

## Amazon inks new tax deal with Johnston

### Mega retailer will now pay town \$618K less after construction delays

By RORY SCHULER

Since Amazon has not yet opened for business in Johnston, the mega-retailer has invoked a costly construction clause in its contract with the town.

Over the past few months, the company successfully negotiated a deal to pay the town \$1.5 million less than initially promised (though the town's financial advisors say the real deficit's more like \$618,000 in fiscal terms).

On Monday night, Johnston Town Council unanimously approved a revised tax agreement with Amazon. "There is a construction clause that indicates if the certificate of occupancy is not issued by Jan. 1, 2024, Amazon will pay a pro-rated share, based on percentage of construction completed," Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr. told the council Tuesday.

AMAZON - PAGE 10



## We all got mooned

**STARING AT THE SUN:** Sun-gazers gathered at the Marion J. Mohr Public Library, at right, and Johnston Senior Center, above, on Monday afternoon to cover their eyes with cardboard and stare at a slowly shrinking orange sphere. Backyard astronomer Steve Massarone helped library-goers view the rare eclipse through a telescope and a pair of special glasses. For more photos from the eclipse viewing parties, turn to Page 9. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



# Déjà 42: Democrat's District 42 primary a rerun from 2022

By RAYMOND BACCARI  
Special to the Sun Rise

Voters in Rhode Island House District 42, which contains parts of Johnston and Cranston, will likely see a 2022 Democratic primary rematch this September.

All three candidates who ran last election, state Rep. Edward Cardillo Jr., Dennis Cardillo Jr., a production supervisor for a company in the medical in-

dustry and nephew of the current state representative, and Kelsey Coletta, a licensed independent clinical social worker and licensed substance abuse counselor, have confirmed they are running again for the seat.

"My last time, since that was my first time running, I really wanted to meet every single individual face-to-face as much as I could," Dennis Cardillo Jr. said when asked what takeaways he took from his last campaign that he's

implementing this time. "I walked every single street in the entire community. I pulled out plat maps and I set a goal of 200 homes per day, and I was alternating every other day. This time around - I think I really would like to focus more [on] certain areas of the community that obviously need help the most and focus on the major points. Really just trying to get the message through of community, exactly how much I can help, how much of I can be

of service, and that I'm here 100% with the community."

Coletta, who came within 83 votes of winning last year's primary, plans to get an earlier start this election cycle.

She said, "I think what did me in last time was, I didn't fully decide until it was kind of late. So, I think what did me in was just a late start, so I've learned to start earlier."

D42 RACE - PAGE 8



Kelsey Coletta



Dennis Cardillo Jr.



Rep. Edward Cardillo Jr.

# Senior 'Spotlite'



**WITH HEART:** This week's JSC Spotlight shines on Rebecca Rontondo. (Photo courtesy Richard J. DelFino Jr.)

## Time is limited, but the JSC has an infinite supply of heart

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

**V**olunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart.

The Johnston Senior Center Spotlight this week shines on Rebecca Rontondo, a volunteer here at the Center who truly has a big heart, and a big smile, that brightens the lives of many of the members she serves here at the JSC.

When Rebecca became age eligible, she became a member here at the Johnston Senior Center. Prior to that time, she would bring her mother, who enjoyed playing cards and socializing here at the Center, which was just down the street from the family home.

Just a few days before her first birthday, Rebecca lost her father, and her mother worked hard to raise her only child in the family home, the same home in which she continues to reside today.

As a young girl, she worked various jobs, and recalls staffing an information booth outside Johnston Town Hall at 14 years old. She later graduated from Johnston High School and then Bryant University. She then started a long career, working for the US Department of Justice, at the office of the US Attorney, a job she enjoyed for over 33 years, before retiring.

Throughout her life, Rebecca has enjoyed taking great vacations, around the world. She has experienced the customs

and cultures of West Africa, Alaska, Portugal, Italy, and on and on. She enjoys exercise of all kind, including swimming year-round, and various other activities.

One interesting fact that Rebecca is very proud of was her involvement in advocating for bus service up Hartford Avenue. Working in the city, she new the value of public transportation. She mobilized a group of women who were counting on RIPTA to be transported into the city.

Back then, the buses ran to Killingly Street only. Through her time and effort, attending many hearings, and soliciting support from elected officials, they were able to gain extended service that eventually extended up Hartford Avenue into Scituate. She rode the bus for about 24 years.

Rebecca enjoys retirement, still traveling, but most of all helping people. She has only been here at the JSC, having answered our solicitation for volunteers, since this past January. She, like many of our volunteers, works tirelessly on behalf of our members. Rebecca is a shining example of giving back to the community, and enjoying the gratitude of making a difference in the life of others.

**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 Spotlight," submitted by the senior center.

# JHS Panther of the Week



**POTW:** This week's Panther of the Week is Sebastiana "Sebby" Lux. Sebby is a sophomore at JHS and is an honor roll student. She is also the sophomore representative for the Sophomore Class for the School Improvement Team and a member of the Girls Volleyball Team. Sebby recently represented Johnston High at the Poetry Out Loud Competition at the Odeum Theater. (Photo submitted by Matt Velino, Johnston High School Principal)

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



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# SUN RISE SCOOPS

## April 13 Gridiron Girls Camp

The First Gridiron Girls Camp in RI will be offered on Saturday, April 13, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Johnston High School, 345 Cherry Hill Road, Johnston. Dr. Jennifer Welter, the first woman to have coached in the NFL with the Arizona Cardinals football team, will be hosting her famous all girls football camp. This is an opportunity to explore a new avenue in sports for our young ladies. It is free! Participants must register! Be a part of history! Registration at: [www.jenwelter.com](http://www.jenwelter.com) or text/call Randy Phillips at 401-339-8511, coach1randy@gmail.com with any questions.

## April 13 Scituate History Program

The Hope Historical Society is hosting an open forum/Scituate and Memorabilia and Artifacts Program on Saturday, April 13, at 2 p.m., at the Howland Barn, 35 Ryefield Road, Hope. The Hope Historical Society invites the community to participate in the "Scituate Memorabilia and Artifacts" meeting celebrating all things Scituate. HHS invites members and guests to display, discuss, and share their memorabilia and arti-

facts. The HHS will also provide a preview of the Scituate Historic Signage Project; "The Scituate Heritage Trail". Intrigued by the topic but cannot attend "Scituate Memorabilia and Artifacts"? You can still share by posting a picture and/or story on our Facebook page "Hope Historical Society, Hope, RI". Pictures and stories must be posted at least 48 hours before the meeting to be included in the Open Forum. Not a Facebook user? Pictures or stories can be emailed to the HHS at [hopehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com](mailto:hopehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com).

## April 14 Lost Villages Tour

Author Ray Wolf will lead a luxury bus tour featuring the Lost Village of Rockland (the title of his newest book), which will focus on more than 25 points of interest. Wolf has decided this will be his last year of giving bus tours, and he said this may be your last chance to join a tour. The 90-minute tours will leave rain or shine from Hope School Playground, 391 North Road (Route 116), in Hope, on Sunday, April 14. Wolf planned at least two tours (and as of earlier this week, one was sold out and only a few seats remained for the second). Call 401-821-0016 or email [thewolf@cox.net](mailto:thewolf@cox.net) to book a seat. Seats are \$59 per person, in advance. No food or drinks are allowed on the bus (bottled water only). For more information, go to [www.raywolfbooks.com](http://www.raywolfbooks.com) and go to "TOURS."

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## SCOOP OF THE WEEK

# 'Imagine not having the supplies to wipe down your counters or soap to wash your dishes'

By RORY SCHULER

One Johnston teenager's trying to lend a little sparkle to local families in need.

Derek La Fazia Jr., 16, "a lifelong resident of Johnston and a sophomore at La Salle Academy in Providence" has launched the La Fazia Spring Cleaning Product Drive, benefiting Crossroads Rhode Island.

"I belong to the LSA honors program, scholars program, future innovative thinkers club and the chess club. I'm also the director of my podcast club," La Fazia wrote. "I play football and baseball

for my school and my town. While attending Thornton elementary and Ferri middle school here in Johnston I became extremely involved in numerous food and clothing drives for my town."

La Fazia was also an active Boy Scouts for five years.

"I have been involved with numerous community activities in and out of school since I can remember," he wrote. "While in scouts I also earned my arrow of light which I was recognized by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse. Even though I am no longer a member of scouting due to my sports schedule, community service is a huge part of my life and my family's."

This year, La Fazia entered into a partnership with Crossroads Rhode Island, and throughout the month of April, he'll host "a spring cleaning product drive, the first of its kind" that he hopes will become "a yearly event."

All proceeds will benefit "our neighbors at Crossroads Rhode Island," according to La Fazia.

"Throughout the month of April I am asking our community to please donate household cleaning items or give a contribution to Crossroads in name of the La Fazia Spring Cleaning Drive," La Fazia explained. "After meeting with Mr. Ric Wild at crossroads I learned that even after an extremely tough journey to get into stable housing people are still very challenged with things that most of us unintentionally

take for granted. Imagine not having the supplies to wipe down your counters or soap to wash your dishes."

La Fazia Spring Cleaning Product Drive will benefit Crossroads Rhode Island.

"Imagine going from being homeless to having a home ... " La Fazia wrote on the flyer for his event. "Going from homelessness to stable housing is a tough journey. Imagine you now have a safe stable home to call your own but no means to maintain it. Please help me in partnership with Crossroads Rhode Island to collect necessary items to help our neighbors."

La Fazia's asking for "general household clean-

ing items," including: all purpose cleaning items, toilet cleaner/brushes, glass cleaner, dish soap, scrub brushes, furniture polish, paper towels, dust pans, brooms, mops."

Anyone interested in contributing items to the event, can drop items off throughout the month of April at La Fazia Auto Body, 920 Plainfield St., Johnston. Business hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

If you have no time to buy items and drop them off, you can help by mailing checks to Derek at La Fazia Auto Body. (Please make checks out to Crossroads Rhode Island and write "La Fazia Spring Cleaning Drive" on the memo line.



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- Free Face Painting 8:30-10:30am
- Free Hair Tinsel 10am-2pm
- Free Photobooth 11am-1pm

**Bring in a SNACK DONATION to help stock a local elementary snack pantry and spin to win a prize**



**COMMUNITY SPARKLE:** Above, derek La Fazia Jr., 16, "a lifelong resident of Johnston and a sophomore at La Salle Academy in Providence" has launched the La Fazia Spring Cleaning Product Drive, benefiting Crossroads Rhode Island. (Submitted photo)

# SUN RISE SCOOPS

## April 20 Fishing Derby

The Johnston Parks & Recreation Department will hold its 2024 Fishing Derby for children ages 4-12 on Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to noon, at Johnston Memorial Park. The derby will include awards for individual achievement and will be free to enter. Johnston Rec reminds participants: "Please remember this derby is meant for the kids ... let the kids do all the fishing. You can help cast and release the fish if necessary."

Derby organizers ask that participants bring bait and fishing poles, and "most of all, have fun!"

## April 20 Cemetery Cleanup

On Saturday, April 20, the Johnston Historical Society will be hosting a cemetery clean-up as part of the statewide "Historical Cemetery Awareness Event." This event is sponsored by the State Historical Cemetery Commission in collaboration with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. The Society will be cleaning Johnston Historical Cemetery #21, the Governor King / Borden Lot. The cemetery is located at the corner of Hartford Avenue and Winfield Road, in the vicinity of Winsor Hill School. The event will run from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Volunteers should take rakes and gloves. For any further information, please contact the Society at 231-3380.

## May 4 St. Rocco 60th

St. Rocco School, 931 Atwood Ave, will host a 60th Anniversary celebration on Saturday, May 4. Mass will be celebrated at 5 p.m. A reception will follow in Café Rocco after Mass. Looking for alumni, family and friends to join us in celebrating 60 years! For more information, call St. Rocco school office at 401-944-2993. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

## May 5 Victorian Tea

The Johnston Historical Society will host a Victorian Tea at 1 p.m. on Sunday, May 5.

The location for the Victorian Tea will be the picturesque Historic Andrew Harris House yard and garden at 216 Morgan Ave., Johnston.

Tickets are \$35 per person, and there's limited seating. All proceeds will benefit the Johnston Historical Society.

Price of admission includes three different "teas," finger sandwiches, mini pastries and much more. For more information and to purchase tickets, contact Anthony Ursillo at 401-764-5901 or e-mail aursillo401@gmail.com.

The event will be held rain or shine (no refunds for tickets). Victorian attire is optional.

## May 11 Historic Yard Sale

On Saturday, May 11, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m., the Johnston Historical Society will host a Yard Sale at the JHS Museum, 101 Putnam Pike, Johnston. Please, no early birds.

## May 14 thru June 5 RI Driver Education Course in ASL

Rhode Island School for the Deaf is taking registration now for RI Driver Education Course and will meet Mon. thru Fri., 3:15 to 5:15 p.m., with one Fri., May 31, at 2:15 - 5:15 p.m., at RI School for the Deaf, 1 Corliss Park, Providence. Course fee is \$100 plus \$10 registration fee = \$110. Total: 33 hours and MUST ATTEND ALL CLASSES! On-line registration is available on the RISD site with a credit card. Make sure to use the class ID #5643. Or register and pay in full through CCRI. Walk-in registration with payment of either cash, check or money order (payable to CCRI) accepted at one of the CWCE (Center for workforce & Community Education) in Lincoln, Providence or Warwick. Textbook required: New "How to Drive: Making Driver Education Fun and Easy!" 15th edition before the first-class meeting. Cost: \$26.95. Available at CCRI Bookstore and AAA. Bookstore does not

accept checks as payment: Cash or credit card only. Refund Policy: Must notify at least 48 hours before the start of class. Attendees are responsible for their own transportation.

## ONGOING SCOOPS

### T-Ball Deadline this week!

Registration is now open for T-ball through the Johnston Recreation Department. Boys and girls ages 5-6 (as of May 1, 2024) are invited to come learn fundamentals, become comfortable with the ball, develop skills and physical dexterity through catching, throwing, swinging the bat, and having fun! Mini games will be played towards the end of the season. Games and practices held in one-hour long sessions on Saturday mornings. The fee is \$70 for individuals and \$50 for each additional sibling. Checks or money orders accepted; made payable to JY-SA. To register, visit johnstonrec.com or visit the Johnston Recreation Office Monday - Friday; 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Youth Track & Field Deadline this week!

