



SECOND PLACE: Johnston High School came in second place, and will proceed to the national virtual competition in April. (Sun Rise photos)

BRAINY BUNCH

After last year's virtual competition, the 39th annual Rhode Island Academic Decathlon assembled Sunday in-person in a demonstration of "resilient brain power" at Bryant University's Innovation Center.

Johnston High School scored a second place finish in the competition, and will proceed to the national virtual competition in April.

This year's Johnston High team featured the intellectual talents of the following students: Mackenzie Hanna, Cameron Tum, Emily Patenaude, Neko Mahony, Ariana Medeiros, Alyssa Pascale, Christopher LaPlante, Benjamin Annicelli, Isabella Ribezzo, Victor Fragoso, Julia Droukas, Jonas Littlefield, Briana Dominique, Sam Dominique and Andrea Muriel. The team was coached by Kerry Murphy and Debbie Smyth.

For more details from the Decathlon, turn to Page 9.



QUIET, LISTEN: Andrea Muriel, a member of Johnston's team, held a shell to her ear prior to the competition. This year's Decathlon theme was "Water," and the competition room was full of nautical details.

'This is Communism at its best'

Johnston joins Warwick and Woonsocket in opposition to RI 'middle housing' bills

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston Town Council may be poised to follow Warwick and Woonsocket city councils in condemning pending legislation that calls for bans on single-family residential zoning in communities like Johnston, with populations over 20,000, and requiring those towns and cities to adopt "middle housing" regulations.

"This is insanity," Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena said this week. "What they're doing is usurping the powers of planning and zoning. This is Communism at its best."

The pending legislation, known as House Bill 2022-H6638, has been sponsored by state Rep. Brianna Henries (District 64, East Providence), Rep. Karen Alzate (District 60, Pawtucket), and Rep. David Morales (District 7, Providence).

The legislators argue the bill would "expand the supply of affordable housing in urban areas, reduce homelessness, and allow Rhode Island residents to access essential services more easily" by requiring the "rezoning of areas formerly zoned as single-family."

■ BILLS - PAGE 6

Five new solar fields get Planning Board master plan approval

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston's running low on open space.

Following a unanimous decision by the Johnston Planning Board, more than 300 acres in town may soon be partially cleared and covered by industrial solar panels.

"If we get rid of these last few open parcels, I'm not sure how much open space we have remaining in town," said Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti. "At some point we still need to maintain the character of the town. And we're slowly losing that."

Cranston-based Green Development has pitched five new solar array projects for western Johnston. They've made a pair of planning board appearances over the past month.

On Thursday, the Johnston Planning Board voted to approve the master plans for five proposed solar fields constructed on mostly wooded plots across approximately 325 acres.

Green Development proposed five master plans for five separate solar fields off Elmgrove Avenue, Harilla Lane and Winsor Avenue.

The first attempt to hear the master plan presentation went haywire on Feb. 15, as planning board officials struggled to get audio and video equipment to function, in order to broadcast the live meeting online.

After more than an hour grappling with the AV issues, the board eventually decided to delay the solar field discussions until last week, March 3.

Concerned abutters, Civetti, and others packed the Johnston Municipal Court building at 1600 Atwood Ave. Thursday evening. Johnston Fire Chief Peter J. Lamb kept count at the door, ensuring the meeting's attendance didn't break the building's 87-body occupancy limit.

■ SOLAR - PAGE 5

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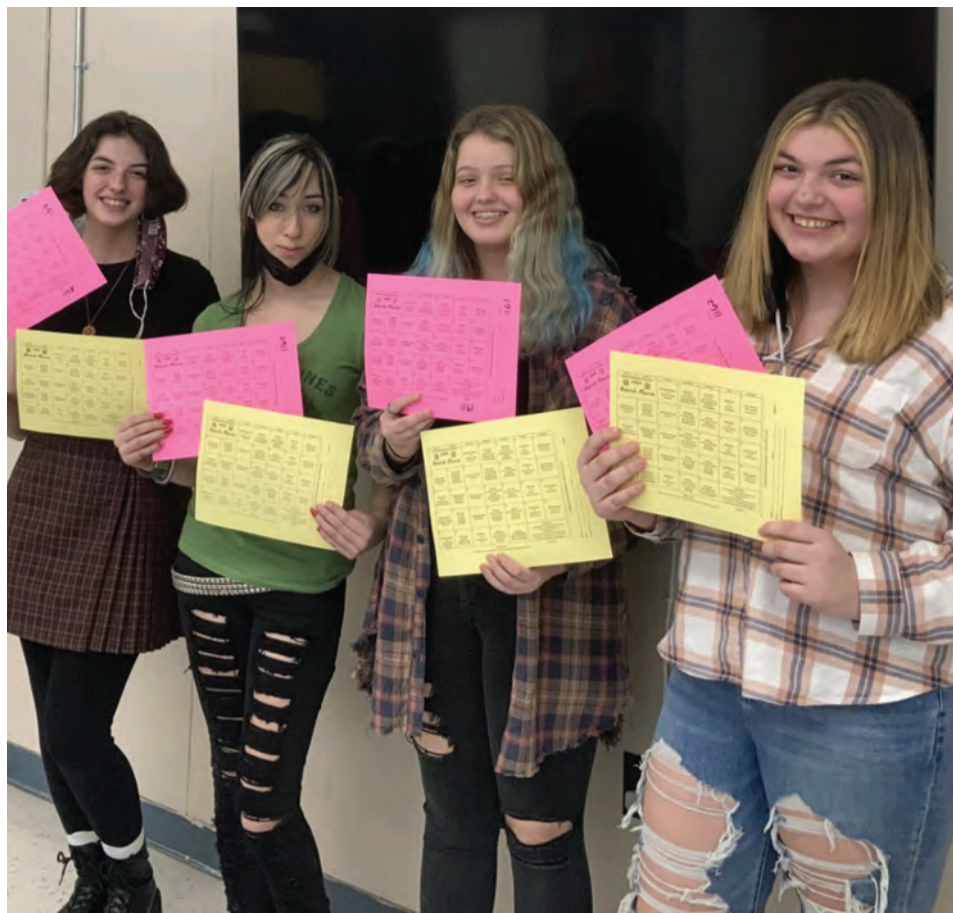
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SUPER SELLERS: JHS students Alyssa Pascale, Isabella Ribezzo, Trinity Blondin and Gabriella Pascale show off some of the 1,202 calendars that were sold during the highly-successful fundraiser that will help fund the music students April 7-11 trip to Williamsburg, Va. (Photo courtesy Steve Turiei)

