for last week's highly successful 2023 Battle of the Classes.



**FIRST FORCE:** These members of the JHS Class of 2024 used their spirit, skills and strength to win the Tug of War during last week's Battle of the Classes. All other results will be announced at the Senior Sendoff Off Dance in June.



**VALUABLE VOICES:** Mark Gilmore (left) and Glen Carroll, who founded the Johnston Community Center Association, received the coveted Contributors Awards during Sunday's JHS Hall of Fame Induction for their 16 years of volunteer announcing Panther basketball games.



**WARM WELCOME:** That's the way Justin Erickson, Johnston High School's new and enthusiastic Athletic Director, greeted Sally and Jack Diorio who represented their late son for what was his second induction into the Panthers Athletic Hall of Fame as a team manager.

## HOF

(Continued from page 12)

knows Gary is looking down on us smiling and recanting the glory days of yesterday."

The late Gary V. Mazzie, who succumbed to an illness but founded the prestigious JHS Athletic Hall of Fame back in 2012, would have indeed been proud of what the event has become in just 11 short years.

That's especially true for Jim Hopkins, the late Mazzie's best friend and coaching cohort, who teamed up to lead the Panthers to that Class C state title.

"We all miss Gary," Hopkins emphasized as he greeted his long-time friend's widow Lee Mazzie and daughters Samantha and Becky. "We are indeed proud to carry on this important tradition in his memory."

Inductees who were named All-State were Michael Pennacchia, 2013 baseball; Ryan McKeon, 2014 baseball; Marc Conte, 2014-15 football and those who received multiple All League or multiple sport All League were Alex DiRaimo, 2013 volleyball; Isabella DiRaimo, 2015 basketball; David Principe, 1984 cross country, outdoor track and wrestling; Leah Gravel, 2015 soccer; and Rachelle Boehm, 2014 soccer.

Also, Jason Cerro, 1998 football; Steve

Denencour, 1990 hockey; Michael Mollicone, 1979 hockey; William Lytle, 1963 cross country, outdoor track and Heidi Baker, 1982 outdoor track and softball.

Bill McNamara was honored for his track and cross country coaching career while Len DiMeo received his induction as the former wrestling coach.

Mark Gilmore and Glen Carroll received the Contributors Award for volunteering the past 16 years to announce the boys' and girls' basketball games as well as Ferri Middle School basketball and JHS soccer.

The Gary V. Mazzie Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award went to Jen Saccocio Paolantonio, 2001 soccer and Miliken Award in Education for 2019 and Gary Bucci, 1979 letter winner in football, hockey and baseball who coached the Cranston Western Little League All-Star into the World Series as well as a number New England and state championships.

The 1995-96 state basketball champions were John Holder, Steven Russillo, Mike Rainone, Brian Renaud, Jim DiPetrillo, Dave DelFino, Doug Waterman, Norm Paquin, Carmone Goneconte, Steve DeMeo, Ken Norigian, John MacAndrew, Brent Williams, Bob Pelland, Kent Waterman and coaches Jim Hopkins, Gary Mazzie, Stephen Gaskin, managers Steven Frederick, Dan Bellevue, Matt DiIorio, Kelly Eramian and Mrs. Coach Lois Hopkins.





**TALENTED TROUPE:** Joan Wright (left) and Sandy Nardolillo (right) are joined by Gabriel Bowden, Marco Fava, Arianna Pagnano, Charlotte Chapman and Lillyann Lucini prior to last Thursday's state track meet in Johnston. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

# Jaguars shine on the track

By **PETE FONTAINE**

Add the names Marco Fava, Gabriel Bowden, Evan Ferrell, Arianna Pagnano, Lillyann Lucini and Charlotte Chapman to the tradition rich Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School sports record books.

Under a sparkling sun, which covered the state-of-the-art artificial surface track inside Johnston High School's Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Stadium last Thursday afternoon, those five members of Ferri's Unified Track Team ranked among the best runners in a multi-school race.

Heading the list was Fava, who is rated one of the best in the state as far as middle school sports are concerned, he finished what Coach Sandy Nardolillo

called "an amazing third place in the state."

As further proof of Fava's overall track talent, Nardolillo emphasized "Marco previously finished in first place in all other races this year."

Likewise, Bowden placed an impressive seventh place in the field of to-flight runners that represented 10 schools while Ferrell was close by her side alongside her pace. As equally impressive, Pagnano ran what Nardolillo called "a strong race as did Lucini and Chapman who were close behind."