Registration is now open now for Youth Track and Field through the Johnston Recreation Department for boys and girls grades 1-8. The fee is \$70 for individuals and \$50 for each additional sibling. Checks or money orders accepted; made payable to JYSA. Volunteers, coaches, and sponsors also needed! To register, visit johnstonrec.com or visit the Johnston Recreation Office Monday - Friday; 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Shoe the Love Through April 27

Shoe the Love Fundraiser is being provided by St. David on-the-Hill Episcopal Church at 200 Meshanticut Valley Parkway, Cranston, is collecting new & used shoes as a fundraiser to support our ministries. There are plastic bins by our doors for drop off until April 27.

### Help OSDRI restock their pantry!

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

Like many people, OSDRI's clients have been faced with some real obstacles these past couple of years. With your help, they pledge to always be there to give a hand up for veterans and their families in need.

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

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Sun. April 14- **TWIN OAKS** Crans. 12:30

Wed. Apr. 17- **CROW'S NEST** Wrrwk 12:30

Fri. April 19- **BLUE ROOM** Crans.

Sun. Apr. 28- **McGovern's** Fall Riv. 1pm

Sat. May 11- **SPORTSMENS CLUB** W.Wrk

Wed. May 15- **Lobster Pot** Bris 1pm.

Thursday May 16- **Tavola** Wrrwk.

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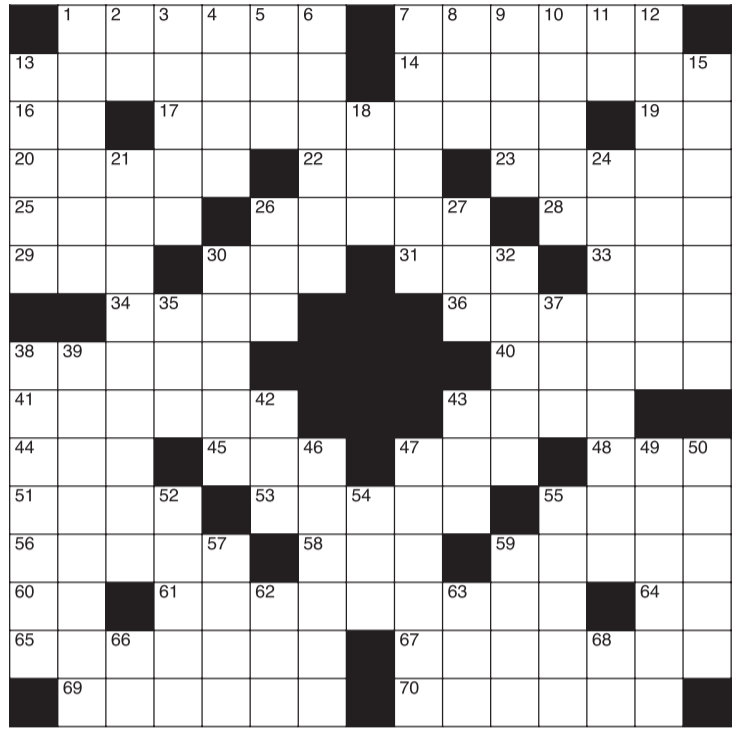
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O	U	T	L	I	N	E	A	N	T	I	B	E	S
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C	A	R	I	T	A	S	R	E	N	A	M	E	S
R	E	L	I	C	S	S	W	A	M	I	S		

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



**CLUES ACROSS**

- Island nation
- Platforms
- Project plan
- French fishing port
- South Dakota
- Oakland's baseball team
- Military policeman
- Ornamental stone
- Garland
- Process that produces ammonia
- Mousses
- Musical notation "dal"
- Fail to win
- Peyton's little brother
- Not near
- Some cars still need it
- Lizard genus
- An idiot (Brit.)
- Postponed
- African country
- Gazes unpleasantly
- In a way, traveled

**CLUES DOWN**

- Ukraine's capital
- Appropriate
- Dash
- Twitch
- Swiss river
- Data file with computer animations
- City in S. Korea
- Particular region
- They have eyes and noses
- Tear
- Large Madagascar lemur
- Not out
- Ornamental saddle covering
- A driver's license is one
- Latin term for charity
- Rechristens
- Objects from an earlier time
- Hindu male religious teachers

**CLUES DOWN**

- Used as a weapon
- Yukon Territory
- Makes a map of
- An established ceremony prescribed by a religion
- Unnilhexium
- Merchant
- Playing the field
- Folk singer DiFranco
- Something to scratch
- Mexican agave
- Equal to one quintillion bytes
- Session
- North American people
- Ranches
- Electroencephalograph
- A type of compound
- Avenue
- High schoolers' test
- A type of meal
- Gradually disappeared
- Ancient Frankish law code

**CLUES DOWN**

- Popular pickup truck
- Buzzing insect
- Deal illegally
- Lying in the same plane
- Obstruct
- Related
- Challenge aggressively
- Nocturnal hoofed animals
- Bird's nests
- Forays
- B. de Mille, filmmaker
- Title of respect
- One-time name of Vietnam
- Self-immolation by fire ritual
- Private school in New York
- Political action committee
- A way to fashion
- Email reply
- "The Great Lake State"

### MISDEMEANOR NO LICENSE CHARGE

Around 9:19 p.m., March 4, Johnston Police Patrolman Patrick Gendreau spotted a vehicle traveling north on Killingly Street with no rear registration plate lights illuminated. He initiated a traffic stop in the parking lot of Cumberland Farms at 663 Killingly St.

Police identified the driver as Paulina Katherine Panciera, 26, of 65 School St., Westerly.

Panciera told police that she had a suspended driver's license. A criminal background check revealed she also had two active bench warrants. Police also discovered it was Panciera's fourth charge (or more) for driving without a license.

She was arrested and transported to Johnston Police Headquarters, where she was processed, photographed and allowed to make a cell phone. A passenger in the vehicle with a valid license drove the vehicle home for Panciera.

Panciera was charged with Operating Vehicle While in Possession of a Suspended License (4th+ subsequent offense, a misdemeanor) and cited for Illumination of Rear Registration Plate.

### DRUG POSSESSION

Around 9 p.m., March 2, Johnston Police responded to Bishop Hill Tavern at 2868 Hartford Ave. following the report of a man "willfully trespassing at the establishment," according to the arrest report.

Police identified the man as Justin A. Marfeo, 32, of 15 Arcadia Ave., Johnston.

"The owner of the business advised us that Mr. Marfeo was in violation of a No Trespass Order and wished for him to be removed from the establishment," Johnston Police Patrolman Richard Xon wrote in the report.

Marfeo was arrested, transported to police headquarters and processed. Police allegedly found a gram of "suspected cocaine" in his sock when he was searched. The substance later tested positive for cocaine.

Marfeo was charged with Possession of an Illegal Substance Level I-V and Willful Trespass.

### STOLEN VEHICLE

Around 10 a.m., March 27, Johnston Police Patrolman Aaron Blanco was at a fixed post at 40 Putnam Ave. when he spotted a U-Haul van traveling west with commercial Arizona plates. A DMV check revealed the vehicle was reported stolen out of the Pawtucket Police Department. Dispatch confirmed the report.

Blanco initiated a "felony motor vehicle stop" with his "department issued firearm at a low-ready."

"I then told the driver ... to step out of the vehicle," Blanco wrote in the arrest report.

Police identified the driver as William C. Johnson, 62, of 162 Broad St., Providence.

Johnson was arrested and charged with Possession of Stolen Vehicle (first offense).

### DUI

Around 5:23 p.m., March 27, Johnston Police Patrolman Richard Xon was at a fixed post along Cherry Hill Road near Cavalcade Boulevard when he spotted a gray Honda Civic pass by at a high rate of speed in a posted 35 mph zone.

He estimated the vehicle's speed around 50 mph and "then observed this vehicle to cross the double yellow line into oncoming traffic and overtake a black Audi sedan on the left-hand side," according to the arrest report.

Xon immediately initiated a traffic stop in the vicinity of 1651 Atwood Ave.

"Prior to the stop, upon approaching the rear bumper of said vehicle, the operator attempted a second time to pass traffic on the left-hand side by crossing the double yellow line," Xon wrote. "It should be noted that while my lights and sirens were activated this vehicle then continued to follow the flow of traffic instead of moving to the side of the road."

According to police, at one point, the driver "came to a complete stop in the middle of two lanes."

"After giving orders to pull over with my cruiser's PA system with no avail, I exited my police cruiser and approached the operator and instructed him to pull over to the side of the road," Xon wrote. "At this point I immediately observed the operator's eyes to be bloodshot and watery."

Police identified the driver as Alex A. Yanes, 28, of 32 Spring St., Johnston.

Xon noted that Yanes' speech was allegedly "slurred/mumbled and (he detected) the smell of an alcoholic odor."

Yanes' allegedly admitted to drinking "two beers."

Police asked the driver to consent to a series of standardized field sobriety tests. He consented.

"At this time, I had probable cause to believe Mr. Yanes was operating his vehicle under the influence of alcohol," Xon wrote. He was arrested and transported to Johnston Police Headquarters for processing. His vehicle was towed from the scene.

According to police, Yanes consented to a chemical breath test. The tests registered results of 0.203% and 0.198%, above the legal limit.

Yanes was charged with DUI of Liquor or Drugs (second offense, 0.15BAC or greater). He also received citations for Speeding (11+ mph in Excess of Posted Speed Limit), Clearance for Overtaking and Laned Roadway Violation.

### WARRANT ARREST

Around 1:30 p.m., March 27, Johnston Police responded to 20 Birchwood Drive in an attempt to locate Anthony P. Cerbo, 45, who resides at that address. According to the arrest report, Cerbo was wanted by East Providence Police for a Violation of a Court Order.

Cerbo answered the door and was placed in hand restraints. He was transported back to Johnston Police Headquarters where he was processed and later turned over to East Providence Police.

**Choose to be Kind**

cherry hill manor nursing & rehabilitation center

## Storm damage?

Johnston Police Department recently posted an EMA update. "If you've been affected by the severe storms and flooding that took place from Dec. 17-19, 2023, and Jan. 9-13, 2024, additional help is here," according to JPD. "The state of Rhode Island and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have opened a Disaster Recovery Center at William Windsor Elementary School, 562 Putnam Pike, Greenville."

The center will be open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed Sundays.

"Those affected need not visit a local center, they can visit any open Disaster Recovery Center," according to JPD. "Other centers available include Coventry Town Hall Annex, 1675 Flat River Road, Coventry, RI 02816, and Curtis Corner Middle School, 301 Curtis Corner Road, Wakefield, RI 02879. There, parties can apply for FEMA assistance, upload documents, and get in-person support."

"Small Business Administration reps are also on-site to guide homeowners, renters, businesses, and nonprofits on low-interest loans. Residents also do not need to visit a Disaster Recovery Center to apply for FEMA assistance, and can register with FEMA in one of the following ways:

Call 1-800-621-3362. Phone lines operate from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. seven days a week. Help is available in most languages. If you use video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA your number for that service; Download the FEMA Mobile App. (also in Spanish), available at Google Play or the Apple App Store. Or Online at DisasterAssistance.gov (also in Spanish)."

**BEACON COMMUNICATIONS**  
 1944 WARWICK AVENUE, WARWICK, RI 02889 | P: 401-732-3100 | F: 401-732-3110

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FULL TIME / PART TIME

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# Opinion

EDITORIAL

## Warwick should have at least one RIAC appointment

As reported in last week's Warwick Beacon (the Sun Rise and Beacon share a publisher), Warwick residents and officials seeking to gain some more insight and accountability into the goings on of the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC) seem to have a bumpier runway ahead of them than previously thought.

Although Governor Dan McKee allegedly told Mayor Frank Picozzi in a previous meeting that he was supportive of letting him appoint one Warwick representative to the seven-member RIAC board, and overall supportive of the proposed legislation that is now before the General Assembly, it appears the Governor has had a sudden change of heart, and now has tried to join RIAC in their opposition of the bill, and in opposition to the changes it proposes.

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

We find this turn of events frustrating, confusing, and more than a little odd, considering the degree of what is being asked for here.

Warwick representatives, including its mayor, and elected leaders at the House and Senate levels of the legislature — heeding requests from constituents who have for years been concerned about and affected by the operations of RIAC and the airport, which is nestled among multiple neighborhoods in Warwick and whose growth has displaced Warwick residents in the recent past — are simply asking for one person with a vested interest in Warwick and its citizens, not the airport's economical wellbeing, to have a seat at the table.

If those opposed, including RIAC and now, apparently, Governor McKee, thought about this issue honestly for five minutes, even from a purely PR perspective, it would be an obvious win-win to allow such an appointment to happen.

One person can do nothing to sway the opinion of a seven-member board. One person cannot upend or cause disruption to any kind of significant degree worthy of making this much of a fuss, and angering so many people. Even the argument used by the Governor's Office, that it somehow violates the state Constitution, falls apart when put under the smallest amount of legal scrutiny.

Considering the governor's sudden about face on this measure, and the halfhearted excuse that was made to justify it, this seems to us to be either a sudden power move by the governor, or he was contacted by someone who has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo, and convinced that he should want to maintain it as well.

Outside of that, we simply can't understand why it's such a big deal to allow one local representative to sit on a board that oversees one of the biggest and most impactful entities within a municipality. In fact, to not allow this seems to be a blatant disregard for the wellbeing of that municipality.

LETTERS

## 'Local boards understand their towns, their comprehensive plans & the local neighborhoods'

It's clear to me that Rhode Island Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Warwick) is trying his best to fix that which isn't broken.

In his recent 15 bill package, addressing housing throughout Rhode Island, he is intent on side-stepping local Zoning Boards and taking State control (H-7062).

The motivation is to develop multi-unit housing in areas where it's never been before. These areas would include business districts and industrial zones.

This is not to mention the possibility of apartment buildings and condominiums, conceivably, in residential areas reserved and designed for single family homes. Imagine, if you will, a second separate house in your next-door neighbor's backyard. With no Zoning Board to intervene, YES it could happen under this plan.