Calendar raffle sales double last year's

By PETE FONTAINE

“Thank You Johnston!” exclaimed Ron Lamoureux, chairman of Johnston High School’s national award-winning Music Department. “With so much generosity from many, many donors, we raised thousands of dollars during our Calendar Raffle that will go a long way towards funding our April 7-11 trip to Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Va.”

In all, as Lamoureux said with excitement ringing in his voice: “The kids and parents as well as members of the Johnston School Music Association were really motivated about the upcoming trip and more than doubled last year’s sales in a matter of just a few weeks.”

How motivated!

“Last year we sold 500 calendars,” the popular music leader offered. “This time, we sold an extraordinary total of 1,202 calendars at \$10 each.”

All of which means that JHS vocalists and musicians — as students have done in previous years — will have an opportunity to prove their mettle and talents against high school students from all around the country during the April 7-11 Music in the Park series.

Dozens of people who purchased the calendars concurred that each of the scheduled 31-day drawing features attractive packages such as \$100 cash from Mayor Joseph Polisena, Council President Robert V. Russo, the Johnston School Committee, Police and Firefighters Unions, Johnston Lions Club and other combined winnings from council members Linda Folcarelli and Robert Civetti, State Sen. Frank Lombardo, and state Rep. Deb Fellella.

“This was a strong statement of how business owners as well residents feel about the importance of our school programs in Johnston,” offered Civetti, who along with his brother David provided several prizes including cash. “The trip is a wonderful opportunity to compete nationally and will be educational, as well.”

For example, the 50 JHS students who’ll travel to Virginia on a chartered double-decker motor-coach along with chaperones, will compete at two different high schools and later tour Williamsburg where they’ll see staffers performing work and chores as they did during a by-gone era.

“Our kids will learn a great deal watching people dressed – and working – from the colonial era,” Lamoureux. “Everyone is excited about the trip, national competition, meeting students from other states and it all will become a reality thanks to the grateful generosity of countless Johnstonians.”

Even Dave’s Marketplace and Stop & Shop put up a prize of \$200 each, while three dozen businesses — including establishments in Smithfield and Lincoln — put up prizes, as did Jason Glander of Custom Fundraising Solutions, that will hosts the JHS Music Department’s annual mattress sale fundraiser scheduled for April 2. Glander offered \$150 in cash.

Blissful Meadows Club, New England Country Club, Trigg’s Memorial Golf Course, Foster Country Club and Crystal Lake Golf Course all put up prizes for foursomes and carts.

“Many people were amazed with the prizes,” Lamoureux emphasized. “Excitement ran rampant from the first winning ticket drawing (March 1). This was again an outpouring of special and super support for our music students.”

On March 1, Tod Droukas won a \$100 gift car to Home Depot courtesy of the Johnston School Committee. Brenna Pires won \$50 to Johna’s, \$25 to English Muffins and \$25 to This Guy’s Pizza.

Other winners were: March 3 — Joshua Galaes, \$50 Target, \$25 to Providence Coal Fired Pizza; \$10, The Lighthouse Restaurant; March 4 — Trod Droukas \$100 cash; March 5-Tom Iasimone, New England Country Club; March 6, Ron, Blissful Meadows Golf; March 7— Kathy Law, \$50 Baffoni’s Poultry Farm, \$25 Wright’s Dairy,\$10 Home Fries; March 8 — Meredith McCauley, \$100 Stop Shop; March 9 — Columbia Fleming, \$50 to Silvio’s, \$25 to Chili’s, \$25 IHOP of Lincoln.

The drawings will continue and as Lamoureux pointed out: “These are busy times for our kids. In addition to their studies and rehearsals, they’ve be at Kirkbrae Country Club to help kickoff (tonight’s) NorthCentral Chamber of Commerce special event.”