Many members of the Ferri Middle School faculty including Joan Wright, were on hand to offer their support and cheer the Jaguars team on.



**PROUD PARENTS:** Luigi and Ornella join their son Marco after he finished a strong third in last Thursday's state unified track meet.

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# MORE THAN A PEN NAME

## RI author defies doctor's expectations and self publishes his own series of children's books

By ED KDONIAN



Brady Knight may not be a household name, but it may soon become one as the 23-year-old Bryan Wolfendon continues to use it as a pen name when publishing his own line stories for children from Kindergarten to sixth grade.

Already for sale on Amazon, and soon to be on sale through Barnes & Noble, his brand is growing and with it his confidence. Knight has refused to be held back by his autism or the other health issues he has that left doctor's believing he'd be wheelchair bound for the rest of his life.

"It makes it difficult at times to do the things I want to do," said Knight. "It also gives me a different perspective. When it comes to my writing I can take what I go through and talk to others about and put it into a different perspective than what other people might see when they say 'Oh, that's not that interesting.' I can turn it into a story that's full of messages."

From a young age Knight was told what he couldn't do. When he was born his parents were told what he couldn't become. However, through a combination of determination and a positive attitude he has proven several of those expectations completely wrong.

■ AUTHOR - PAGE 20





**WARWICK SHOWCASE**

**KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON**

\*\*\*\* 1/2

(Historical Western)

Don't be late for this great three-and-a-half-hour historical western, based on David Grann's non-fiction book. Warwick Showcase forgoes the 15 minutes of trailers, shows a short intro by Martin Scorsese, and gets right into the movie. Before you know it, three and a half hours have flown by.

The Osage Indian tribe has settled in the Oklahoma territory, only to discover oil on their land.

Cattle rancher William Hale (Robert De Niro) befriends the Osage people and becomes their benefactor. Little do they know that he is secretly plotting to gain their fortunes.

Hale's nephew, Ernest Burkhart, (Leonardo DiCaprio)



KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON

See it at the

with Joyce & Don Fowler

**Movies**



arrives in town and is hired as a taxi driver, spending most of his time driving Osage tribal member Mollie Brown (Lily Gladstone) around the fast growing town of Fairfax.

Mollie and her two sisters are in line to become very wealthy Indians (as referred to in the film).

Hale convinces his nephew to take a liking to Mollie, which he does. They eventually marry and have children. The Osage tribe becomes wealthy from the oil and Mollie and Ernest lead a very comfortable life.

People start dying, and Hale is behind a plot to steal the wealth from the Osage people, pulling his nephew into the murders.

The FBI comes to town to investigate. Greedy, but somewhat naïve Ernest finds himself in the middle.

He loves Mollie deeply, but he also loves money and the things it can provide.

Burkhart makes for an interesting character study, as his greed influences his actions.

Gladstone is terrific as the smarter one in the marriage. Suffering from diabetes, she is one of the first in the country to take insulin, the new wonder drug.

Justice is served as the FBI comes to Fairfax and gathers enough evidence to convict Hale.

The movie ends with a clever Where are they now? final scene.

Scorsese uses a number of awesome overhead shots

contrasted to closeups of authentic Osage Indians who play themselves with pride and dignity.



THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

**NETFLIX**

**THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER**

\*\*\*\*

This terrific 8-part series is about a brother and sister who sell their souls to become wealthy leaders in the pharmaceutical industry.

Bruce Greenwood plays Roderick Usher, a greedy, powerful man who sees his grown children eliminated as their company develops a drug that eliminates pain, but causes much pain to his family along the way.

The story centers around Edgar Allen Poe's works, with many references to his titles, quotes, and plots, making for a fascinating plotline.