It's obvious there's a shortage of housing throughout Rhode Island and this issue needs to be addressed, but in a thoughtful and precise way. A cookie-cutter approach statewide is no way to cure this problem. What's right for Central Falls or Providence is not what's right for Johnston or Cranston.

This legislation would eliminate the authority of local Boards allowing developers to simply erect multi-unit, or other housing, wherever they want with little or no local permitting. The elimination of local Zoning

Boards or the combining of local Planning and Zoning Boards is a thinly veiled means of putting all control in the hands of the State by statute.

Local boards understand their towns, their comprehensive plans and the local neighborhoods. Most importantly, these boards understand the people who live and work there and are accountable to those same people.

Clearly the Speaker's intent is to override all local control, creating tracts of housing like a runaway train, with no consideration for consistency of local architecture or neighborhood design, but most importantly no consideration for homeowners and businesses.

The Johnston Zoning Board has done a remarkable job of guarding the interests of our town. We dare not put that decision-making responsibility in the hands of the State or remove it by statute. You can imagine how that will turn out.

Let's remember, these are our neighborhoods, this is our Town and we have the right to plan and shape it free of State interference, the way we see fit.

Richard Fascia, of Johnston  
Member of both the Johnston Zoning Board & Johnston Republican Town Committee



## Pete Fontaine always loved the town of Johnston more than any of his editors

Pete Fontaine reported in his own unique way, and was a fabric of many local newspapers. He thought his stories should always be front page news above the fold and wouldn't hesitate to let that be known. His phone calls to me would always start off with, "You're not going to believe this one." And in most cases I didn't.

He was proud of his connections to most RI sports icons and could tell you a personal story about each. I will remember him mostly for one particular day when I was walking out of Johnston's Town Hall, he seemed bothered and frustrated, pulled out his reporters note pad and without hesitation read this to me — a quote from someone a news person I believe — "a newspaper editor will always tell you that the reporters are the heart and soul of any newspaper, until it comes to pay."

I was confused why he would read that particular quote at that particular time, until I learned he had an argument with the newspaper editor, one of many he would speak about often.

Peter was a feisty individual with his own style which was sometimes loved and sometimes not so much. A special man, with a special love for reporting. Rest in Peace my friend and may a pad and pencil never be too far from you.

Just a quick thank you to John Howell and Rory Schuler for the great bio on Pete Fontaine ("PETE FONTAINE: 1942-2024 ... Ink in his veins, heart on his sleeve," April 4 edition). He would be so very proud. BUT, he would have complained his picture should have been above the fold. Great job gentlemen, Johnston appreciates your hard work and dedication.

Arnie Vecchione, of Johnston



<p><b>Publisher</b> John I. Howell Jr. - JohnH@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Advertising Director</b> Donna Zarrella - Donna Z@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Editor</b> Rory Schuler - RoryS@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Sports Editor</b> Alex Sponseller - AlexS@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Advertising Representatives</b> Melissa Miller - MelissaM@rhodybeat.com Linda Nadeau - LindaN@rhodybeat.com Suzanne Wendolowski - SuzanneW@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Classified Advertising</b> Ida Zecco - Classifieds@rhodybeat.com</p>	<p><b>Circulation</b> Leslie Paz</p> <p><b>Credit Manager</b> Lynne Taylor</p> <p><b>Bookkeeping</b> Leslie Paz</p> <p><b>Production Manager</b> Lisa Bourque Yuetner - LisaB@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Production Staff</b> Monique Rice - MoR@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Spotlight Profile Writer</b> Jennifer Coates - JenniferC@rhodybeat.com</p> <p><b>Tel.:</b> 401-732-3100 <b>Fax:</b> 401-732-3110</p>
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# JFD adds new ladder truck to its apparatus arsenal

By RORY SCHULER

Have you seen the Johnston Fire Department's newest investment?

A new Ladder 1 started responding to calls in town last month. The Johnston Sun Rise asked Johnston Fire Chief David A. Iannuccilli about the importance of the JFD's new ladder truck and the role it will play in future fire-fights.

"The new aerial ladder is indispensable to our fire department due to its multiple uses," Iannuccilli said. "Reaching heights and areas that are not accessible to ground based firefighting equipment. It will also greatly enhance our fire departments capabilities in tackling future fires and various rescue efforts in challenging situations."

How badly did the department need a new ladder truck? "The acquisition of the new aerial ladder was urgent due to the old ladder being out of service more often than not, plagued by persistent mechanical issues," Iannuccilli explained. "This new ladder is paramount for maintaining operational readiness and ensuring our fire department can effectively respond to emergencies without delays."

When it was ordered almost exactly two years ago, the new truck's price tag was estimated around \$1.1 million, but in the end cost around \$10,000 more than expected. The town's new ladder truck, approved for purchase in April 2022 by Johnston Town Council, was built by Spartan Fire and Emergency Apparatus.

In 2015, Johnston purchased "a state-of-the-art 2014 Rosenbauer" ladder truck (replacing an aerial ladder purchased in 1991). Now former Johnston Fire Chief Peter J. Lamb said that truck, however, was plagued with mechanical issues.

"They usually last longer than that," Lamb explained in 2022. "This truck has been problematic. We've spent a lot on maintenance. Our ladder truck has been out of service a great deal of the time."

According to Iannuccilli, the department was offered only \$75,000 for the old ladder truck.

"The old truck's still in pretty good shape," the chief said Wednesday morning. "We'll keep it as a back up."



**FORMER OR LADDER:** Johnston spent a little over \$1.1 million on its new Spartan Fire and Emergency Apparatus aerial ladder truck. (Photos courtesy JFD)

## D42 Race

(Continued from page 1)

Reflecting on the last election for this seat, Rep. Cardillo Jr. said via a press release, "Last election I had the honor of being re-elected by the voters of my District to represent them at the Statehouse. I did that by fighting for their interests regardless of political pressure. I will continue that fight after the next election."

Looking at this year's race, Rep. Cardillo Jr. said in the same release that voters in the district "rejected our opponents last election and I have full confidence that they will reject them again," adding, "Their values are not the values of the working men and women of District 42."

On the topic of policy goals the candidates will focus on during their campaigns, Coletta says two are improving infrastructure to avoid future floods, men-

tal health and preventing overdose deaths.

"An overdose death is a policy failure and it's unacceptable," Coletta said. "And one of my goals is to work to make sure that people have access to care that they need to live."

Dennis Cardillo Jr. listed education reform, affordable housing and showing the community how involved he is and how much he can do as the main pillars for his campaign.

He said, "Having a small child myself. My wife and I, we have a toddler. We really want to see a big push towards education, having a child that will be growing up and going into the school system. Affordable housing for the community and especially for the elderly. And just really showing the community just how involved I am, and family-oriented and just keeping everything positive."

Rep. Cardillo Jr.'s statement didn't list the exact policies he would mention to residents at the door, but said, "I will continue to listen to my voters and act on the issues that affect our neighborhood and have no time to engage in the petty political foolishness of our past opponents who were rejected in the last election."

The representative's release added that he will also take his legislative accomplishments "directly to the voters as I did in the last election."

In true Rhode Island fashion, two of the candidates running, Coletta and Dennis Cardillo Jr., recently became neighbors.

"Since the last election, Kelsey and myself both

bought homes, and we didn't realize it, but we are actually neighbors," Dennis Cardillo Jr. said. "We have just one house in between us. So that was a little bit of a shock to realize now that we're going to be running against your own neighbor, so I think that'll make things pretty interesting."

Coletta said it doesn't change anything and she also sent him a welcome message when he moved into the neighborhood.

Coletta also mentioned how she hopes the complaint from 2022 by Rep. Cardillo Jr. that his nephew isn't a resident of this district doesn't happen again, saying, "I do have to say the whole talk last time about how he didn't live in the district - I hope that that's not a thing again because I can attest, I'm at 4 Tarragon, he's at 8. We both live in the district."

As for running against his uncle a second time, Dennis Cardillo Jr. said he doesn't really "have anything bad to say about that."

"Even in my last campaign, I did not send out any negative flyers about any of the other candidates," added Dennis Cardillo Jr. "I kept every aspect positive, what I can do for the community, how much I can be of value and to show the community what type of service and leadership I can bring."

Coletta has scheduled an April 10 kickoff event for her campaign at Taste of Italy on Atwood Avenue in Johnston. Dennis Cardillo Jr. says he is in the early stages of his campaign but plans to formally launch sometime in the spring. Rep. Cardillo Jr. didn't say an exact date he will kick off his campaign but said he is seeking reelection.

### Solicitation of Bids

Tri-County Community Action Agency is requesting formal bids for **Child Care Center Renovations** to the Agency's facility located at 7 Waveland Street, Johnston, RI, 02919.

Beginning on Monday, April 15, 2024, bid packages may be obtained by visiting Tri-County's Administrative Office, located on 1126 Hartford Ave, Suite 201, Johnston, RI 02919. Bid packages may also be downloaded at [www.tricountyri.org](http://www.tricountyri.org).

A walkthrough of the facility will be conducted on Monday, April 22, 2024 at 3:00p.m. During the walkthrough, potential bidders may examine the facility and ask questions related to architectural drawings, specifications, renovations and/or the bid process. All questions related to the renovations and bid will be recorded in writing and will be answered in writing to all "walk-through" participants, within 48 hours. The walk-through of the site and sign in sheets is mandatory.

Bids must be delivered in a SEALED envelope addressed to

**Tri-County Community Action Agency  
Attention: Dental Renovation Bid Committee  
1126 Hartford Avenue  
Suite 201  
Johnston, RI 02919**

**Bids must be received not later than 3:00 p.m.,  
on Monday, April 29, 2024**

The official clock is located within the Administration office of Tri-County CAA at 1126 Hartford Avenue.

**Sealed bids will be publically opened beginning at 3:15 p.m. on Monday, April 29, 2024.**

Tri-County CAA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive technicalities, and make award(s) for reasons other than cost, as deemed to be in the best interest of the Agency or its programs.

*Renovations may begin any time after the contract is awarded.*



## Legal Notice Town of Johnston Adopted Ordinances

At a recent meeting of The Johnston Town Council, the Council did adopt the following Ordinance effective immediately:

### Ordinance 2024-4

An Ordinance amending Article IV of Chapter 248 entitled "Mobile Food Establishments" & Chapter 242 entitled "Parks & Recreation Areas" of the Town of Johnston Code of Ordinances. Said ordinance sets guidelines for Mobile Food Truck Events and also events in Town Parks

### Ordinance 2024-5

An Ordinance authorizing and approving a revised Tax Stabilization Agreement by and between the Town of Johnston and Amazon.com Services, LLC establishing a stabilized amount of taxes to be paid on account of certain real property and personal property located in the Town of Johnston, Rhode Island

**Said Ordinance is on file and available for review in the Office of the Town Clerk.**

**Johnston Town Council  
Robert V. Russo  
President**

**Attest:  
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.  
Town Clerk**

## LEGAL NOTICES

**JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD  
OF REVIEW  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA  
Thursday, April 25 2024  
at 6:30 PM  
Johnston Senior Center  
1291 Hartford Avenue**

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Review will hold its regular meeting on April 25, 2024 at 6:30 pm, at Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Avenue. All persons interested in the following proposals are requested to be present at this time. The assembly facilities are accessible to the handicapped. Persons requiring special accommodations shall call the Zoning Office at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting (401) 231-4000 ext. 4117. Persons utilizing TDD equipment may contact the Town through "Relay Rhode Island" at 1-800-745-6675. The agenda for the evening will be as follows, subject to change:

- I. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Minutes from Previous Meetings
- III. Old Business: None.

### IV. New Business:

**Petition of David Petrucci Owner/Applicant for 61 Lookout Ave, AP 9 Lot 238, Zoned R15. Applicant is proposing construct a detached two car garage with new driveway.**

**Petition of Robert and Karen Tedeschi Owner/Applicant for 17 Jenckes Street, Ap39 Lot108, Zoned R15. Applicant is proposing special use permit for free standing 2 car garage on a plot zoned B2**

### V. Adjournment

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

*• The Zoning Board Agenda and Minutes are available for review at <https://clerkshg.com/johnston-ri> or Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Department of Development and Public Services, 100 Irons Avenue, Johnston.*

*• Items not heard by 10:30 p.m. may be continued to the next Regular Meeting or special meeting at the discretion of Board.*

*• Facilities are handicap accessible. Interpreter services may be requested from TTD (401) 792-9642 at least 72 hours in advance.*



# ECLIPSE 2024



**STARING AT THE SUN:** Sun-gazers gathered at the Johnston Senior Center on Monday afternoon to cover their eyes with cardboard and stare at a slowly shrinking orange sphere.



**DARK SIDE OF THE MOON:** Backyard astronomer Steve Massarone helped library-goers view the rare eclipse through a telescope and a pair of special glasses. Immaculate Conception students Arseni, 13, and Aaron Aguilar, 8, stopped by to take a look. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

## Obituaries

### Anthony Angelo Ritacco,

Anthony Angelo Ritacco, 89, of Westerly, passed away peacefully on Easter Sunday, March 31st, 2024, at home.



Anthony was born on September 30, 1934, to Louis and Rose (Gaccione) Ritacco in Westerly. He is survived by his sister, Anna Cardinali of Mystic. He was pre-deceased by brothers Joseph Ritacco of Minneapolis and Louis Ritacco Jr., of Westerly, and sister Angelina Ritacco of Westerly as well as daughter-in-law Kimberly Lima Ritacco, wife of son Anthony, of Uxbridge, Massachusetts.

A Korean War Army veteran, Anthony was a graduate of Macalester College and lived for a short time in St. Paul, Minnesota. While traveling back and forth to Rhode Island, he met the love of his life, the late Marypatricia. They married in January 1966 and were married for 56 years. Anthony leaves their 4 children, son Michael and his wife Kelly; Mollie Fitzgerald and her husband John; Patricia Ascari and her husband Michael, and Anthony and fiancé Elisha Morris; and five grandchildren, Marley Ritacco, Michael Ritacco, Lukas Ritacco, Gillian Ascari and Sawyer Fitzgerald.