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High Honors

Mohammed Abaherah
Joseph Acciaro
Melissa Aguilar
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Lucas Anderson
Benjamin Annicelli
Benjamin Bejnar
Allison Benoit
Kevin Biscelli
Trinity Blondin
Macenzie Buddenhagen
Tyler Buote
Brooklin Califano
Vincent Chan
Janet Clements
Albion Cortesi
Glorianna Crichlow
Giuseppe Cucinotta
Jazmin Cuello-Pineda
Kelly Dargy
Courtney Dias
Michael DiIorio
Jullia Droukas
Willson El Hage
Alexia Evangelista
Caitlin Fasteson
Gezelle Fernandez
Cameron Ferrara
Victor Fragoso
Amanda Giron Caballero
Marco Goris
Jonathan Guilmette
Mackenzie Hanna
Nicholas Harrington
Emma Homenick
Aliyah Hunt
Emily Iannuccilli
Kyle Iannuccillo
Siera Jeetan
Emily Klein
Hannah Klein
Lucio La Terra Bellina
Brenton Lang
Jaylin Loeum
Dylan Lussier
Cassie Magnone
Neko Mahony
Samantha Marcotte
Logan Martins
Peyton McClish
Alicia McCoy
Jeremy Melise
Jaylen Molina
Carlos Monteiro
Neriah Nhar-Matko
Brendon Norris
Janelle Nunez
Ayomide Olagundoye
Lilian Oliva Garcia
Sebastian Orozco
Ava Palma
Emily Patenaude
Nicole Patenaude
Noelle Patenaude
Joshua Philbrick
Genesis Pineda
Shannon Pistocco
Candace Raposo
Tyler Renaud
Noe Reyes-Estrada
Gianna Ricci
Yandery Rodriguez
Janzel Roquez
Steffi Rotella
Phoenix Russell
Derek Salvatore
Selina Santanelli
Kasem Sasa

Ryan Schino
Makayla Scuncio
Joseph Silvia
Aiden Soto
Ariana Stoecker
Carl Taglianetti
Luke Taglianetti
Jayden Testa
Joseph Thomas
Bobbi'Sue Trahan
Jared Trotter
Cameron Tum
Jacqueline Urizar
Cameron Vanstone
Joseph Vento
Nathen Zalisk
Catrina Zinni
Total High Honors: 95

1st Honors
Nicki Aucone
Logan Brennan
Gianna Brodeur
Hailey Brown
Emily Buddenhagen
Georgiana Cardullo
Michael Cepeda
Dylan Cerio
Henri Chan
Matthew Clements
Rebecca Clements
Elise Connors
Charles Curci
Enaijah De La Cruz
Antonio DeFalco
Alyson DelaRoca
Alexia DiLorenzo
Adrianna Dinucci
Samson D'Uva
Jennelle Fernandez
Maya Ferreira
Makaila Fosu
Roman-De Furtado
Jasmin Guerrero
James Guilmette
Carlos Gutierrez Deleon
Shannon Hartley
Charlene Hohmaier
Malikai Hopp
Mineishka Hunt
Vanessa Javery
Ava Khoury
Fujiy Kue
Talia Laflamme
Christopher LaPlante
Savhanna Larivee
Nina Lautieri
Chelsea Maranhao
Ariana Medeiros
Ava Melo
Manee Men
Dylan Moore
Karissa Morales
Eliyahna Negrón
Elijah Odhiambo
Gianna Orozco
Alyssa Pascale
Gabriella Pascale
Caroline Pesenecker
Allan Pineda
Emily Placella
Jenna Poland
Malakai Quinones
Dylan Robbins
Justin Rogala
Celeste Santanelli
Raylin Santos
Athena Sin
Sheyla Soto

Matthew Sou
Parker Sylvia
Branden Testa
Abraham Tillet
Ariana Torres Morales
Lena Torti
Jackson Troxell
Victoria Venditelli
Patrick Waldron
Danielle Warren
Austin Wheeler
Dominic Whitten
Total 1st Honors: 71

2nd Honors
Ferlandi Aguilar Lopez
Santiago Aguilar
Logan Hayden Akins
Amelia Akkaoui
Saad Alam
Carlos Alfaia
Emily Anderson
Jenna Aucone
Samantha Bayona
Sadie Bun
Melanie Capraro
Michael Carlino
Dariana Carrascoza
Morgan Carrier
Ryan Carvalho
Joseph Centeno-Gonzalez
Michael Chavier
Sofia China
Raymond Cimino
Elyssa Collins
Haley Connors
Evan Correia
Julian Correia
Juliana Correia
Elliot Cortesi
Yohani Cortez
Phillip Costantini
Carprece Daigle
Kyle D'Alessandro
Arianna Dandy
Timothy Davis
Armando DeCosta
Kathleen DeLeon
Anthony DiBiasio
Samantha DiMaio
Tyler Diodati
Santo DiRaimo
Lauren Dixon
Briana Dominique
James Estrada
Rudy Estrada
Landon Faucher
Emily Feinstein
Dominique Ferrazzano
Zachary Ferry
Joseph Forte
Stanley Garcia
Sarah Gasbarro
Kyle Glode
Serenity Gonzalez
Robert Graham
Riley Guenette
Caleb Guimaraes
Gianna Halliwell
Zachary Hanna
Lauren Hill
Susana Huevo
Dineishka Hunt
Ariana Iasimone
Jada Irons
Michelina Irons
Rachel Ixcotoyac
Faith Khang
Aiden Lariviere