# Real Estate Transactions

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ADDRESS	SELLERS
4 Cote Ct	Palleschi, Donald and Palleschi, Jeanine A
5 Weymouth Ln	Obrien 3rd, Kenneth E
38 Leisure Way	Masse, Alfred and Masse, Anna R
45 Ginger Trl	Lavoie, Deborah H
80 Wood Cove Dr	Marsocci, Susan J and Upright, Deborah J
180 Twin Brook Ln	Hanlon, Jeremi and Hanlon, Jessica
543 Washington St	Morin, Normand J
1740 Noosneck Hill Rd Lot 21	Elkins, Holly B

BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
Benevides, Robin T	10/6	\$620,000
Asiedu, Emmanuel	10/4	\$850,000
Ferria, Edmund and Ferria, Susan	10/2	\$190,000
Shorrock Jr, Peter and Shorrock, Jessica	10/5	\$550,000
Nguyen, Kathleen and Chung, Thy	10/2	\$899,900
Varone, Frederick A and Varone, Brittany L	10/6	\$549,900
Pimentel, Diliana R	10/4	\$395,000
Vitalo, Elisa M	10/4	\$316,000

**Johnston**

ADDRESS	SELLERS
4 Prescott Ave	Kollie, Francis
5 Pleasant View Ave	Scott, Brian D and Scott, Kathy B
12 Grant St	Worster Eileen R Est and Worster, Edward
34 Countryside Dr	Watkins, Jason R
58 Merino St	Metals Recycling LLC

BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
Harnois, Ryan M	10/5	\$409,000
Perez-Rosa, Fermin A and Valdez-Deperez, Vicenta	10/6	\$290,000
Worster, Kimberly	10/6	\$17,000
Vecchione, Vincent L	10/6	\$435,000
Narducci, Michael P and Narducci, Michelle A	10/5	\$300,000

**Warwick**

ADDRESS	SELLERS
3 Dixie Ave	Warhurst, Matthew R
41 Morse Ave	Brown Christopher T Est and Brown, Lawrence J
60 Canonchet Ave	Cavanagh, Roland R and Cavanagh, Janet M
62 Glenwood Dr	Johnson, Bradley E
74 Edgewater Dr Lot 79	June A Corcoran Irit and Corcoran, Mary
74 Edgewater Dr Lot 250	June A Corcoran Irit and Corcoran, Mary
74 Edgewater Dr Lot 249	June A Corcoran Irit and Corcoran, Mary
74 Edgewater Dr Lot 80	June A Corcoran Irit and Corcoran, Mary
74 Winslow Ave	Matthews, Christopher
91 Melrose Ave Lot 263	Davis, Wendy A
91 Melrose Ave Lot 264	Davis, Wendy A
95 Newfield Ave	Re-Up Mgmt LLC
118 Edmond Dr	Morales, Deanna
134 Monroe St Lot 170	Ramos, Daisy
134 Monroe St Lot 171	Ramos, Daisy
243 Atlantic Ave	Bottom Line Re Solutions
683 Orleans Ct Lot 683	Murray Jr, Edmund and Murray, Nancy
762 Williamsburg Cir Lot 762	Wetzel, Wilbur R

BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
Rodrigues, Antonio M and Rodrigues, Margarida B	10/4	\$450,000
Estrada, Lorena	10/3	\$385,000
Morales, Joanne	10/2	\$398,000
Hopkins, Derick	10/2	\$315,000
Wiernasz, Christian	10/3	\$413,000
Wiernasz, Christian	10/3	\$413,000
Wiernasz, Christian	10/3	\$413,000
Wiernasz, Christian	10/3	\$413,000
Marcouiller, Lucas	10/2	\$405,000
Morin, Daniel R and Sabatino, Carla N	10/3	\$335,000
Morin, Daniel R and Sabatino, Carla N	10/3	\$335,000
Hartman, Corey and Hartman, Jeanna	10/3	\$345,000
Beamon, Alix and Rice, Shane	10/3	\$525,000
Ferrante, Vincenzina	10/3	\$279,900
Ferrante, Vincenzina	10/3	\$279,900
Croteau, Heather	10/3	\$394,500
Abbott, Mary A and Busko, Patricia E	10/3	\$350,000
Murray Jr, Edmund F and Murray, Nancy A	10/3	\$325,000