Anthony, better known as "The Ace" lived most of his adult life in East Greenwich, where he and Patsy raised their family. He was a part of multiple businesses statewide. While working as the sales manager for the East Providence Post, he and the paper's editor John Howell bought the Warwick Beacon in 1969. The company went on to buy The Cranston Herald and start weekly newspapers in Providence, Seekonk, Coventry and Newport as well as a commercial web printing company, Beacon Press Corporation in Warwick. Eventually, Tony ran the printing company and Howell the publishing company. The Ace's reach throughout the state was wide, as he employed many people, mentored more, and fostered many business relationships throughout his storied career.

The Ace was a dedicated family man and a loyal friend to many with a heart of gold. His departure brings great sorrow to so many and is deeply felt by everyone whose life he touched.

Anthony will be laid to rest with military honors alongside his beloved Patsy this summer.

Donations in his memory to the Karen Bradshaw Memorial Charity, PO Box 1017, East Greenwich, RI 02818 or at [www.kabgolffmemorial.com](http://www.kabgolffmemorial.com) would be appreciated.

## See that orange fingernail sliver? Did it change you forever?

By RORY SCHULER

Sun-gazers gathered at the Marian J. Mohr Public Library and Johnston Senior Center Monday afternoon to cover their eyes with cardboard and stare at a slowly shrinking orange sphere.

Backyard astronomer Steve Massarone helped library-goers view the rare eclipse through a telescope and a pair of special glasses.

Immaculate Conception students and siblings Arseni Aguilar, 13, and Aaron Aguilar, 8, stopped by to take a look.

Massarone expected the eclipse would reach about 92% totality in northern Rhode Island. If the percentage reached 100%, he said, we'd likely feel a dip in temperature and a few moments of near darkness.

"We're gonna see about 92% blockage of the sun," he explained, standing outside the Marian J. Mohr Library in Johnston, where he had special optical gear laid out on a table.

He helped Arlene Lopardo, a clerk at the library, view the eclipse

through special glasses and an eclipse-adjusted telescope.

According to NASA: "On April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse moved across North America, passing over Mexico, the United States, and Canada. A total solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the

Sun. The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk." It was incredibly sunny in the Ocean State on Monday afternoon as Johnston residents gathered to view the eclipse.

Plenty of residents scrambled for eclipse eyewear last-minute (those who didn't plan far in advance).

A group of Johnston Se-

nior Center members stood by the bocce court and looked toward Amazon, and up, to view the eclipse.

Through the narrow cardboard glasses, Johnston sun-gazers witnessed a dark circular mass slowly moving across a bright orange sphere, until merely a skinny orange fingernail trimming remained.

Through the narrow cardboard glasses, Johnston sun-gazers witnessed a dark circular mass slowly moving across a bright orange sphere, until merely a skinny orange fingernail trimming remained.

Trimming remained.



### TOTAL ECLIPSE? ALMOST:

Backyard astronomer Steve Massarone said the eclipse would reach about 92% totality in northern Rhode Island. He helped Arlene Lopardo, a clerk at the Marian J. Mohr Library in Johnston, view the eclipse through special glasses and an eclipse-adjusted telescope.

## 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

# Amazon

(Continued from page 1)

## The Amazonians

Four representatives from Amazon, a woman and three men in suits with no ties, sat quietly two rows behind Polise-na during the meeting (the three men sat together, and the woman sat in the row behind them). None of the four stood to speak during the public session discussion.

The men sat silently, only occasionally laughing at the jokes cracked by the town's top elected officials and attorneys, reviewing potential scripts that were encased in black and clear report folders.

Clearly visible to the reporter in the row behind them, one of the men's potential scripts identified him as Jonathan Greeley, who leads Amazon's Economic Development Work in New England.

"I'm pleased to be here tonight to provide an update on our Johnston construction project, known internally as PVD2, and discuss the proposed revised Tax Stabilization Agreement (TSA) for the Project," the document read (this Johnston Sun Rise reporter photographed and read the document over the Amazon rep's shoulder).

"At the outset I'd like to thank the Mayor and his team, the Town Council and the Town of Johnston for continuing to be amazing partners on this project," the document read. "Your collaboration from project to conception to now has been critical."

## Silent Attendees

The script, intended for the public and the Town Council but never read into the record, continued: "As you may recall from the last time we appeared in front of this body, Amazon has partnered with Bluewater Property Group to build a 5-story, 3.8 (million) square (foot) Amazon Robotic fulfillment center. When complete, more than 1,500 employees will pick, pack, and sort packages before they are loaded onto line haul trucks and transported to nearby sortation and logistics facilities across the northeast. Thanks to the innovations of Amazon robotics our people will be working alongside advanced robotics technology, allowing them to learn new skills and helping create a more efficient process to meet customer demand."

The letter went on to compare the size of the facility to 66 athletic (the exact sport was partially obscured by a resting hand) fields.

"As you might imagine given the size and function, this construction process (has been) complex," the script continued, but the document was partially obstructed by the man's hand (who was holding it).

A few more bits were visible. Greeley had planned to blame some of the delays on "supply chain challenges" and "inflationary" (something ... not visible from the row behind). The Amazon official had planned to tell the council that the company had "expressed optimism" that they would still be able to open on time, but alas, that didn't happen.

## Delay Delayed

After the meeting adjourned, the four Amazon reps stood outside the Johnston Municipal Court chatting, openly discussing whether they should have addressed the meeting.

The Johnston Sun Rise offered them the opportunity to speak directly to the residents of Johnston, through their local newspaper. They were asked when the facility on the hill off Hartford Avenue would finally open (the opening and hiring of 1,500 people has faced several delays over the past year).

All four declined comment, and one of the men (the same one holding Greeley's script) said they would just defer to the most recent statements from Amazon spokesman Steve Kelly (who told the Sun Rise last month that the facility is expected to open by the end of this year). Amazon said the same thing last year, but the facility remains unfinished.

"The timeline has not changed for us — still slated for later this year," Kelly wrote on March 13.

Polise-na, who rarely attends Town Council meetings, spoke briefly prior to the vote. He told Town Council that "we tried very hard but there was no way to issue them (an occupancy permit) for their building."

"We were approached by Amazon in the fall and they said that they would be invoking this construction clause," Polise-na explained. "And they initially came to us and said the number that they felt comfortable paying on the initial, the original \$5.7 million, was \$2.7 million, which is a \$3 million shortfall. That would be a \$3 million shortfall for this budget."

## Money Already Spent

The mayor was in a tricky spot. He had assured the voters of Johnston, when they went to the polls to approve a \$215 million bond for new school construction, that there would be "no tax increase" tied to the project. He promised the taxpayers of Johnston that Amazon's regularly scheduled annual payments over the next 20 years would pay for the new schools.

The school construction has already started and more than \$40 million in contracts have been approved. The site of the town's new elementary center has been cleared and a ground-breaking ceremony has now been announced for 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 4.

The school's groundbreaking ceremony will be held before the Amazon facility's ribbon-cutting.

"My administration is not OK with that," Polise-na told Town Council, referring to Amazon's initial proposed reduction in this year's payment by \$3 million. "And, after a few productive meetings, we came up with this alternative plan."

According to Polise-na, the town has already received this year's \$5.7 million payment, but it was kept in escrow pending Monday night's vote.

"So Amazon is going to pay the full \$5.7 million this year ... They're giving us an extra half a million dollars next year, and then in 10 years, in the years 11 through 20, they'll get \$200,000 off per year ... We spoke to our fiduciary," Polise-na explained to Town Council. "As you guys know ... money is worth more today than it is in the future. If you use a 10-year treasury, with the additional half a million dollars we get, and the present value of years 11-20, it comes out to a difference of \$618,000."

At face-value, the reduction of \$200,000 per year over the last 10 years of the TSA totals \$2 million (in overall payment reductions).

"So this was very important to me to get done," Polise-na told Town Council. "I take my responsibility seriously, and having a \$3 million shortfall ... It's not good for anybody. It's not good for the town. I'm appreciative of Amazon understanding this. I'm appreciative of the extra half a million dollars they've given us."

## Flood Money

The "extra" half million dollars will be used toward remediating widespread flooding issues in town, according to Polise-na and Attorney William E. O'Gara. Some of Johnston's worst flood-spots

are directly downhill from the new, massive Amazon facility (though many of those spots have been historically flood-prone).

O'Gara, partner with Johnston law firm Pannone Lopes Devereaux & O'Gara, addressed Town Council (he attended the meeting with fellow firm attorney former Cranston Mayor Allan Fung, who sat in the solicitor's chair Monday night).

"We had a lengthy discussion with the town's financial advisor ... to sort of have a check to make sure that our view of the impact on the town was on the money," O'Gara explained. "And he looked at the impact and he valued the impact at ... the net present value, as indicated by the mayor, at \$618,630.67. And he indicated that his feeling was that what the Amazon agreement does for the town, which is provide a stream of revenue to offset the costs of the bonds in connection with the elementary school, middle school and high school project. That that was going to remain intact, and he described the impact as modest."

## The Backend

Due to many of the same reasons Amazon cited for construction delays, the school projects have also been revised.

The town may no longer renovate the middle school, despite the pitch delivered to voters when they passed the school construction bond referendum. The plans now call for a new elementary center and a mostly new high school (plans call for preservation of the JHS gymnasium, with a completely new building constructed around it, between the current school and the football stadium).

"When you look at the stream of revenue that the tax treaty pays, it's ... approximately 1%," O'Gara said. "It's a 1% impact. And again, the 1% ... is on the back end of the deal. So when you do that calculation, as to what the actual cost to the town is today, it's that \$618,000 number ... Ultimately, we preserved for the town the benefits that the tax treaty provides and it allows the town to go forward with certainty as to the revenue stream."

According to O'Gara, Polise-na's administration also negotiated an agreement with Amazon that future annual payments will be made each year, in a single payment, before Jan. 30.

"From a budgeting standpoint, that's beneficial," O'Gara told Town Council.

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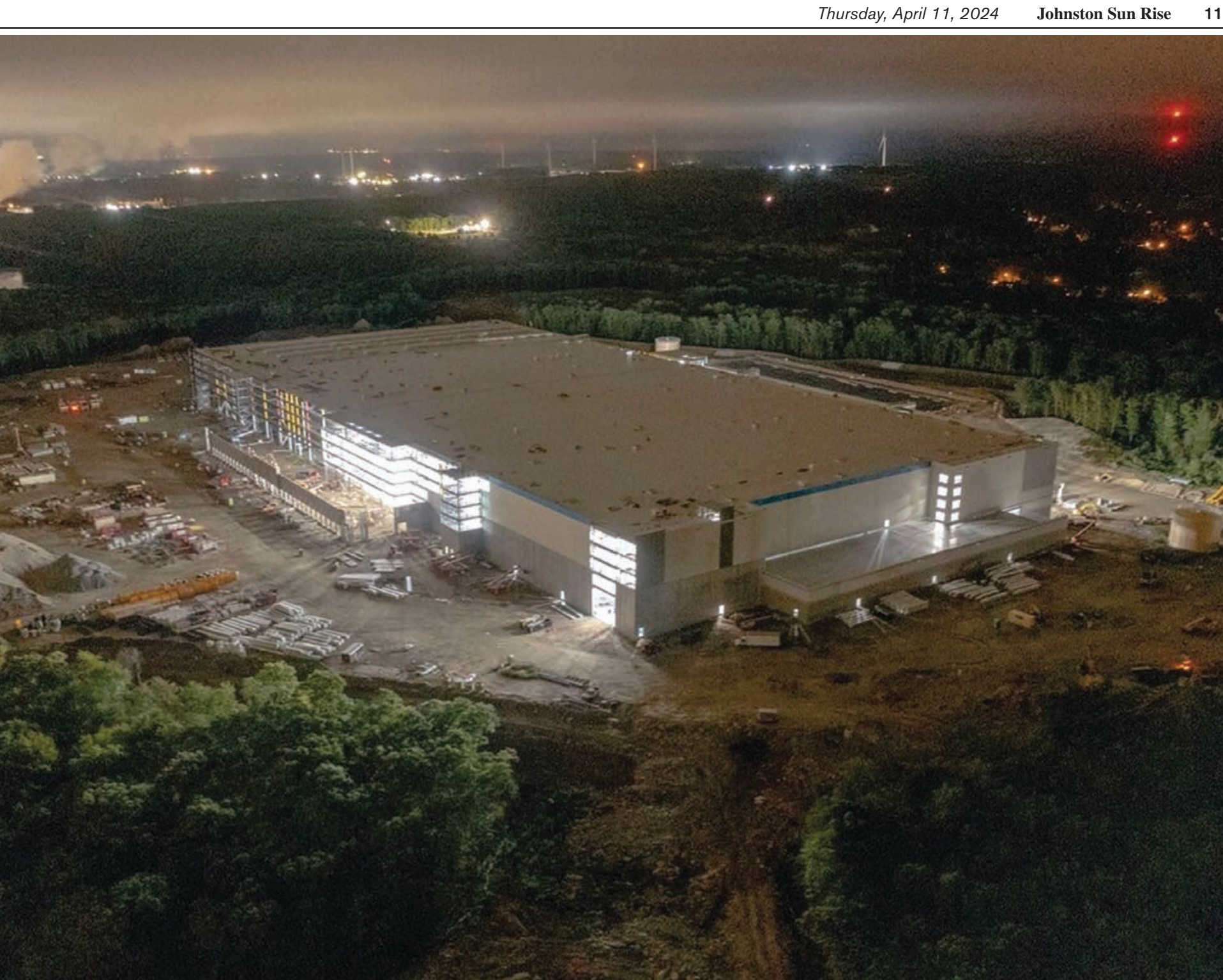
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**PACKAGE DELAYED:** These images of the Amazon construction site in Johnston, after sunset, were captured by a drone piloted by Trevor Bryan, an FAA Licensed and insured drone pilot, the owner and operator of New England Aerial Services, on Sept. 21, 2022. The illuminated project has been taking shape on the Hartford Avenue hill overlooking Johnston, but its opening date has now been pushed to late 2024. (Sun Rise file photo)

**Amazon**  
(Continued from page 10)

**Sticky Point**

Polisena and Ward 5 Town Councilman Robert Civetti briefly debated whether it would make more sense to use the town's reserve funds to cover the Amazon shortfall, than lose money in the future.