Karen Lastor Rojas
Noah Lavergne
Thadeus Leomensah
Jonas Littlefield
Katelyn Loffler
Joseph Lopez Tavares
Eric Luna
Isabella Maggiacomo
Gabriella Manchester
Samantha Marcotte
Balla Marone
Mouhamadou Marone
Dylan Martins
Joseph Matteo
Cameron Mattson
Maylin McAteer
Samuel McLellan
Milana Melvin
Gabriela Mercado
Jiana Mitsoulis
Benjamin Monahan
Isaiah Montoya
Desiree Morales
Mia Mowry
Jacob Muller
Hector Munoz-Lopez
Connor Niles
Jose Noriega
McKayla Osinger
Jeremy Ovalles
Edgar Pacheco-Ortiz
David Pagliarini
Aliyah Pagliaro
Lexie Palma
Dean Paris
James Pastore
Loren Pastore
Preston Penn
Alessandra Pesare
Juliana Pires
Emily Pistocco
Xavier Pol
Matthew Ponte
Kaylee Poole
Skyla Prata
Alexander Quesada
Danny Quinn
Donavin Quinones
Christopher Ragosta
Isabella Ragosta
Sydney Raposo
Alexis Rattray
Michelle Recinos
Hunter Remington
Nicholas Rianna
Sophia Ribezzo
Raleigh Richard
Anthony Rini
Danielson Rivas
Diana Rosales
Alaysia Royal
Lana Salamone
Abigail Salas
Lilianna Salois
Joshua Sanford
Miguel Santamaria Romero
Jesse Santillan
Lexianna Santos
Christian Sarmiento
Shanna Scopelliti
Vena Seyon
Andrew Sia
Julia Sidoti
Shane Simeone
Jonathan Simpson
Kenneth Smith
Christian Sonner
Ricsa Soth
Marlon Soto

Shylah Soto
Brandon Souza
Jacob Spinella
Ryan St. Lawrence
Michael Stone
Emmerson Sylvia
Chantal Torres
Dariel Urena
Jeremy Urena
Jared Urizar-Santos
Gianna Usenia
Kaylee Vanstone
Anghelina Vejarano
Nicolas Viau
William Vizcaino
Cameron Walker
Jordan (Fae) Weston
Victoria Winsor
Total 2nd Honors: 161

3rd Honors
Jacob Abbruzzi
Abigail Andres
Jahzara Asencio
Ryan Audino
Gabriel Bandoma
Gustavo Barroza
Sean Beliveau
Kalina Bonetti
Annabella Brennan
Mark Brouwer
Victoria Butler
Samuel Cambranes
Jacob Carr
Christopher Civetti
Evan Correia
Anthony Corsinetti
Devin DelSanto
Alex Fedorchuk
John Ford
Robert Franchini
Joshua Galeas
Ayberson Garcia Cruz
Valeria Gomez
Jose Gonzalez
Kayla Gruttadauria
Adam Hernandez
Ashley Lainez Natareno
Nathan Langlois
Hannah Lavergne
Jared Lee
Andrew Lyman
Nicholas Lyon
Kelli-Lynn Miller
Jonathan Morris
Andrea Muriel
Tyson O'Donnell
Gregory Panarello
Alexis (Alex) Pannone
Elisabeth Parrillo
Abigail Patnaude
Jianilda Perez Figueroa
Michael Perugino
Daniel Peterson
Catherine Privitera
Kenneth Privitera
Joshua Ramos-Ortiz
Ryan Rentas
Katie Rodriguez
Jayanah Rollins
Anthony Sevigny
Ariel Shelly
Brandon Simonelli
Collin Sonner
Alejandra Torres Morales
Sarah Vasquez
Nicholas Williams
Total 3rd Honors: 56

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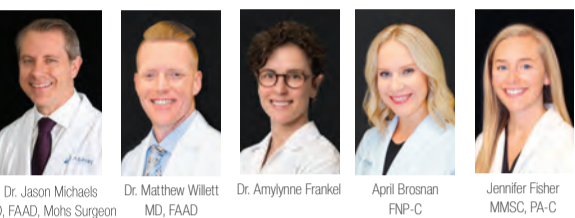
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JOHNSTON WIND: Green Development built and operates the Johnston Wind Project, along Plainfield Pike and Shun Turnpike in Johnston. Johnston Wind consists of seven 3-MW wind turbines completed in 2018 and operational since December 2018. (Photo courtesy Green Development)



JOHNSTON-SCITUATE SOLAR: The Johnston-Scituate solar project, a 4.675 MW solar project on 17 acres along Scituate Avenue in Johnston, has been operational since 2021. (Photo courtesy Green Development)

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FIRST MEETING: A concerned abutter holds a site map showing one of five proposed new solar fields. Surrounding property owners are trying to get project details. The Johnston Senior Center was packed on Feb. 15 for the first meeting on the project's five master plans. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



SECOND MEETING: Above and below, on March 3, the Johnston Planning Board unanimously approved master plans for five new solar fields in western Johnston. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

■ Solar

(Continued from page 1)

Kevin Morin, Director of Engineering & Project Development for Green Development, delivered his company's solar field pitch. He assured the board that the solar fields would require minimum attention from town services and the properties may be available for future development after two decades.