**Cranston**

ADDRESS	SELLERS
12 Hybrid Dr	Takian, John K and Pjojian, Debra L
17 Hervey St	Daniel, Kevin V
19 Urbana St	Santos Irit and Renzulli, Elizabeth L
26 Brookwood Rd Lot 285	Kaimanes Home Improvement
26 Brookwood Rd Lot 284	Kaimanes Home Improvement
27 Pheasant Hill Ln	Thomas, Paul and Thomas, Jane F
72 Bateman Ave	Sepe, Michael J and Martino Sepe, Valerie L
85 Coldbrook Dr	Calise Arleen S Est and Frechette, James R
90 Ellen Ln	Daponte, Jill N
91 Legion Way	Cassino Rlty LLC
96 Midvale Ave	Bransfield, Eric T and Pacheco, Danielle
131 Chandler Ave Lot 13-8	Simmonds, Patrick J
131 Chandler Ave Lot 8-12	Simmonds, Patrick J
131 Chandler Ave Lot 14-8	Simmonds, Patrick J
160 Woodbine St	Sarco, Dean and Sarco, Anne
252 Mayfield Ave Lot B	Lake Life LLC
1320 Elmwood Ave	Ocean State Rlty & Rehab
1703 Cranston St	Cranston Knightsville Re

BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
Gustafson, Alexandra D and Izzo, Caroline M	10/3	\$483,000
Dispirito, Conor	10/4	\$361,500
Vessella, Thomas and Parrillo, Matthew W	10/2	\$400,000
A A & E Prop LLC	10/2	\$335,000
A A & E Prop LLC	10/2	\$335,000
Bautista, Richard A and Bautista, Nancy	10/4	\$655,000
Mallozzi, Edward J and Mallozzi, Dannah M	10/2	\$90,000
Shaw, Michael J and Shaw, Nicole B	10/4	\$535,000
Fay, Brian and Costa, Jennifer	10/4	\$450,000
Laura B Napolitano RET	10/4	\$445,000
Magaji, Vinayaka	10/2	\$443,500
Lowe, Jessica L and Lowe Jr, Michael J	10/3	\$405,000
Lowe, Jessica L and Lowe Jr, Michael J	10/3	\$405,000
Lowe, Jessica L and Lowe Jr, Michael J	10/3	\$405,000
Oladosu, Kehinde	10/2	\$525,000
Cruz Jr, Robert S	10/2	\$300,000
Kyltiff Invest & Consulti	10/4	\$340,000
1703 Cranston Street LLC	10/2	\$1,300,000

**West Greenwich**

ADDRESS	SELLERS
55 Linden Ln	Desent, Nash S and Desent, Suzanne C
333 Victory Hwy	Morissette, Nanci P and Morissette, Arthur D

BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
Leddy, Lindsay and Dandurand, Michael	10/2	\$765,000
Vanikiotis, John	10/4	\$215,000

**West Warwick**

ADDRESS	SELLERS
6 Fawn Ln	Fagan, Barbara M
23 Fountain St	Drowne, Austin
29 Spring St	Degen LLC
59 E Main St	Belchikoo LLC
119 Monterey Dr	Lattenist, Younes and Delamrquette, Anne

BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
Shrank, Aaron M	10/6	\$376,000
Cole, Michael	10/5	\$340,000
Oresman, Kelsi-Mariah	10/10	\$360,000
Liu, Yao and Chen, Chunhua	10/6	\$430,000
Allen, Christopher and Allen, Michelle	10/3	\$415,000

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**THE DOC AND HIS PATIENT:** Doctor Juan García, played by José Luis Suazo, and patient, played by Andersson Tejada in the Teatro ECAS production of "Terapia" during one of the psychotherapy sessions. (Photo provided by Teatro ECAS/Photographer Bay McCulloch)

# Latino theater has new hi-tech comfortable home

By IDA ZECCO

In 1997, a Providence public high school teacher Nancy Patiño convened a group of Latino artists in Providence to offer youth after-school programming where they could explore their own cultures. This was the beginning of the Educational Center of Arts and Science (ECAS).

Francis Parra led the theater program, which became Teatro ECAS, an independent 501c3 arts nonprofit. Since then, Teatro ECAS has been the leading Latino theater in New England, presenting classical and contemporary plays in Spanish, training a generation of actors, and offering educational programming for all ages. Teatro ECAS has also staged plays in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Cuba. Today, Teatro ECAS is the only Latino repertory theater in New England.

Teatro ECAS is one of only a handful of theaters in the country producing Spanish language theater full-time. In addition to the start of the new season, Teatro ECAS was recently announced as a grant recipient of The National Latinx Theatre Initiative, based in Los Angeles. The National Latinx Theater Initiative is a new re-granting program that will boost the national profile of Latinx theater companies across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, disperse funds needed to pursue greater financial stability and nurture artistic voices in a post-pandemic landscape. Teatro ECAS was the only theater (out of 52 awarded) from New England!