"What I would have liked ... to at least (have been) able to see our financial statements," Civetti told the mayor. "I've requested financial statements from them ... (the town's) finance director, he hasn't provided anything. I've made several requests."

Last year, the town ended in the black. And for the past year, Civetti has been publicly requesting budget updates and financial statements from Polisena's administration, during public meetings, but he says his requests have been ignored.

"If you look back at our June 30, 2023 audit, we finished with a budgetary surplus of \$3.2 million," Civetti said. "So I don't know where we stand currently. If we're on the same pace, we certainly

could have covered the \$2 million shortfall ... I don't necessarily like kicking the can down the road ... It might be short-sighted, because again, we don't know where we stand. I feel I'm being asked to make a decision on something (without adequate information)."

Civetti works as a certified public accountant (and has a client-list that includes at least one other Rhode Island municipality). He's familiar with projects and budgets of this scale, and the sound numbers make when you crunch them. Civetti offered to make a motion to amend the pending revised TSA ordinance.

"Let's appropriate \$3 million from our fund balance, so that the administration has a balanced budget ... I just don't see a need to be shorting future years, when we don't know what the financial position of the town's going to be," he argued.

The mayor sounded frustrated as he rose to disagree.

"So, rather than short the town \$1.5 million, which is essentially \$200,000 from years 11 to 20, you'd rather short the town \$3 million?" Polisena asked Civetti.

"We allocated the Amazon money," the mayor told the councilman. "As I've said multiple times, the annual Amazon reve-

nue always exceeds the bond payment ... I'm not going to forego \$3 million this year so we don't forego \$1.5 million in years 11 through 20."

"I'd rather lose \$1.5 million, over a 10-year span, 10 years from now, so it can be planned for -- again, it's only \$200,000 -- than just leave \$3 million on the table now," Polisena concluded.

Civetti eventually voted with the rest of Town Council to approve the revised TSA with Amazon.

O'Gara further argued that the renegotiated TSA was a good deal for Johnston.

"With respect to the idea of essentially this resolution, which is you maintain the payment that you were counting on this year when you constructed a budget ... You receive an additional \$500,000 next year to deal with the flooding issues," he said. "And that essentially Amazon agreed to take payments 11 years out, at a point of time where the payments under the tax treaty have escalated pretty significantly. The payments are going to ramp up from \$5.7 (million) to get to \$8.9 million in year 20 ... Providing a credit to Amazon, you're providing those in years where your payments are going to significantly exceed what your anticipated

debt service is for the school bonds."

**Swift Delivery**

The ordinance was ultimately approved with a unanimous vote of Town Council after a pair of public hearings (the first held on Thursday, March 28, and the second on Monday, April 8).

Civetti asked for an update on the promised payments from Amazon for local organizations, like Johnston youth sports and the Johnston Senior Center, which were contingent upon Amazon opening its doors. The attorney and the mayor said the details have yet to be settled.

To end his argument for a re-negotiated TSA, O'Gara lightened the mood, providing an example from his own tax bill.

"I live in Westerly, and we passed a small bond," he recalled. "And they told us, 'Your taxes are going up a couple hundred dollars to pay for that.' Because we don't have anyone who's going to send us (payments like Amazon) ... Taylor Swift sends us some money, but she doesn't us ... \$7 million a year."

Some people in the audience laughed. The three men from Amazon laughed loudest.

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 Liam Brennan 2028  
 Tyler Brunelle 2028  
 Lucy Chapman 2028  
 Michael Chounlamany 2028  
 Faith Kennedy D'Elia 2028  
 Dimazlia DiBiasio 2028  
 Christopher DiPanni 2028  
 Brody Dutilly 2028  
 Ella Farrell 2028  
 Gina Ford 2028  
 Shawnee Funches 2028  
 Avery Gordon 2028  
 Anthony Hopp 2028  
 Esra Imrane 2028  
 Sparrow Katowicz 2028  
 Kamryn Kue 2028  
 Jewel Langlois 2028  
 Brianna Lapati 2028  
 Trinity Lorello 2028  
 Kaylee (Roman) Lucas 2028  
 Giavanna Manfredi 2028  
 Jasmeet Mann 2028  
 Giana Mercurio 2028  
 Daniela Morales Cordon 2028  
 Frank Nasisi 2028  
 Gabriela Noriega Garcia 2028  
 Lea Petrillo 2028  
 Angie Quiroa 2028  
 Isaiah Ramirez 2028  
 Brea Rianna 2028  
 Derryck Roberts 2028  
 Carolyn Rosales 2028  
 Sophia Rubino 2028  
 Brooklyn Russillo 2028  
 Joseph Santos 2028  
 Isabella Serpa 2028  
 Derek Simas 2028  
 Nicholas Smith 2028  
 Aubrey Soares 2028  
 Mia Soprano 2028  
 Gianna Stomberg 2028  
 Jayeden Thayorath 2028  
 Isla Troxell 2028  
 Izabella Urena 2028  
 Ella Ware 2028  
 Ashlyn Wheeler 2028  
 Scarlett Agnoli 2029  
 Adrian Amaya 2029  
 Alexis Arias 2029  
 Mackenzie Arsenault 2029  
 Nolan Cahill 2029  
 Breonna Carleton 2029  
 Ibrahim Fall 2029  
 Marco Fava 2029  
 Carleigh Flath 2029  
 Ian Heywood 2029  
 Ella Martin-Sharkey 2029  
 Matthew Otero 2029  
 Ethan Quixtan Portillo 2029  
 Penelope Santos 2029  
 Brandon Turbitt 2029  
 Nicolas Villa-Pinto 2029  
 Caylee Allen 2030  
 Sofia Amane 2030  
 Jason Aung 2030  
 Lannie Baker 2030  
 Caleb Brunelle 2030  
 Gabriel Brunelle 2030  
 Leonardo Cardoso 2030  
 Charlotte Chapman 2030

Natalie Chea 2030  
 Jaden DeLeon 2030  
 Ryder Dieringer 2030  
 Jillian Dixon 2030  
 Islene Dominguez 2030  
 Kaylee Hopkins 2030  
 Jean Julio Jules 2030  
 Miranda Khoury 2030  
 Alessio La Terra Bellina 2030  
 Angelyn Larios 2030  
 Noah Macartney 2030  
 Jillian Marandola 2030  
 Jameson McClish 2030  
 Landon Moy 2030  
 Lindsey Moy 2030  
 Nathaniel Owusu 2030  
 Jalah Pincince 2030  
 Logan Poole 2030  
 Mason Poole 2030  
 Salina Reth 2030  
 Madeline Ritch 2030  
 Maralys Roques 2030  
 Emilio Urena Moya 2030  
 Adrian Valenzuela 2030  
 Harmony Wagnac 2030  
 Ella Watters 2030  
 Solange Womack 2030

**Total High Honor Roll: 98**

## Honors

Malaika Ali 2028  
 Emily Alvarado Mota 2028  
 Larissa Alvarenga-Pesoa 2028  
 Robert Cardillo 2028  
 Steven Carrera Hermosilla 2028  
 Christopher Cherry 2028  
 Jon Costa 2028  
 Nickola D'Aquila 2028  
 Roger Delgado 2028  
 Jordan D'Elia 2028  
 Matthew Duquette-Siswick 2028  
 Michael Fantini 2028  
 Cooper Ferranti 2028  
 Joshua Figueroa 2028  
 James Forgetta 2028  
 Thomas Fraioli 2028  
 Landon Frankina 2028  
 Frank Galeas 2028  
 Brandon Giron Caballero 2028  
 Chelsea Guy 2028  
 Jhasmin Heredia 2028  
 Tatiana James 2028  
 Jayla Jones 2028  
 Jaelyn Jordan 2028  
 Syvianna Jules 2028  
 Cesar Jumique 2028  
 Hadley Kampper 2028  
 Navjot Kaur 2028  
 Aristotle Landim 2028  
 Lila Lautieri 2028  
 Mackenzie Lopes 2028  
 Adriana Morales Cordon 2028  
 Marissa Morsilli 2028  
 Owen Niles 2028  
 Kaiya Nop 2028  
 Corey Ogden 2028  
 Maria-Fernanda Oliva 2028  
 Linda Orozco 2028  
 Savannah Paquin 2028  
 Quintin Picon 2028

Enzo Pistacchio 2028  
 Bruno Porreca 2028  
 Mason Provoyeur 2028  
 Leilani Quinones 2028  
 Aylin Reyes Marte 2028  
 Adriana Riggen 2028  
 Valentina Rincon 2028  
 Zelice Rolland 2028  
 Jacob Rosa 2028  
 Daisy Rosales 2028  
 Mia Rubino 2028  
 Elena Sampson 2028  
 Max Sciotti 2028  
 Mckenzie Shanley 2028  
 Yaliana Sievers 2028  
 Kaleigh-James Slader 2028  
 Javiana Stec 2028  
 Tristan Stevens 2028  
 Ava Turgeon 2028  
 Belinda Urizar Ruiz 2028  
 Yomilenny Valois Tolentino 2028  
 Aidan Wentworth 2028  
 Melvin Wilson 2028  
 Neji Acksonovong 2029  
 Antonio Baez 2029  
 Calla Cadieux 2029  
 Ryder Calabro 2029  
 Jacob Celeste 2029  
 Krishna Chu 2029  
 Alexander DaPonte 2029  
 Sophie Darby 2029  
 Paola DeLeon 2029  
 Anthony DiFonzo 2029  
 Gabriella Dinucci 2029  
 Caleb Doura 2029  
 Kendall Duguay 2029  
 Sokhna Fall 2029  
 Dante Ferranti 2029  
 Lila Figueroa 2029  
 Brayden Garceau 2029  
 Gabrielle Gonsalves 2029  
 Kenzi Harrop 2029  
 Mason Johnson Goncalves 2029  
 Layla Kelly 2029  
 Dominic Lacasse 2029  
 Josue Lainez Natareno 2029  
 Angelina Lambrese 2029  
 Khady Marone 2029  
 Emma McDougall 2029  
 Addyson Meloni 2029  
 Ryan Morin 2029  
 Alexander Mrozewicz 2029  
 Niah Ndukwe 2029  
 Nicolas Ortellado 2029  
 Joshua Ortiz 2029  
 Jayliana Pedraza 2029  
 Allyson Pena 2029  
 Mykhal Picon 2029  
 Khloe Pipkins 2029  
 Ethan Pongvongkeo 2029  
 Derek Ricci 2029  
 J'lene Santana 2029  
 Dante Santos 2029  
 Avery Sarit 2029  
 Christopher Sbardella 2029  
 Natalia Scorpio 2029  
 Lily-Anne Segee 2029  
 Joshua Seyon 2029  
 Jenae Smith 2029  
 Ezekiel Sonaike 2029  
 Summer St. Pierre 2029  
 Julianna Stonis 2029  
 Peyton Vargus 2029

Cory Veitch 2029  
 Grace Wilbur 2029  
 Winston Xaymongkhoun 2029  
 Cristian Bonilla Aguilar 2030  
 Gabriel Bowden 2030  
 Damani Bowe 2030  
 Aiden Bright 2030  
 Kadie Bun 2030  
 Jackson Burgos 2030  
 Awa Ceesay 2030  
 Caleb Cenafils 2030  
 Emelyn Coggins 2030  
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 Angelice Lopez 2030  
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 McKenna Pace 2030  
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 Tyler Pepler 2030  
 Sherlyn Perez Sosa 2030  
 Logan Pongvongkeo 2030  
 Sophia Proulx 2030  
 Sophia Ramirez 2030  
 Christopher Ramos-Mues 2030  
 Joshua Robbins 2030  
 Maiyah Rosa 2030  
 Mariah Sanchez Perez 2030  
 Mikayla Souza 2030  
 Kenna Sparks 2030  
 Aiden Spencer 2030  
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 Kianne Torres 2030  
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**Total Honor Roll: 184**

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# Why journalism is so vital to democracy



PHOTO BY MARY MURPHY

## Former reporter, UConn professor Mike Stanton reflects on RI stories & characters

By G. WAYNE MILLER

**GWM:** Mike, let's start with today. You live in Rhode Island and are a journalism professor at the University of Connecticut. Tell us about your responsibilities and the courses you teach.

**MS:** Having lived in Rhode Island for three decades, I didn't want to move when UConn hired me in 2013. I grew up in Connecticut, but love Providence. So now I keep one foot in each state, which is interesting when UConn plays Providence College in basketball – I have season tickets to the Huskies and the Friars, who I used to cover for the ProJo!

I teach a range of courses, from our introductory Press in America and Newswriting I classes to more advanced courses like Investigative Reporting, Sports Journalism and Feature Writing. My investigative class last year published a project about housing evictions and the affordable housing crisis in southeastern Connecticut in The Day of New London. It won a national award for investigative reporting in the Hearst student journalism competition. It's a great example of the hands-on learning that we stress.

**GWM:** What attracts your students to journalism?

**MS:** Two things – storytelling and making a difference.

Since prehistoric cave paintings, humans have told stories and that appetite continues, even as the platforms change. Students are very excited to tell stories – through words, pictures, video, podcasts, etc. I tell them that newspapers may be dying, but not the public's hunger for stories – and that they're going to help invent the future.

Secondly, students are passionate about making a difference. Since the rise of disinformation and our fractured politics, we've seen an increase in students – even non-majors – who take Press in America because of a heightened awareness of the importance of a free press in a democratic society. Some have changed their major to journalism or added it as a second major. They want to do stories that hold the powerful accountable – that afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted.

**GWM:** Give us an overview of where they hope to work – legacy newspapers, broadcast, online or somewhere else.

**MS:** There's a range. But they are finding jobs. Some work in legacy media, others for websites, or in broadcasting. Given our strong sports teams at UConn, and the proximity of ESPN in Bristol, Conn. (I co-teach Sports Journalism with ESPN feature producer Steve Buckheit), we have a lot of students who want to cover sports. Some work at ESPN; others have gone on to work as reporters and producers for Major League Baseball, including Molly Burkhardt, the daughter of two great journalists I worked with at the ProJo – the late Mimi and Andy Burkhardt. Others get jobs on the social media side of media companies, or doing social media for sports teams, etc. Data is another field. One former student is at the New York Times, mining huge amounts of data for investigative stories and graphics. Another worked for Tim White at WPRI as an investigative producer. Another recent alum, Taylor Begley, is the sports director at WPRI.