Morin also reminded residents that, due to local ordinance, each solar field will generate money for the town's scholarship fund.

"The Planning Board unanimously passed the approval of the master plans," Civetti said. "It now goes to zoning for approval of special use variants. If approved, it goes back to planning where they can get many more details."

The five projects include — a 1.0 Megawatt solar field, called, GD Johnston Elmgrove II, at 25 Elmgrove Ave. (AP 51 Lot 4, zoned R40); GD Johnston Harilla I, a 2.25 MW solar field at 28 Harilla Lane (AP 51 Lots 9 & 11, zoned R40); GD Johnston Winsor I, a 4.0 MW solar field at 46 Winsor Ave. (AP 60 Lot 4, zoned R40); GD Johnston Winsor II, a proposed 8.0 MW solar field at 86 Winsor Ave (AP 60 Lots 2, 20, 86, zoned R20 & R40); and GD Johnston Winsor III, a proposed 24.0 MW solar field at 112 Winsor Ave. (AP 59 Lot 15, zoned R40).

"My opinion is mixed," Civetti said following the conclusion of the botched Feb. 15 meeting. "I don't have enough details."

Following the March 3 meeting, Civetti said he still had doubts the project would be the best option for the five residentially zoned parcels.

"I think there's still a lot of uncertainties," Civetti said on Tuesday. "It's not so much the project going there, it's the magnitude of it. What sort of buffers will be in place? How will it be situated on the property? Ultimately, especially the largest parcel, there's a lot of wetlands. What are they clearing?"

The proposed solar arrays are not Green Develop-

ment's first foray into Johnston.

The Johnston-Scituate solar project, a 4.675 MW solar project on 17 acres along Scituate Avenue in Johnston, has been operational since 2021.

Green Development owns, operates, and maintains the solar array and sells power to National Grid through the Renewable Energy Growth (REG) program, according to the company's website.

The firm is also behind the Johnston Wind Project, along Plainfield Pike and Shun Turnpike in Johnston.

Johnston Wind consists of seven 3-MW wind turbines completed in 2018 and operational since December 2018.

Now that the Planning Board has approved the master plans, Green Development will now be required to appear before the town's Zoning Board.

"Solar's your best neighbor," Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena said in an interview Tuesday afternoon. "This is an option. A developer could put houses there instead of solar."

Solar fields don't have children to educate. They don't generate trash for the town to haul away. Vehicles accessing the sites will be minimal once the fields are constructed and operational. And so far, Polisena said, Green Development have been solid community partners.

"There's always that argument," Civetti countered. "What does it cost to put houses there? As a resident in that area, many have told me they'd rather look out a window and see a home on that property. There are reports out there that if you live next to one of these solar farms your property value reduces 7 percent. I think a lot of people I talk to, they'd rather look at a house than industrial solar panels."

The Planning Board and Town Planner Thomas Deller have pledged to update the town's Comprehensive Plan. For now, the planning documents don't adequately address solar projects.

"It's silent in our Comprehensive Plan," Civetti said. "Until that new Comprehensive Plan is prepared and it covers solar farms, maybe we're at the point where we have to hold off for now."




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

(Continued from page 1)

"It would also create the development of middle housing within areas formerly zoned as single-family areas and reduce the use of automobiles," according to the bill's opening paragraph, or "legislative purpose."

Parallel legislation, S 2340, has also been introduced in the state Senate.

On Feb. 21, Woonsocket City Council voted unanimously to pass a resolution in opposition to the bill. On Monday night, Warwick City Council followed with its own resolution.

According to the resolution, Warwick City Council asserts that the legislation "would prohibit single-family residential zoning in municipalities with populations over twenty thousand (20,000) and mandate the adoption of zoning regulations for middle housing in single-family residential zones."

"The model middle housing ordinance to be created by the state building code standards committee would override local ordinances should municipal governing bodies fail to amend their comprehensive plan to provide for middle housing by June 30, 2023," according to the resolution.

The bills would "usurp the traditional zoning power of cities and towns to comprehensively regulate, on a local level, the land use in their communities and would overtax local communities' availability to provide adequate public safety measures and other necessary municipal services," according to the Warwick City Council resolution.

The Warwick City Council "respectfully urges the Rhode Island General Assembly not to pass the Bills."

Polisena said his son, Town Council Vice President Joe Polisena Jr., will introduce a similar resolution at the board's regular monthly meeting next week.

"People in this state better wake up come election time," Mayor Polisena warned Tuesday afternoon. "This is the most absurd legislation — and I was a

state senator for 12 years — that I've ever seen in my life. It's absurd. It's disgusting."

In response to Woonsocket's council resolution, Rep. Henries Tweeted in defense of her bill.