ECAS Theater operates a 90-seat theater and community arts space located at 679 Valley Street, Providence. The theater underwent a \$1.2 million renovation back in April after moving from its previous location on Parkis Avenue in Providence. The theater's new lo-

cation occupies a comfortable black box space, unhindered sight lines, comfortable seating and a technical sound and lighting grid that must be the envy of most black box theaters in New England. Supertitles are displayed upstage, above the action of the play. Although I speak fluent Italian and could follow most of the Spanish dialogue, I was grateful for the English supertitles that provided the audience a complete and enjoyable understanding of the play's context. Parking is limited. The theater is handicap accessible.

In addition to their production season, Teatro ECAS provides acting, singing and dancing classes in Spanish for children ages seven through sixteen, along with workshops and summer camps.

Teatro ECAS is a diamond within Rhode Island's multi-cultural inhabitants. This gem highlights an inclusive and culturally diverse environment where language, culture, and artistic expressions can flourish, entertain, educate, excite and inspire.

**Who is the Fool?**  
Teatro ECAS Presents  
"Terapia" (Therapy)

Teatro ECAS presents the first show of their 26th Season. Terapia (Therapy) a comedy in three, "therapeutic sessions" including a diagnosis by Argentine playwright, Martín Giner, and directed by Francis Parra, ECAS Artistic Director. The premise of the play is to pose the question as to Who is the Fool - The doctor or the patient?

The play opens on a nearly bare stage. One center stage desk with minimal props, a wastepaper basket, far stage-left, and two chairs in front of the desk. There are minimal light and sound queues, and Parra's adept direction is non-intrusive to the play's core focus which is the di-

ologue - the centerpiece of the play. The temptation for an over-the-top, farcical production seems obvious. There are few moments of uninterrupted laughter in this production. However, Parra avoids the "schtick" and creates authentic characters of both doctor and patient. Thus, allowing us to connect ourselves with them by sharing our own human folly. It is the authenticity of the situation that warrants laughter.

As comical as it is, this is a challenging script for two actors. Doctor Juan García, played by Jose Luis Suazo, and patient, played by Andersson Tejada are point perfect in their roles. They engage in a fascinating dialogue with both intelligence and humor as they unravel topics such as family miscommunication, social conditioning, hypocrisy, loneliness, sexuality, and the value of psychoanalysis. Their sessions volley between absurdity and reality, leading the audience to the brink in raucous delight, only to pull us back into careful reflection of our own perceptions. Our reality may not always be what it seems.

This is a beautiful play, a story well told, well directed and flawlessly acted. Bravo to ECAS for mounting Martin Griner's hilariously insightful play. Don't miss it - last chance is this weekend!

Presented by: Teatro ECAS  
Location: 679 Valley Street, Providence, 02908  
Time: 7:00 - 8:30 PM  
This production runs 1.5 hours without intermission.  
Performance Dates: 10/19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28 & 29  
Price: Starting at \$30  
Box Office: 401-421-3227 or www.teatroecas.org (subscriptions available)

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# ANIMAL



By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Rhode Home Rescue

## Jackie

This beautiful girl is in search of a foster or forever home! Jackie is a two year old mixed breed who loves people and children. She is currently in a home with two other dogs, one she gets along with but the smaller dog she does not. So, if you have another dog the rescue would require a meet and greet. If you currently do not have any other pets, then maybe Jackie is the girl for you! She has a birth defect in one of her eyes but that hasn't stopped her from being a playful, happy girl! Please contact Rhode Home Rescue if you'd like more information about Jackie. Email: [Rhodehomerescue@gmail.com](mailto:Rhodehomerescue@gmail.com)

**Jackie can't wait to share her heart with you!**

If you are thinking of adopting or know of an animal in need, please contact Karen directly at

[animaltalk1920@gmail.com](mailto:animaltalk1920@gmail.com)



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AT DOGTOPIA WARWICK  
30 Jefferson Blvd, Warwick

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# My "go to" restaurants

By DON FOWLER

Lately I have been scratching more and more restaurants off my "go to" list.

Poor service, food quality, preparation and amount, and large increases in price have been the main reasons.

I hear it more and more at social gatherings and on social media, and I've experienced it too many times.

Joyce and I have settled on three restaurants in Cranston and Warwick that we feel have maintained their standards and we can count on to get what we expect.