**GWM:** What's the best bit of advice you've ever given to your students?

**MS:** Get hands-on experience from Day One. The classroom is important, but it's only part of the equation. Sign up right away to work for campus media and develop as many multi-platform media skills as you can to make yourself more versatile. Dive immediately into journalism classes, so you can get to the more advanced courses faster and parlay your experience into internships that can lead to a job when you graduate. Too many college students focus in their first two years on knocking off their general-education requirements and don't get into the advanced journalism courses until they're juniors or seniors. In the classroom, we try to be as hands-on as possible, having students write news stories, cover campus beats, attend sporting events, produce broadcasts and podcasts, etc.



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By JENNIFER COATES



Meet Kaushal Jain, someone who will make your life easier and who will give you more time to do the things you love this spring! Visit her at Jain's Laundry on Putnam Pike!

There is going to come a time when you can no longer avoid it. That pile of laundry in the corner, growing every day while you find excuses to ignore it. But it is not going away, and eventually, it will overtake your room or leave you without a single clean garment to wear.

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For the most competitive prices in the area, you will find both the wash-fold, same-day service offered by Kaushal here at Jain's Laundry as well as a room full of coin-operated washers and dryers for the "do-it-yourselfers". If you don't have enough quarters, no worries - there is a change machine that accepts up to a \$20.00 bill available here.

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loads, from 25 pounds to 65 pounds. The top loading machines are available here for only \$2.25 per load. State-of-the-art dryers are installed which are incredibly efficient, rotating both clockwise and counter-clockwise to prevent the bunching and twisting that can make drying uneven in conventional dryers.

Vending machines are also on-site if you need to re-stock your supply of detergent, softener or laundry bags. There is never a need to wait because there are rows and rows of machines ready to go at any given time. Everything you need is right here at Jain's Laundry.

There is plenty of parking and a friendly, helpful staff here, ready to meet the needs of both residential and commercial customers. You can stay in their clean waiting area between cycles or leave and return between loads. There is always someone there to keep an eye on your clothes or help you as needed.

Jain's Laundry is found in the Plaza 44 shopping plaza on 39 Putnam Pike. It is open seven days each week - from 8 am to 9 pm, Monday through Friday, and 7 am to 8 pm on Saturday and Sunday. For more information about their services, call 401-231-7019.

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# Sports

## Panthers dominant in 2-0 start

### Boudreau leads JHS softball in opening week

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston softball team has emerged as a Division II favorite early this spring season after beating Mt. Hope 11-0 in the opener then Toll Gate 2-0 on Monday afternoon to improve to 2-0.

Sophomore pitcher Haley Boudreau has been electric in the circle for the Panthers, racking up 28 strikeouts in 12 innings of work and allowing no earned runs on just three hits.

The Panthers clashed with the Titans in a pitchers' duel on Monday, as Toll Gate's Delaney Wilson was also stellar, allowing just one earned run when Kalyn Foster knocked in an RBI in the sixth inning. Johnston's first run came in the third on a throwing error. Otherwise, the Panther bats were held in check by Wilson, who finished with 14 strikeouts of her own.

Boudreau relied on her off-speed pitches to keep the Titan batters off-balance all night.

"My curveball was working well. I noticed that they could hit inside so I made sure to pitch outside and that helped me get through the game. It was a lot of pressure, but I feel that that makes me pitch better. The adrenaline helps me pitch faster," Boudreau said.

Boudreau had a breakout season last spring for the Panthers and figures to be perhaps the division's best arm. She is excited to build on last year's performance and feels a bit more comfortable this season.

"I'm a lot more confident because I know that I won't be as nervous. I experienced everything last year," Boudreau said.

Bella Boudreau led the Panthers at the plate in the opener, knocking in three runs. Arianna



IN THE CIRCLE: Johnston pitcher Haley Boudreau deals on Monday afternoon. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

■ PANTHERS - PAGE 16



WINNING PITCHER: Emmanuel Rios deals last week. (Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)

### JHS baseball splits first two games

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston baseball team split its first two games of the regular season, beating Woonsocket 2-1 in the opener then falling to East Providence 1-0 in the second.

Emmanuel Rios got the win on the mound in the opener, pitching six innings and allowing no earned runs while striking out nine batters. Davian Nunez led the team at the plate, going 2-for-2 and knocking in both of its runs.

Dylan Guernon tossed a solid game against the Townies on Monday night, but their one run would be enough to get the win. Guernon pitched five innings, allowing no earned runs and striking out six. Johnston was held scoreless and Matt Clements earned two of the team's four hits in the loss.

Although the Johnston pitching has been stellar through two games, the bats have struggled to take off. As the offense looks for answers, Johnston coach Joe Acciaro believes the pitching and defense will have to shoulder the load in the early going.

"We've got to play some small ball and we have to be disciplined. That's something that we're trying to focus on, getting back to the fundamentals and making it work. We just have to understand that we aren't going to be a team that puts up big numbers across the plate, but we'll have to get some runs somehow," Acciaro said. "We won't be able to make errors and we'll have to generate runs anyway we can. It's early, though, so it's not like we can't turn it around."

Acciaro continued, "We'll try to take a page out of East Providence's book last year. They won 13 games by one run and that may be something that we have to do. It's all about getting the little things done and having discipline, patience. When you're playing small ball, you have to have unselfish

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**SHORTSTOP:** Arianna Velasquez makes a play on Monday.

### ■ Panthers

(Continued from page 15)

Velasquez, Alexia DiLorenzo and Foster all recorded multiple RBI as well.

The Panthers have been trending in the right direction as a program over the past two seasons and are looking to take one more step toward winning a championship. With a roster that features

quality pitching, fielding and hitting, Boudreau believes chemistry will be the final piece to the puzzle.

"We've been working together since sixth grade. We work well together, we communicate and I think we can make it far this year," said Boudreau.

The Panthers next faced Barrington on Wednesday, but the results were not available at press time. Johnston will host Lincoln on Saturday morning.



**TAG OUT:** Chris Civetti looks to tag a baserunner last week.

### ■ JHS

(Continued from page 15)

players. No one wants to bunt, but sometimes you have to do (those things) to give the team the best chance to win. We

just need to figure out how to generate runs. We can pitch, we can field. We can play with anyone as long as we play as a team and do the little things."

The Panthers were scheduled to take on Ponaganset on Wednesday, but the results were not available at press time.



# Local softball teams impress in opening week

My biggest takeaway through the first week of spring sports is how excellent our softball teams are here at Beacon Communications. All five of our teams have impressed and could be contenders by season's end, at least based on what we've seen in the early going.

In Warwick, Pilgrim appears to be right back to where it was last year as one of the state's best clubs. Gretchen Dombeck has proven to be a worthy successor in the circle after Alyssa Twomey graduated, and returners like Genna D'Amato, Madison Tuirok and Skylar Hawes appear to be more than enough on offense to keep this team in play for a deep postseason run.

The only question I have at this point is experience. Although Pilgrim's underclassmen have proven to be ready for significant roles, how will they fare when the playoffs arrive? It's early, I know, but this team will be in the playoffs, no doubt. How far can the youngsters carry this team when the postseason grind gets underway?

As for Toll Gate, despite start-

ing 0-2, what I saw on Monday against Johnston was encouraging.

Pitcher Delaney Wilson is back and threw an absolute gem against the Panthers (who we'll get to in a moment). Wilson allowed just one earned run and struck out 14 batters. Unfortunately, the Titans bats were cold.

Sure, Toll Gate also has a young roster, but having a pitcher capable of doing what Wilson did is huge. Others may disagree, but pitching is the most important aspect of the game at the high school level. Any team can get lucky and knock in a couple runs here and there, but having a quality pitcher is essential. There is no such thing as a fluke performance in the circle.

Toll Gate was shut out in each game, so I do believe the offense will struggle this season. Wilson, though, will only get better once the weather warms up, as will the entire team. Toll Gate has a difference maker in the circle, and even just a small improvement at the plate will allow the Titans to win some games and make a playoff push.

## My pitch



by  
ALEX  
SPONSELLER  
SPORTS EDITOR  
ALEXS@  
RHODYBEAT.COM

The Cranston East Bolts look primed to be a contender in Division III after returning to the playoffs last season.

Freshman Isabella Sousa has been flat out dominant in the circle for the Bolts. Again, if you have a top tier pitcher, that alone will make you a playoff team. Jaeda Viveiros, Nevaeh Fatorma, Kiara McGarty, Estrela Rivas and Mariah Means-Waldorf are all solid players, while Samaya Imondi and Leanna Garcia look ready to emerge as underclassmen.

The Bolts really have all the pieces in place to contend for a championship, it will just be about staying healthy and con-

sistent.

Across town, the West Falcons have also picked up where they left off last year and are also very much in the Division I Championship mix.

As of this writing, the Falcons are 1-0 after thumping North Kingstown 18-0 in the season opener. Heading into the season, the questions were: who would replace Paige Cote in the circle, and would the Falcons have enough depth to replace the two or three big bats that graduated?

It's a small sample size, for sure, but an 18-0 win is impressive and should give us the answers.

Mia Crudale got the win in her debut as the team's pitcher and has been around for awhile ... she should be ready to lead the team in the circle. Sofia Marella is behind the plate, and Siena Nardelli, Nicole Silvestri and Sam Healy all return and look ready to be All-Division players. This lineup is still loaded despite losing a few pieces.

Finally, the Johnston Panthers have already emerged as the favorite to win the DII title.

Haley Boudreau returns after

a breakout freshman season and is set to be one of the best pitchers, not only in the division, but in the entire state. In two starts, she is 2-0 and has yet to allow a run while picking up 28 strikeouts. She has also been solid at the plate as well.

Along with Boudreau, there is Arianna Velasquez, who will be playing Division II softball in college and is an elite infielder. Ava Waterman also returns along with Kalyn Foster, who drove in the team's only earned run on Monday against Toll Gate.

Between having the division's best pitcher and a deep, versatile lineup on the field and at the dish, Johnston should be there until the very end.

Again, it has only been a week. Things can change and look completely different in the next two months, but when assessing the ceilings of these teams, we could easily see all five reach the playoffs and multiple win championships. Softball has always been my favorite spring sport to cover, so I am thrilled that it looks like this will be a huge season for our teams.

## Locals shine for RIC track team

### FROM STAFF REPORTS

Senior Trinity Hayes (Providence) finished first in both the 100m (12.45) and 200m (25.71) as the Rhode Island College women's track and field team competed at the Coast Guard Spring Invitational on Saturday.

Junior Samantha Sainristil (Cranston)

finished second in the hammer (44.74m) and seventh in both the discus (33.94m) and the shot (10.72m).

Sophomore Bethanie Jean-Philippe (Cranston) finished second in the javelin (34.99m) and 24th in the long jump (3.95m).

Sophomore Haley Oliver (Coventry) finished seventh in the 1,500m (4:53.25) and eighth in the 800m (2:29.72)

Freshman Marlyn Dunlop (Providence) finished 16th in the 400m (1:11.13).

Junior Shirley Portillo (North Providence) finished 17th in the 400m (1:11.28).

In upcoming action, Rhode Island College will compete at the Southern New Hampshire Invitational on Saturday, April 13.

Sophomore Shamus Culhane (North

Kingstown) finished first in the hammer (53.15m) and 15th in the discus (29.27m) as the Rhode Island College men's track and field team competed at the Coast Guard Spring Invitational on Saturday.

Freshman Gabriel Dosunmu (Providence) finished third in the 4x100m relay (44.12), fifth in the long jump (6.78m) and 10th in the 100m (11.37).

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# Local waterways stocked for Opening Day

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Opening Day of the freshwater fishing season in Rhode Island is 6 a.m. Saturday, April 13. The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) has stocked over 60,000 brook, brown, rainbow and golden rainbow trout select areas in advance of the season.

Local waterways ready with stocked fish in the Cranston/Warwick/West Warwick area include Gorton Pond, Warwick (new this year); J.L. Curran Reservoir, Cranston; Meshatic Pond, Cranston; Pawtuxet River (north branch), Scituate and Cranston; Pawtuxet River (south branch), Coventry and West Warwick; and Seidel's Pond, a children's only pond, Cranston.

Over one hundred freshwater locations will be stocked. For a list of trout stocked waters and rules governing children's ponds, please see trout waters and other information of interest to anglers at Designated Trout Waters | Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (ri.gov).

A 2024 fishing license is required for anglers 15 years of age and older. A Trout Conservation Stamp is also required of anyone wishing to keep or possess a trout or to fish in a catch-and-release or "fly-fishing only" area. Trout Stamps are not required for persons possessing trout taken from a lake or pond that shares a border with Rhode Island.

In Rhode Island, the minimum size for trout is eight inches (8") and the daily creel or possession limit is five from April 13, 2024, through Dec. 1, 2024, and two from Dec. 1, 2024, through Feb. 28, 2025.

**Getting ready to fish is easy**  
Freshwater fishing in Rhode Is-

land and Massachusetts is outstanding. Both states stock waterways with a variety of trout and salmon which makes catching them easy this time of year. Freshwater fishing is a good way to start fishing as anglers of all ages can fish from the safety and comfort of a pond, lake or river shore.

Fishing provides adventure, excitement and food if you like to clean and cook your catch (which is not necessary as many anglers practice catch & release). And it gives us an opportunity to be outdoors with family and friends and/or gain a bit of solace with the environment.

Here are three simple steps to get started.

One: fishing licenses and regulations. Freshwater fishing is regulated by the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. See links to licensing information below.

Two: what you need to get started. For freshwater fishing use a light to medium action rod and reel combination such as an Ugly Stick, Berkley or other rod/reel combination (\$39 to \$69). You will also need some hooks and bobbers that float baits in the water column and move to signal that you have a bite. If recently stocked, trout can be fished with a synthetic bait (as that is what they eat when in the hackery) like Power Bait (\$4 to \$6) or as the fish acclimate to the natural environment live bait such as night crawler worms or shiners can be used. Once anglers have mastered casting and retrieving, lures can be used such as spinner baits and jerk baits.