"What drives the legislation I introduce today is my experiences with homelessness as a kid," Henries wrote. "While my mother working full time in the housing industry, my family still couldn't afford rent because in Rhode Island wages are too low and affordable housing is scarce. That's why I'm proud to be introducing legislation to undo Jim Crow restrictions on building more affordable homes ... I look forward to the day Woonsocket's city council joins me in those fights."

Polisena said Johnston's legislative delegation is "vehemently opposed" to the "middle housing" bills.

"That's insane," Polisena said in response to Henries Tweet. "It doesn't make any sense to strip the powers of cities and towns. This is a very dangerous piece of legislation. I don't want to hear about Jim Crow. They should let the cities and towns enact their own laws addressing affordable housing. This is dangerous, dangerous legislation."

Town Councilman Robert Civetti said he also worries the bills would weaken local control over planning and zoning decisions.

"Zoning really should be at the local level in my opinion," Civetti said Tuesday. "I don't think the state should be controlling our zoning laws. We have our zoning rules and regulations and ordinances for a reason. What should be built should be up to the local communities, not handed down from the state of Rhode Island."

Polisena took his concerns to a recent Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns meeting, hoping to raise awareness of the legislation among his fellow elected officials.

"I don't plan to give the State House the keys to Johnston," Polisena said. "We'll live and die by our decisions. I don't need the state coming in and mandating what I have to do, and what the council has to do."

PPL purchase of NEC paused

By RORY SCHULER

Following a decision by the Bay State's top court, the finalization of the \$5.3 billion sale of Rhode Island's primary power company has been halted.

"The closing on the sale of Narragansett Electric to PPL has been put on hold by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court," according to Kristy dos-Reis, spokeswoman for Attorney General Peter F. Neronha. "The Attorney General looks forward to the opportunity to fully argue its appeal before the Superior Court."

Two weeks ago, the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (RIDPUC) approved the sale of Narragansett Electric Company (NEC), which provides power to nearly every electric customer in the Ocean State. In an attempt to stop the sale, Neronha's office filed an appeal, arguing the transaction may not be "in the best interest of Rhode Islanders."

Nearly all Rhode Island power customers buy electricity from a single source, the NEC, currently owned by National Grid. The Allentown, Pennsylvania based PPL Corporation (NYSE:PPL) released a statement in response to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision.

"Today, the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts issued a stay of a July 2021 order by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) that had cleared the way for National Grid USA, which is headquartered in Massachusetts, to complete the sale of The Narragansett Electric Company to PPL. Narragansett Electric's operations are solely within Rhode Is-

land," according to PPL. "The stay follows an appeal by the Massachusetts attorney general challenging the DPU's order. The stay will remain in effect until further order by the court."

PPL, formerly known as Pennsylvania Power & Light wants to buy NEC from its current owner, National Grid. PPL received unanimous approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to acquire NEC from National Grid USA in September 2021, for \$5.3 billion.

"We remain confident the court will find that the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities correctly issued the waiver and that the transaction can move forward," according to PPL's statement. "In the meantime, we continue to plan for a successful outcome and completion of the Narragansett acquisition. We will be prepared to close quickly with National Grid at the appropriate time. And we're excited about the opportunity to invest in Rhode Island's future and to work with the talented team at Narragansett Electric to drive significant value for Rhode Island families, businesses and communities. We do not intend to comment further on the appeal at this time."

Witnesses for PPL and the opposition delivered testimony before the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (RIDPUC) from Monday, Dec. 13, through Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021. The agency performed "a thorough examination of the record that included participation of nine parties, 17 witnesses who offered testimony, thousands of pages of discovery, four public hearings, many public com-

ments, post hearing briefs, and reply briefs," according to Thomas F. Kogut, RIDPUC Associate Administrator.

The agency ultimately approved the sale in February, and Neronha filed a lawsuit to stop it.

"My Office has filed a motion in Rhode Island Superior Court to appeal and stay (the Feb. 23) decision by the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers to approve the sale of Narragansett Electric to Pennsylvania-based PPL," Neronha said in a statement on Thursday, Feb. 24. "This proposed transaction would have enormous consequences for all Rhode Islanders, and we will continue to advocate to ensure an electric and gas utility that is in the best interests of Rhode Islanders and that complies with Rhode Island law."

Massachusetts-based National Grid USA cleared Bay State regulators when they waived oversight of the transaction. However, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey opposed the decision, requesting a stay from the Supreme Judicial Court, which was granted last week. Massachusetts' highest court may decide the case as soon as May, and in the meantime Neronha's challenge will hang in the balance.

"Important development," Neronha Tweeted from his personal Twitter account on March 3. "Now more likely this change of utility ownership will get full court review. By law regulators aren't the last word — courts are. Trying to ram a transaction through on regulator approval alone before judicial review can happen says a lot. None of it good."

VOTING BALLOT Best Zeppoles Contest



Cast your vote for the best Zeppoles:

- Original Italian Bakery
- Palmieri's Bakery
- Bread Boss
- Calvitto's Bakery
- Solitro's Bakery
- DeLuise Bakery
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Winner announced in the March 17th issue of the Cranston Herald & Johnston SunRise

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Opinion

EDITORIAL

Democracy's price

Rhode Islanders are already experiencing unprecedented sticker shock at the gas pumps, and that pain is unlikely to fade any time soon. However, understanding one of the primary causes for this — instability created by Vladimir Putin's maniacal decision to engage in a bloody and unjustifiable invasion of neighboring Ukraine — should also serve as a reminder to all of us why this price is one worth paying.