**TWIN OAKS** continues to be our favorite "go to" restaurant when we want a good drink and meal. We enjoy relaxing in the Founders room, overlooking Spectacle Pond and watching the ducks and geese.

We enjoy the waiters and busboys, who are always upbeat and seem to be enjoying their jobs.

Joyce likes to go on Thursday for the veal cacciatore, while I enjoy

Friday for the fried fish that hangs over the edge of the plate. Special occasions call for baked stuffed shrimp.

The menu is extensive enough to provide whatever your interests are on a given day. And not all dinners are that expensive. The broiled sirloin with potato and vegetable or pasta is reasonably priced, as are most of the Italian dinner choices.

And it is not "So crowded that nobody goes there anymore."

**GOVERNOR FRANCIS INN**, which we used to refer to as the Warwick Senior Center, seems to be attracting more younger folks (or are we just getting older) and families these days with their home cooked and "smaller appetite" selections.

I find their 1/2 order of ribs to be better than many rib houses. Joyce loves the Governor Burger, knowing that rare means RARE.

I love the soups, especially the seafood chowder, while Joyce hogs the fresh breadbasket.

One time the chef overcooked my stuffed sole. Back to the kitchen it went, with a fresh plate arriving a few minutes later with two extra pieces.

And then there's those incredible carrots and turnips.

**LEMONGRASS** is our family and personal "go to" restaurant for either take-out or dine-in once a week.

We have literally gone through the menu, with Joyce favoring the shrimp dishes, while I enjoy the Thai offerings. My son drives up from Connecticut for his favorite Crispy Pork.

All our meals begin with Nim Chow.

Wang has added a robot that helps the friendly staff carry the meals to the table.

Take out meals are ready in ten minutes, just the time it takes me to get there and return home with piping hot dinners.



### ■ Author

(Continued from page 16)

Just three years ago a mitochondrial condition put Knight into a wheelchair. At the time he was told that he would never walk again. His parents, Kathleen and Steven Wolfendon, looked for a new home to accommodate a wheelchair and did everything else they could to provide for their son in a troubling time.

"It's a miracle," his mother said. "They told us he wouldn't be able to do anything like this. They told us by 20 he would be wheelchair bound, and he was. At 20 he was in a chair, and I still didn't think he'd get out of it. I was so proud of him when he wrote that first book. They said he couldn't do any of this and he's done it all."

Seeing Knight walk into a room, you'd never guess that he spent the last three years in a wheelchair or that it's been only two months since he got out of it. What secret does he have that, after three years in a chair and several doctors telling him he would never walk again, got him to this point? — Hard work.

He was tired of being told by doctors that he wouldn't walk again. After all, they'd already been wrong about so many of the things they said he would never be able to do. At one point it was believed he'd never talk, but after the first time he had surgery on his brain as a child he looked at his parents from his hospital bed and uttered the word "home." His mother said the entire room broke down crying.

Knight, taking his fate into his own hands, decided it was time to ignore the medical opinion that his legs were now just for show and to hire a personal trainer to help him at least try to walk again.

"Our friends at the site of the Warwick Toy and Comic Palooza (Oct. 1) at the Knights of Columbus saw him stand up and walk out of the car and everyone was like 'what is happening?'" Kathleen said. "Two months ago, that's how recently he was in the chair. He's constantly breaking through what people think he can do."

Knight is proud of his ability to adapt and to not let things stop him from achieving goals he sets his mind towards. Whether it be learning to walk again or self publishing his own line of books, little seems to be able to get in between Knight and his dreams.

It all started years before with journaling. As a young man dealing with a variety of health complications he

saw a therapist. The idea of keeping a journal to help him keep his thoughts and feelings clear came up.

"It was when I was ten," Knight recalled. "I had a psych therapist who wanted me to journal. I ended up getting hooked on writing. At the time I couldn't verbally talk too well, so everything had to be written down or typed up. After that I started making stories. They started out as three page stories then they went up to ten pages, fifteen pages and now I'm up to full chapter books."

Full chapter books, picture books and short children's books are all part of Knight's current library, but he plans to expand from there.

"They're for children, special needs adults, people with short attention spans, and I even do picture books for kids who can't read yet," he elaborated. "I'm trying to expand into the young adult age brackets. Like I said, being autistic and having the medical issues I have gives me a different perspective on what issues I deal with. A lot of my books are realistic fiction based on real life events that I've altered either in sequence or in details and wording to make them a little more age appropriate."