Three: where to catch fish. Rhode Island DEM's Division of Fish & Wildlife stocks over 100 ponds, rivers, brooks and lakes with a variety of trout and salmon so you might want to check waterways in your area. Massachusetts stocks designated trout wa-

terways with over 500,000 fish each year. Many of them are stocked two or three times a year.

For a complete list of stocked ponds, license information and a copy of the RI Freshwater Fishing Regulations and Guide visit [www.eregulations.com/rhodeisland/fishing/freshwater](http://www.eregulations.com/rhodeisland/fishing/freshwater). In Massachusetts visit Freshwater Fishing | Mass.gov.

### Hats off to Ed Lombardo

Ed Lombardo, expert fly fisher, guide and instructor, was honored by Rhode Island Trout Unlimited (225) with their Lifetime Achievement Award at their annual banquet which took place Saturday at The Quonset O Club, North Kingstown. Ed was honored for his forty years of service as a fly instructor for thousands of men, women and children.

Lombardo has worked with the Department of Environmental Manager in Rhode Island for 33 years instructing freshwater and saltwater fly classes. Presently he works with Kimberly Sullivan, principal biologist and aquatic resource education coordinator for the DEM, delivering multiple fly fishing programs each year. They conduct both saltwater and freshwater classes, programs for children, veterans, beginners and those more experienced with fly fishing and tying. Ed has also instructed fly fishing and tying for the many area fishing clubs he is a member of.

After receiving the award, Ed said, "This was a total surprise. I did not know about the award. It is a great honor."

### Where's the bite?

Freshwater fishing. Trout season in RI opens Saturday, April 13, however, many trout ponds are open for fishing in Massachusetts. Prior to this date. "Anglers just wanting to get tight on something have been traveling to Massachu-



**SILVER SPRING LAKE:** Kevin Tierney of Burrillville fished with stepsons Camryn Lions and Geo Curtis. The trio caught seven trout including two golden trout. Opening day this year is Saturday, April 13. (Submitted photo)

setts to fish for trout. But here in Rhode Island anglers are starting to get excited too," said Jeff Sullivan of Lucky Bait & Tackle, Warren.

Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence, said, "Anglers are gearing up for opening day. We are open this weekend and have a good supply of Power Baits which have been the hot bait for the past few years. However, I might add anglers have been hooking up with largemouth bass and Pike in area ponds this week."

Saltwater. Anglers continue to find holdover school striped bass in estuaries. "The Narrow River has been producing school striped bass for customers fairly consistently," said Henault of Ocean

State Tackle.

Jeff Sullivan of Lucky Bait & Tackle said, "We have had quite a few anglers getting ready for both tautog and stiped bass. They are getting their lead core line ready for trolling and buying a lot of soft plastic lures mimicking shad. I do not expect it to be very long before the striped bass fishing explodes due to the warm weather we are expecting next week."

Lombardo, said, "We fished Narrow River Monday. Caught a nice mid twenty inch fish that looked like a holdover fish. I believe once the water warms some the bite will get better. I caught it on my Hot Pink Ed's fly. We saw now bait in the water on Monday."

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7 Anthony St	Joseph Edward M Est and Joseph, Amanda M	Joseph, Mary E	3/20	\$300,000
19 Freedom Ct	Aames Mtg Inv T 2005-4 and Deutsche Bk Natl T Co Tr	Novatel LLC	3/26	\$316,000
44 Linwood Dr	R F Corvese Declaration O and Dimaino, Lianne	Dambek, James and Hitte, Jessica	3/25	\$212,500
52 Burnett St	Morales, Fredy	Singh, Amritjit	3/25	\$421,000
494 Woonasquacket Ave Lot 209	Cusano, Benjamin A	Lyons, Michael L	3/25	\$51,500

## Warwick

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
10 Harris Ave	Phaon Cap LLC	Garganese, Jason and Garganese, Elizabeth	3/22	\$359,900
29 Gibbons Ave	Parkhurst, Tiffany	29 Gibbons LLC	3/18	\$285,000
32 Whipple Ave	Welly, George	Mjb Prop LLC	3/21	\$325,000
33 Contour Rd	Ryan, James F and Ryan, Judith A	Nkwocha, Adrian and Nkwocha, Lauren	3/18	\$700,000
45 Adams St	Barton Buell R Est and Rowland, Juliana	Equity T Co	3/21	\$370,000
55 Deer Run Xing Lot 55	Stonebridge Xing Dev LLC	Betty R Kinder T and Kinder, Betty R	3/22	\$670,700
55 Symonds Ave	Federici, Ruth A and Iadimarco, Carol T	Christie, Robert W and Christie, Betty C	3/21	\$340,000
78 Edgenhill Rd	Midwood, Sara M and Midwood, Lois	Viera, Shirley A	3/18	\$337,000
90 Bond St	Muzalewski, Philip and Muzalewski, Dianne	Allard, Mark E	3/21	\$569,000
90 Stonebridge Ln Lot 90	Stonebridge Xing Dev LLC	Treacy, Redmond M and Treacy, Lisa	3/22	\$700,000
123 Shadow Brook Dr	Ramakrishna N Nayak Fit and Nayak, Ramakrishna N	123 Shadowbrook LLC	3/18	\$825,000
124 Longfellow Dr	Hassard, Regina L	Hassard, Regina L and Bender, Danielle	3/20	\$195,000
131 Canonchet Ave	Adelheid R Anderson T and Anderson, David C	Vu, William	3/20	\$555,000
136 Phillips Ave	Ri Hsng & Mtg Fin Corp	Ricci, Benjamin	3/22	\$200,000
165 Oakland Beach Ave	Weindel, Shannon	Divincenzo, Francesco	3/19	\$322,000
176 Harmony Ct	Finizia, Stephanie	Rizzo, Lisa and Sparling, David	3/21	\$354,000
190 Lakeside Ave	Scalzo, Frank and Scalzo, Wendy	Christensen, Drew A	3/21	\$375,000
209 Long View Dr	Duchesneau, Christine	Fletcher, Ryan A	3/21	\$250,000
229 Reynolds Ave	Gentile, Alberico and Gentile, Kimberly	Bateman-Drew, Robert M and Bateman-Drew, Stephanie E	3/18	\$555,000
230 Boulder View Dr	Treacy, Raymond M	Stocker, Drew T	3/22	\$535,000
230 Douglas Rd	Mark F Zappe Irt and Doyle, Matthew J	Ortega, Tony and Ortega, Gilberto	3/18	\$385,000
417 Squantum Dr	Kaplan, Rachael D	Gannon 4th, Richard P and Starr, Nancy K	3/20	\$523,000
426 Pequot Ave	Tiraterra, Casey	Borden, Andrea	3/18	\$330,000

## West Greenwich

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
27 Whippoorwill Way	Marchesseault, Gary D and Marchesseault, Michele	Marchesseault, Gary D	3/20	\$195,000

## West Warwick

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
38 Gough Ave	Magiera, Joseph P and Magiera, Melissa	Howard, Caita E	3/22	\$430,500
56 West St	Reisert Realty Corp	Laroche, Thomas	3/22	\$360,000
94 Cowesett Ave Lot 23	Lugo, Jeann C	Pinto, Michael	3/22	\$175,000
450 Providence St Lot 3	Delman, Brian M and Delman, Terry L	Zhang, Yulun and Liang, Tingxia	3/21	\$326,000

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# Being an adult parent is not how I imagined

Being a parent is tough! When my kiddos were young, they needed simple things; diaper changes, bottle feedings, songs, developmental activities, a home daycare where they could get loving from a grandmotherly type caregiver, and lots of hugs and kisses. Babies are so much fun!

As they aged, they needed help with their homework, transportation to extra curricular activities like soccer and dance, nutritious food, and lots of hugs and kisses. We did many family activities, such as going to the tiny house in NH, on cruises, to Disney World and Rocky Point. Holidays such as Easter and Christmas were great fun, albeit not too extravagant. Involvement in our church was important, as was volunteering where the children learned to do things for the less fortunate. Having children was so much fun!

Teenagerhood was a little more difficult, and I suspect it would have been worse had I known what was REALLY going on! (Years later, I noticed that the bushes outside my daughter's bedroom were smooshed, ostensibly from her

## Life Matters



with LINDA PETERSEN

sneaking out of her bedroom at night.) They all happily graduated from high school, some of them happier than others, of course. A few of them went to college, with the expenses necessitating a second mortgage on our house, which we are still paying off.

As adults, I pictured their happy families inviting us for holidays and celebrating birthdays together, with lots of hugs and smiles. I would celebrate special occasions with them, such as the birth of a child or a dance recital. They would come to me for my wise advice, and my grandchildren would flock to me as my grandchildren were drawn to MY mother. My dreams have been

dashed. I am a failure as the parent of adult children.

Half of my six grandchildren love me, but I am unfortunately inconsequential to the other three. Technology is their main love, and Facebooking friends or playing games on their phones supersedes any type of socialization. Not one to play favorites, all six get equally priced gifts for birthdays, Christmas, Valentines Day and Easter. I pick out thoughtful, individual items for each child, hoping to get a "thank you" in return, something not always forthcoming. It might be best to just give the gifts to those who appreciate them, but I am eternally hopeful and not ready to draw that line yet.

Most disappointing is that I do not have the skills to have a better relationship with a few of my adult children who choose to live their lives sans parents, preferring their independence over inclusion in an extended family. They have every right, of course, to live their lives how they wish, but in my dreams we were one big, happy family. It hurts my heart that we are not as close as I had hoped. Being the parent of adult children is no fun at all!

See it at the

# Movies

with  
Joyce & Don  
Fowler



**WARWICK SHOWCASE**  
**MONKEY MAN**  
\*\*\*  
(Violent, Political, Revenge Movie)

Dev Patel directs and stars in the title role of this R-rated, extremely violent movie about an underground Indian fighter who gets the pulp beaten out of him in fixed fights for little money.

Referred to as Kid, he also works as a dishwasher and waiter in a posh restaurant/brothel, where he sneers at the haves, while living his miserable life among the have-nots. Kid's mother has been murdered in front of him when he was young, and he lives to revenge the police chief who murdered her.

Kid loses it one day as he has had enough of his mistreatment and that of an abused female "employee." He attacks the police chief, his bodyguards, and anyone who gets in his way in one of the bloodiest

scenes I've watched at the movies. He is chased through the streets in quick-cut scenes and injured nearly to his death. Saved by a cult, he gains back his strength. Kid takes on the bad guys, seeking his revenge on the police chief in an even bloodier battle, with a shocking outcome.

The R-rated violence may be a bit too much for some, but the political messages about the injustices to the downtrodden in India come through loud and clear.

**AVON**  
**THE ZONE OF INTEREST**  
\*\*\*

This slow-moving Oscar-winner from Poland is filled with irony, as we watch German commander of Auschwitz, Rudolf Hoess and his wife Hedwig raise their five children in a large house and pristine gardens under the shadow of the

concentration camp. Everything is idyllic as Hedwig tends the beautiful flowers, the children swim in the pool, the servants prepare their meals, and Rudolf goes off to work every morning.

The perfect life is disrupted when Hoess is reassigned, leaving his family to be promoted to a new assignment, only to be brought back to oversee new responsibilities at Auschwitz in a stunning, chilling, subtle conclusion.

The film makes a strong statement about the insecurity and inequality of war, doing so in a very slow and often tedious way.

**NETFLIX**  
**RIPLEY**  
\*\*\* 1/2

Netflix has sent (The Amazing Mr.) Ripley off to Italy to return the prodigal son of a wealthy man to America.

The con-artist discovers more than he bargained for in this black and white film noir.

**VIKINGS**  
\*\*\* 1/2

It's a bloody battle as the Vikings head west to discover new lands and new people to rid of their treasures.

The haves and have-nots clash, lessons are learned about how to treat those who are different than you, and who to trust.

**LONGMIRE**  
\*\*\* 1/2

Our daughter turned us on to this series about a middle-aged Wyoming sheriff who tackles a murder an episode. Quirky characters, original plots, and some surprise endings make this a fun hour to watch.



MONKEY MAN

# ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable

## Cici




Photo credit: Ron Schmidt Photo

Cici is a beauty queen, all dressed in her pearls and ready to be part of your family! She was rescued with her eight puppies that were born under a porch. Luckily for Cici someone stepped up to help her and now she is here in RI hoping to start a new life. The great news is all of her puppies have found loving homes and now it's her turn. She is a two year old golden color Lab/Hound mix with a sweet, shy loving temperament. Cici is available at Go Fetch Rescue, contact them via their website [www.gofetchrescue.org](http://www.gofetchrescue.org) Cici hopes her forever family comes along soon!

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)




## Griffin

Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

Are you ready to get outside and enjoy exploring with a new puppy? Then meet Griffin, he can't wait to join your family! He is an adorable seven-month-old mixed breed puppy with a fun loving temperament. He's smart, adorable and hoping that you will fall in love with his photo and go to meet him at EGAPL Heart of RI at 44 Worthington Road Cranston, RI. They are open for visiting hours on Wednesday 3:00-7:00, Thursday and Friday 12:00-2:00 and Saturday 10:00-2:00. Feel free to call for more information at 401-467-3670. Griffin also has a brother and a sister who are also looking for a home!

## Stanton

(Continued from page 13)

**GWM:** Now, a bit of throw-back. Years ago, we worked together at *The Providence Journal* – many fine memories! – where your specialty was investigative journalism. What was the appeal – and importance – of that?

**MS:** Rhode Island was a theme park for journalists – you had larger-than-life figures like Raymond Patriarca and Buddy Cianci and an assortment of characters and scoundrels. Providence was a target-rich environment. I can't think of a better place to learn the craft than at *The Providence Journal* in its heyday. At the ProJo, we had a proud tradition of not only investigative reporting but also storytelling and longform narrative journalism. We had a story-of-the-month contest in the newsroom that promoted the craft of writing, and later some of those stories – and the accompanying *How I Wrote the Story* – were published in book form.

I loved holding public officials accountable and the impact that our stories had. I worked with friends and colleagues like Tracy Breton and the late Bill Malinowski and who showed me the importance of shoe-leather journalism – knocking on doors and developing sources. We had editors like Joel Rawson and Tom Heselton who encouraged us to think big and take risks. When a statewide banking crisis hit in early 1991, they took me out of the Sports department for what was supposed to be a temporary assignment to help cover it, and I never looked back.