Global markets and large-scale geopolitical consequences are frustratingly complex — but grappling with that complexity is essential. Despite how easy it may be to place an infantile sticker of Joe Biden mockingly proclaiming "I did that" next to the price ticker on gas pumps throughout the state, anyone with even an elementary understanding of the mechanics that cause gas prices to ebb and flow will concur that, alas, it is not so simple.

Gas prices being the highest we've ever seen is not the result of one president, or any one entity. It is the result of a mass of complicated factors. Some of those factors include a simple increase in the demand of gasoline, which normally occurs as the weather gets nicer and people venture out into the world. The easing of Covid restrictions and our acceptance of the virus as a new endemic part of our lives is also likely increasing our demand for more gas to get back out into the world, driving up prices as a result.

With increasing demand, the supply of gasoline becomes more important. And the conflict in Ukraine has resulted in big changes in the supply chain of oil — on top of the historic trend of inflation that has been affecting oil prices for years prior to this moment in time. Fossil fuel companies play a major role in this as well, and should not be excused for their role in price manipulation.

The Biden administration has been forced to open up its retaliatory playbook in order to satisfactorily punish Russia for its aggression without potentially causing World War 3 by utilizing any direct military response. It cannot be understated how delicate of a balancing act this is.

By banning the import of Russian oil and gas, as was done Tuesday morning, the President has taken a calculated risk, during a key midterm election year, that the pain this will cause Americans at the gas pumps will be overridden by the more important show of support it provides to the free world, and to democracy as a concept in general.

Russia only contributes 10 percent of America's crude oil. We have vast reserves and untapped land, as well as relationships with other oil-producing countries (which are also problematic, but less so than Russia, currently) that can be utilized to re-balance the scales and, eventually, push prices back down to reasonable levels.

What we cannot allow, however, is for one tyrannical madman to set a precedent that invading a sovereign nation on a false pretense of persecution and rightful ownership of that country will go unpunished. The world hangs in an historical balance today where authoritarian regimes, like Putin's Russia, will test and re-test the boundaries of their ability to usurp and crumple the pillars of democracy. By taking a stand on Russian oil, the Biden administration has, at great political risk, shown a dedication to defending democracy from those types of ill-willed combatants.

It might hurt us in the wallet for a while, but \$50 for a tank of gas instead of \$30 is a comparatively small price to pay when we are seeing real, horrific acts of violence being perpetrated on innocent Ukrainian men, women and children each day.

American history is flush with examples of its people sacrificing their own comforts for a greater good, in war time and in peace time. Today's gas prices are a microcosm of a much grander struggle occurring, and we must be committed to ponying up our share for the preservation of freedom and democracy.



CNE future, 'non profit is in our DNA,' Fanale

TALKING POLITICS



by
IAN
DONNIS

STORY OF THE WEEK

The biggest certainty about Rhode Island's hospital landscape is that more changes are ahead. After state and federal regulators recently rejected the Lifespan-Care New England merger, CNE President/CEO Dr. James Fanale told me this week, "We are doing our due diligence on all options and keeping all options open." CNE includes Kent Hospital in Warwick and Butler and Women & Infants hospitals in Providence. Fanale said CNE's financial challenges stem from how it lost more than \$100 million on the now-shuttered Memorial Hospital in Pawtucket. "If we didn't have that now and had that cash in the bank, we would have a liquid balance sheet, we wouldn't be in the shape we're in," he said. "But you can't go back." On the rejection of the merger, Fanale didn't dispute the combined market share it would represent — panned by regulators as anti-competitive — although he maintained that healthcare quality would not suffer through a merger, and that fears about higher costs "would be drastically mitigated by some of the intervening powers of the state." For now, it remains unclear which entities beyond StoneBridge Healthcare will make overtures for CNE. (Also uncertain is the

future ownership of Roger Williams Medical Center in Providence and Our Lady of Fatima Hospital in North Providence, now that CharterCare owner Prospect Medical Holdings is exploring a potential sale.) Any proposed transactions will be viewed through the prism of whether the buyer is from Rhode Island or out of state and whether it is a for-profit or not-for-profit organization. Asked about these differences, Fanale said they're largely about the culture of different entities. CNE's status as a not-for-profit is "in the nature of our DNA," he added. "We would prefer to stay not-for-profit, but that doesn't preclude looking at other options."

LOCAL CONTROL

Chris Koller, formerly RI's health insurance commissioner, and former state Health Department Director Dr. Michael Fine, sing from the same hymnal in expressing hope that Care New England can remain controlled by Rhode Islanders. "From my standpoint, locally-based, locally-governed institutions stand the best chance of being good servants to the community and helping to improve the population's health," Koller said on Political Roundtable. Fine points to how roughly 60 percent of hospital funding comes from publicly funded Medicaid and Medicare. He said a Lifespan-CNE merger could function in the public interest, but only if it operates under the aegis of a hospital regulatory commission "or something like that." Fine and Koller laid out their case in a recent Boston Globe op-ed for greater oversight and transparency on hospital finances. Is it realistic to think state government will offer that considering

how, for example, the advisory Health Services Council last year recommended approving an ownership change for Prospect Medical despite concerns about the company's finances? "You know, what we really called for was leadership," Fine responded, "and I think what we've been lacking is leadership in the healthcare sector and have been lacking it for many years We need a clear set of goals and a clear commitment to building a healthcare system that takes care of all Rhode Islanders and that does in a way that costs way less than it does now, that has good health outcomes and focuses on those good health outcomes, not on what providers of one sort or another need today."