With uplifting stories like "Miracle of Friendship," a tale of overcoming bullying through the power of friendship and respect, to "Tale of a Hero," the story of a young boy in foster care believing his life won't amount to more before becoming a legend, Knight's tales all have an inspiring and uplifting element that reflect his own struggle to make his life better. These stories all hold a piece of himself in them, and it's those pieces of determination, hope and spirit that he hopes to share with his readers to inspire them.

"They're not just about challenges that people dealing with medical problems might face, but also about problems that any child might face," Knight said. "They're about problems like bullying, making friends and some of them are fun too. I have one about going on an arctic adventure. One is about going into the woods and meeting an eagle, even a bobcat helping a deer find his mom was one story."

We all face a variety of struggles in life, and Knight has faced more than most, but his sheer determination to grow and thrive proves that we don't have to remain bound by other's opinions of us. Knight hopes to share the message that with enough hard work and faith we can all make our dreams a reality.



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## Preserving Pop Culture



**By Travis Landry**  
Auctioneer & Specialist  
Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers  
Cranston, RI

Some of you middle-aged folks may see the high prices toys, comics, and trading cards you played with in the 70's, 80's, and even 90's sells for at auction and cringe knowing you once owned, and tossed, the very toys collectors go wild for today. Basically, you've realized you likely threw out a small fortune and have come to regret it. That's understandable. If you could go back in time, would you have preserved your toys instead of playing with them? Would your childhood-self give up the joy of tearing open a new toy to save it as an investment in your adult future? Probably not! The reality is there are no time machines and no do-overs for you – but, if you've got kids (or even grandkids) there is still time for them. Maybe you're thinking some of the toys they're playing with today will be worth something someday, and you're probably right. What should you do?

So, obviously you don't want to take away all your kids' beloved toys like some kind of cruel monster, but someone with an eye on popular culture might recognize a strong and likely collectible when it comes around. My advice? Buy two: one for playing, one for preserving. It takes money to make money, so the initial investment of an extra action figure or playset specifically to keep it in pristine condition negates the risk of regret later on! Plus, you still get the



pleasure of watching your kids enjoy their toys. Win, Win!

Once you have your extra toy, comic, video game, trading card or whatever... what should you do with it? First of all – save everything! If it was shipped in a special box, save it. If you have a receipt, save it. I can't tell you how many times I've seen the value of a collectible skyrocket because it has all the original packaging and documentation of its purchase. It might seem random, but 30 years from now, people will get all nostalgic looking at receipts from stores long since out of business – it adds to the collectability!

Next, let's talk about storage. Moisture is your enemy. Sunlight is your enemy. Humidity is your enemy. Critters are your enemy. So many variables can destroy cardboard packaging, so you must protect your investments. Basements are not safe, garages are not safe, and attics are not



safe unless you store these items in air-tight, water-tight, uv-resistant, and nibble proof containers. While you're at it, maybe you want to make those containers childproof, too – just in case your little one stumbles across them!

One last bit of advice I have is labeling your bins so anyone who finds them in the future knows what they are. Often times, we get calls from kids and grandkids of collectors who have no idea what their parents have stuffed in storage. Some sort of written documentation, whether it be sharpie on the storage bins or a save digital file, can make the sorting process so much easier on them if you're no longer there to guide them.

If you ever have any questions about your toy collections, drop me an email at [Travis@BruneauandCo.com](mailto:Travis@BruneauandCo.com) – I'm happy to help!

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# Is it the Right Time to Sell Your Home?

By Jennifer Cosgrove O'Leary

**W**ith the median selling price of a single-family home in Rhode Island currently at \$450,000, now may be the perfect time for you to sell your home. But the question we often hear from people thinking of selling their home is – “where will I live next?” And it is a good question.

By selling now, you will likely make a record profit. But if you must put that profit into a new home, you may have to spend even more and that may not be what you are looking to do. The goal in real estate is to buy low and sell high, which is difficult in this market as prices are above average throughout much of Rhode Island.

### Here are 3 tips to think about:

**Tip 1:** Consider moving to an area of Rhode Island that is considered a “fringe market” - an area outside of a high-cost area that has room for growth. Rhode Island has several of those areas, where there are still opportunities to make a strategic investment in a home. Consider having a conversation with your real estate agent to see if any of these areas match your needs.