**GWM:** And investigative journalism continues to play a vital role in a democracy, correct?

**MS:** Absolutely. Studies have found that communities that are news deserts – with no reporters keeping track of what's happening in town hall or at the State House – have higher rates of corruption and lower levels of voter participation.

**GWM:** You were on the team that won the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting. For those who may not know, tells us about what you investigated and the findings.

**MS:** When I was covering the banking crisis, I developed a State House source who had inside information about a patronage empire that former House Speaker Matthew Smith had built at the state courts, where he had landed a cushy job as state court administrator. Later, other ProJo reporters got wind of the fact that Smith had hired the n-er-do-well son of a political figure, who then stole money from a court fund. When Smith found out, he and his confederates covered it up. We wrote stories about that, then moved on to report on the patronage empire of Smith and Rhode Island Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Fay, who had been Smith's State House ally before his appointment to the bench. That led to criminal investigations and their resignations.

**GWM:** You are also an author. Your first book was the best-selling "The Prince of Providence." For those who may not have read it, give us an overview.

**MS:** After we won the Pulitzer, several reporters on the investigative team moved onto bigger jobs – Dan Barry and John Sullivan to *The New York Times*, Ira Chinoy to *The Wash-*

ington Post, Dean Starkman to *The Wall Street Journal*. I got a 1-year Knight Fellowship at Stanford, returned to take over the ProJo's I-team, but was later offered a job at *The Wall Street Journal*. I accepted the job on a Friday, didn't feel good about it over the weekend, then turned it down on Monday. One reason I changed my mind: there were rumblings of a federal corruption probe of Providence City Hall, and I had this idea about writing a book about the case and Buddy Cianci. I knew if I left that I would never write that book.

Buddy was a colorful character who had gained a nationwide following and who embodied the best and worst of American politics – All The King's Men meets *Goodfellas*. I called Jon Karp, a rising star at Random House who had gone to Brown and then worked briefly as a reporter at the ProJo. His immediate reaction: "I've been WAITING for someone to write a book about Buddy." He connected me to his former Brown classmate, Andrew Blauner, who became my literary agent. I wrote a book proposal and sold it to Random House in the months after the FBI raided City Hall and Operation Plunder Dome became public. (Another publisher who bid on the book had published a landmark biography of Huey Long, which I thought put Buddy in good company! He wanted me to call my book *Rogue*, but I liked the alliterative *Prince of Providence*, with its bow to Machiavelli.)

I initially intended *The Prince of Providence* to chronicle the case – with the question of whether Buddy would survive serving as the narrative thread. But as I dug into the rich history, Plunder Dome became just the second half of the book. The first half deals with Buddy's rise and his first downfall – his early career as a Mafia prosecutor, his upset election in 1974 as Providence's first Italian American mayor (and the anti-corruption candidate!), his first reign as major and downfall amidst corruption and the assault of his estranged wife's suspected boyfriend with a fireplace log and lit cigarette. Remarkably, of course, Buddy made a triumphant comeback six years later to preside over the Providence Renaissance (the moving of the rivers, Waterfire, etc.) until he was finally brought down by Operation Plunder Dome. The City of Providence and its rich history – Roger Williams, the Industrial Revolution, immigration, the Mafia, machine politics – is also a major character. The book became a surprise *New York Times* bestseller and endures to this day as a classic on American and urban politics. People give it to people who move to Providence as a way of learning about their new home. *The Prince of Providence* was adapted into a hugely successful play at Trinity Rep in 2019 (the theater's biggest hit ever outside its annual Christmas Carol). It still awaits a movie adaption that has stalled several times, despite interest from actors ranging from Russell Crowe to Oliver Platt.

**GWM:** And tell us about your 2019 title, "Unbeaten: Rocky Marciano's Fight for Perfection in a Crooked World."

**MS:** Rocky Marciano, from Brockton, Mass., is history's only unbeaten heavyweight boxing champion. I knew about him, but in researching *The*

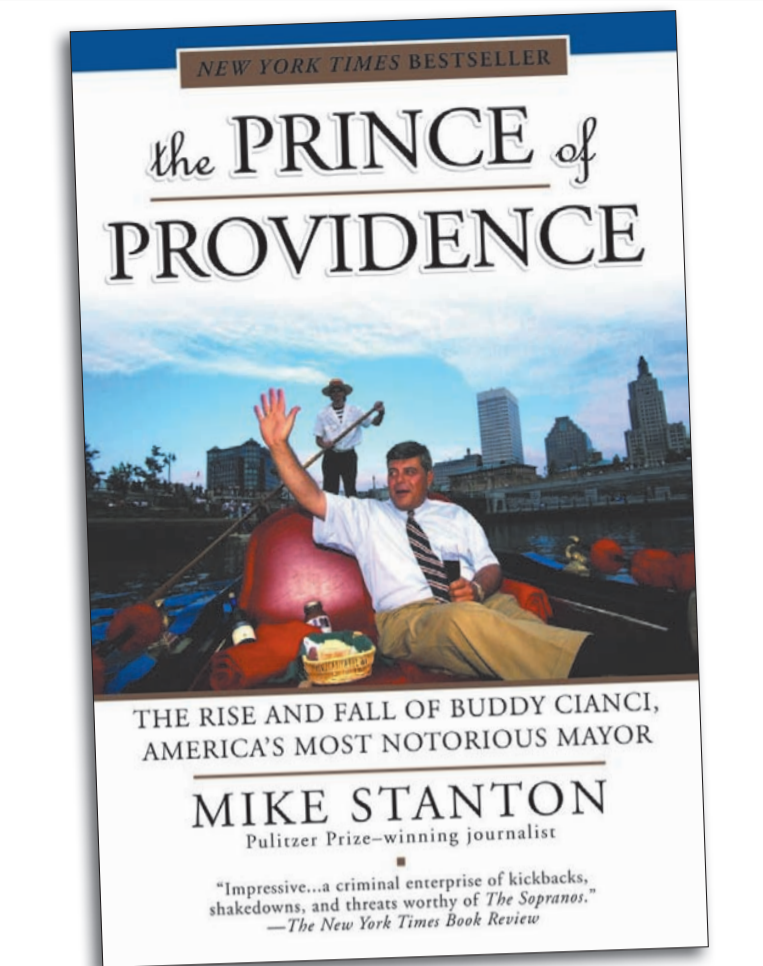
*Prince of Providence*, I learned that Buddy Cianci as a boy would go to the old Rhode Island Auditorium to watch Rocky fight in the late 1940s. Turns out Rocky fought 29 times in Providence enroute to the title. Then, after my father died, I was going through his papers and found an autographed Rocky poster – Dad had gone to Bryant in the early 1950s, when the campus was in Providence, and met Rocky. I was fascinated to re-create this Runyonesque, Guys & Dolls world of mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century America, when boxing was as popular as the NFL is today, with celebrity studded, sold-out fights in Madison Square Garden and Yankee Stadium. Boxing also embodied the immigrant struggle. And the sport was controlled by the Mafia, which was notorious for fixing fights and in fact tried to, and may have, fixed a few of Rocky's fights. I was fascinated at how Rocky navigated the corrupt and brutal world of boxing to achieve perfection, then walked away in his prime – which few athletes do – with that 49-0 record. Later in life, in retirement, he bonded with his seemingly polar opposite, Muhammad Ali. I interviewed Ali's wife at the time, who told me how Ali and Marciano discussed going to American's inner cities together to preach racial harmony. This was amidst the riots of the late 1960s – and weeks before Marciano's death in a plane crash, so it never happened. I wrote *Unbeaten* as a social history that appeals to people who aren't hard-core boxing fans, and it won praise as a best book of the year from *The Boston Globe*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Times of London*. It's the only definitive biography of Rocky, and I uncovered some previously unknown stuff – like his Army court-martial in England during World War II. I remember going to the National Archives and that aha moment when I discovered a complete transcript of the court martial, old medical records and even Rocky's mugshot, which appears in the book.

**GWM:** In addition to everything else, you were a *Boston Globe* Spotlight fellow. What did that entail?

**MS:** That was a cool experience. The Hollywood filmmakers of the Academy Award-winning film *Spotlight* funded a fellowship at the *Globe* for investigative reporting. The *Globe's* Spotlight Team is the gold standard, especially for a kid who grew up in New England. Years ago, I'd been a finalist for a job at Spotlight but didn't get hired. I applied for the fellowship with a proposal to write about the natural gas industry in New England. I focused on the controversial construction of a natural-gas compressor on the waterfront south of Boston, in Weymouth. It was the lynchpin in a major gas line from Pennsylvania that feeds New England. I used that story to show how state and federal agencies that approve big energy projects are often captured by industry, with local residents who fight the projects for health, safety and climate-change reasons standing little chance against these Goliaths.

**GWM:** The decline of legacy newspapers has left many parts of the country news deserts – and gutted many once-leading publications. What threat does that pose to communities and democracy in general?

**MS:** It creates a vacuum that



"The Prince of Providence" was originally published in 2003 and the paperback version become available in 2004.

is filled by disinformation and puts people in silos, leaving them disconnected and unable to agree on basic facts. Look at the recent Baltimore bridge disaster. Instead of focusing on what happened, you have some people claiming on social media that the accident was caused by diversity and equity initiatives.

We talk about this a lot in my classes at UConn. As I mentioned earlier, studies show that in the absence of local news coverage, voter participation declines and corruption rises. This is not a partisan thing – this is about simply telling people what's happening on their town council, with their city budget, at their police department, in their schools. I had a student at UConn from Long Island – the district where George Santos was elected to Congress – and she spoke in class about how, during his campaign, few reporters paid attention to the gaping holes in Santos's resume. There was one small local paper that wrote some things, she said, but few people paid attention. If reporters had been watching, Santos probably wouldn't have been elected.

**GWM:** Talk about role being played by the many non-profit online news outlets that have emerged in recent years. You are vice chair of the board of *ecoRI News*, a publication partner of *Ocean State Stories*, which is also a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

**MS:** This is an exciting development in journalism – the efforts of various non-profits to fill the vacuum left by the decline of legacy media. We're in the midst of an exciting expansion at *ecoRI News*. We have a Report for America reporter, Colleen Cronin. We have a new editor, Bonnie Phillips – a Rhode Island native who spent years as a top editor at the *Hartford Courant*, which won the Pulitzer for breaking news in 1999 for the Connecticut Lottery shootings and which was a finalist in 2013 for the Sandy Hook shootings. Frank Carini, our co-founder and one of our writers/columnists, was recently recognized for his environmental writing by being Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse's guest at the State of the Union address. Other newsrooms, like Rhode

Island Current and *Ocean State Stories*, are providing new forums. Rhode Island's public radio and television stations are merging. I did really some fun stories about Narragansett Bay and seafood last year for *ecoRI News* as part of a new partnership with Rhode Island Public Television that also aired as a story on RI PBS Weekly. It was great working with them – they taught this old dog some new tricks! The Rhode Island Foundation is looking at ways to support local news as part of a new national initiative called Press Forward, which has the backing of such groups as the MacArthur Foundation and the Knight Foundation. I'm excited to see where that goes.

**GWM:** What's next for Mike Stanton?

**MS:** In the short term, I'm looking forward to hosting author talks later this month with two writers with Rhode Island ties whom I admire.

On April 20, at Barrington Books, I'll be talking with best-selling author Don Winslow about the final book in his Rhode Island/Danny Ryan trilogy, *City in Ruins*, about a Providence mob war based on the Iliad.

And on April 25, at Books on the Square, I'll be talking to former Providence Phoenix editor and local freelance author Phil Eil about his new book, *Prescription for Pain*, which chronicles a remarkable true-crime case of a major pill-mill doctor in the opioid epidemic.

As for my own writing, it's funny how one book leads to another. Writing about Buddy Cianci and Rocky Marciano, one name that kept popping up was Raymond Patriarca, the longtime former New England Mafia boss. I'm working on a biography of him. There's no timeline yet. I'm going through the voluminous files I've gathered over the years, including his 7,000-page FBI file, to organize the story and develop a book proposal. There's some wild and crazy stuff there! I'm excited to tell the story of a man whose life encompasses the rise and fall of the American Mafia, from the bootlegging days of Prohibition to the rise of the Las Vegas casinos.

I call it my Rhode Island Trilogy!

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## A Collector's Legacy turned Pedigree



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

drove them to collect and become who they were. I first consigned and began processing the Andy Yanchus Collection in July 2022, which has become nearly a two year journey down one of the greatest learning experiences I could ever ask for. With such a wide range of material the collection was broken down into five cataloged auctions in addition to numerous monthly DiscoverIt sales. Later this month on April 27th the final chapter, Part V of the Andy Yanchus Collection, will cross the block bringing an end to the most significant collection we have handled as a company. The best part: it certainly ends with a bang!

Andy's collection was filled with many surprises and high value discoveries. However, in the last few boxes I did not expect to find what many collectors would consider to be the most comprehensive collection of 1950's through 1970's non-sport trading cards to come to public auction. In addition to regularly released card sets, Andy's collection contains numerous preproduction, unre-



leased, and promotional Topps items, some of which have never been offered on the market before. The collection was so extensive we were able to establish a pedigree with CGC!

What is a pedigree and why is it important? Per CGC: "Countless collections have surfaced over the years... but every now and then a collection is found that is so exceptional that it becomes a recognized pedigree." This means that every one of the 1,100+ cards we submitted

to CGC for grading will be identified with a custom label indicating the card is from the "Andy Yanchus Collection."

There is so much to mention it would be impossible to list it all, but if it was a non-sport trading card produced or even a test set that never made it to market, Andy had it. 1969 Planet of the Apes black border cards and 1968 Julia unreleased cards are just a few of the rare and stellar highlights found in Andy's collection. I can truly say, it's a once in a lifetime find. If you are a trading card fanatic or someone eager to learn, this is the collection to study. Plus, the best part for collectors, is it is all being sold with no reserve to the highest bidder on April 27th!



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 melissam@rhodybeat.com  
 p 401-732-3100  
 1944 WARWICK AVENUE, WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND 02889