**Tip 2:** Consider a fixer upper, or alternatively, a distressed house – a house that has title issues or is bank owned. My husband and I bought our home in East Greenwich in 2020, and it was a fixer upper! We monitored it for several months, and when we noticed it reached the desired price, we seized the opportunity to sell our current home at a substantial profit. This allowed us to successfully execute the “sell high and buy low” strategy.

**Tip 3:** Flexibility. If you can be flexible, consider renting for a little while. This can be tricky for those with children and rents are high - the average rent for a 2 bedroom apartment in Rhode Island is \$2,170 right now - but renting can be a good option for those thinking of trying out a new area or downsizing. Important things to

consider: Will you like this area? Do you need more space or does smaller work better for you? Renting can give you insights you won't get from driving through a town or neighborhood.

### What Should You Keep in Mind Before you Decide?

There are some things to keep in mind as you consider selling. Is now a good time for your family to move? Do you have enough equity in your house? When was the last time you refinanced? Are you close to retirement? If so, selling when the market is high could really help grow your nest egg and give you more options when you actually do retire. Your real estate agent can help you with some of these questions.

Do your research. Get advice from a real estate agent who understands you and knows your market. Understand the value of your home. Do you have to fix it up first or is it ready to sell now? Having a clear understanding of your options is key to making a smart decision. Considering whether to sell your house can be an emotional decision, but expert advice can help.

And remember the only perfect time to sell, is the time that is right for you.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Jennifer Cosgrove O'Leary is one of the top 10 Realtors® (as certified by Real Trends) in the state of Rhode Island and the Co-Owner/Broker of Greenwich Bay Brokers. She is the only Certified Divorce Real Estate agent in the state. Jennifer leverages her years of interior design experience, as well as her degree in occupational therapy to provide guidance on the critical aesthetic and ease of use elements that are part of the home buying and selling process.

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# DIY projects that can conserve energy around the house

**METRO**  
Home renovation projects can pay numerous dividends. Renovations can have a positive effect on resale value, make homes more livable for residents and, in some ways, make homes more affordable.

Renovation projects that aim to conserve energy can save homeowners substantial amounts of money. Such projects don't often require considerable effort or even sizable financial investments, which can make homeowners skeptical as to just how much they can save after completing the project. But the scale of a project may have little to do with how much homeowners will save. For example, the U.S. Department of Energy notes that a relatively effortless task like turning back a thermostat between 7° and 10° F for eight hours per day can save homeowners as much as \$83 per year. A more labor-intensive task like planting shade trees saves homeowners an average of between \$35 and \$119 per year.

When looking for ways to conserve energy around the house and save money, homeowners need not necessarily commit to expensive projects. The DOE notes that the following are some energy-saving projects and details what homeowners can expect to save after completing them. While each individual project may not result in jaw-dropping savings, homeowners who follow many of these recommendations may end up saving more than \$1,000 per year.

## Project: Install exterior low-e storm windows.

What is it? Low-e windows reflect infrared heat back into a home. Such windows are coated with an ultra-thin layer of metal that improves the window's insulation ability.

How much can I save? Homeowners who install low-e windows can save between 12 and 33 percent on their annual heating and cooling costs.

## Project: Seal uncontrolled air leaks.

What is it? Air leaks let cool air in during winter and warm air in during summer. Caulking, sealing and weather stripping all cracks and large openings can cut back on air leaks that are costing you money. The DOE recommends hiring a contractor to seal any leaks on heating and cooling ducts.

How much can I save? Homeowners who seal uncontrolled air leaks can save between 10 and 20 percent on their annual heating and cooling bills.

## Project: Plant shade trees.

What is it? If you plant a deciduous tree between six and eight feet tall near your home, it will begin to shade your



windows within a year of being planted. Depending on the species of the tree and the home, the shade tree will begin shading the roof within five to 10 years. The DOE notes that shading is the most cost-effective way to reduce air conditioning costs.

How much can I save? Properly planted shade trees can reduce air conditioning costs by anywhere from 15 to 50 percent.

## Project: Insulate the water heater tank

What is it? New water tanks are likely already insulated. But homeowners with older hot water tanks can insulate their tanks with a water heater insulating blanket kit.

How much can I save? Insulating a water heater tank can save homeowners as much as 16 percent on their annual water heating bills.

Even the smallest DIY projects can produce big savings. More information about energy-saving home improvement projects can be found at [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov).

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