ONE YEAR

Raimondo Edition: Former Gov. Gina Raimondo, now U.S. Commerce secretary, will be back in Providence for a March 15 speech at Brown University. Raimondo remains front and center in the news, serving as a messenger for the Biden administration on the economy and Ukraine, talking at MIT about getting the U.S. back in the microchip game, and even serving as the designated survivor during POTUS' State of the Union address. Raimondo's political future remains a parlor game. Conservative broadcaster Hugh Hewitt is a steadfast fan. Last year, he called Raimondo the top rival to Kamala Harris in 2024. This week, he tweeted, "In four years she could be on the podium. The D bench is not deep and she's terrific."

MARIJUANA

If it wasn't already clear, 2022 is the year when Rhode Island will almost

certainly legalize recreational marijuana, joining most of the other New England states that have done so. Sen. Josh Miller (D-Cranston) and Rep. Scott Slater (D-Providence) outlined the legislative proposal last week: legalization would take place in October, with a new process for taxing and overseeing up to 33 retail licenses in six zones around the state. The sponsors talked up the measure and how it would address issues of equity and expungement. At the same time, critics said the Smith Hill plan doesn't go far enough. The BLM RI PAC called for the automatic expungement of marijuana-related convictions. "Additionally," the group said in a statement, "we encourage changes to increase the percentage of licensed applications from 25% to 50% to Black and Brown applicants. Many Black and Brown applicants do not currently have the network or financial capital it takes to be granted a license. Consequently, BLM RI PAC additionally recommends that the licensing fee be heavily reduced, ensuring that the application process is more equitable for all residents regardless of their socioeconomic background. Under this proposed legislation only the well-funded, connected applicants will stand a fighting chance. Thus, Rhode Island must secure that no unfair advantages are granted in the process of accepting licensing applicants."

Ian Donniss can be reached at idonnis@ripr.org. You can follow him on Twitter @IanDon. For a longer version of this column or to sign up for email delivery, visit thepublicsradio.org.

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Lawmakers consider RI recreational marijuana legalization bill

By ALEX MALM

Should cannabis be legalized in Rhode Island? Lawmakers will soon be making that decision. A bill that would legalize, regulate and tax recreational cannabis sales in Rhode Island was introduced Wednesday by state Sen. Joshua Miller and Rep. Scott A. Slater. Local law enforcement leaders are following the legislation closely. "I took an oath as a police officer and Chief of Police to uphold the laws of the State of Rhode Island and the ordinances of the Town of Johnston," said Johnston Police Chief, Joseph P. Razza. "The potential legalization of marijuana and its impact on law enforcement and public safety as a whole will bring new challenges. I am confident that as a police department, we will meet those challenges in the best interest of public safety." If approved, the legislation would legalize the sale and possession of up to one ounce of cannabis for those 21 or older,

with no more than 10 ounces for personal use kept in a primary residence, effective Oct. 1. It would also allow Rhode Islanders to grow a small amount of their own cannabis at home, according to a press release. "The time for Rhode Island to move forward with cannabis legalization is now. This historic shift in public policy will create a vibrant new marketplace in our state and end the failed practice of prohibition, which has caused such harm to so many in our communities," said Miller. "To help address those past wrongs, and to ensure all Rhode Islanders have the opportunity to share the economic benefits associated with legalization, equity is a central focus of this legislation." The legislation would establish a 10 percent state cannabis excise tax in addition to the 7 percent sales tax, plus a 3 percent local tax for the municipality where the sale takes place. It would also create an independent three member cannabis control commission, which would eventually also assume oversight of medical marijuana,

which is currently under the purview of the Department of Business Regulation (DBR). It also establishes a cannabis advisory board and a cannabis office within DBR. Like legalized medicinal marijuana, the legislation would limit the number of dispensaries. It would allow up to 33 retail licenses distributed in six zones statewide, including nine compassion centers "that could potentially be hybrid recreational and medical retailers." The legislation also includes "measures to address social equity to reduce barriers to participation for those communities that have long been disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition," a press release read. "It uses licensing fees and penalties to fund technical assistance and grants to applicants and communities that have been impacted, and reserves one license in each of the six districts for a social equity licensee and another in each district for a co-op." The legislation also creates a process for individuals to request expungement of prior

convictions for misdemeanor and felony cannabis possession for amounts that have been decriminalized. Documents provided on Tuesday, lay out the penalties for different marijuana offenses under the legislation. The possession of more than two ounces of marijuana would be a misdemeanor. For possession of more than an ounce but less than two ounces a civil penalty would be imposed. If someone were caught with more than 10 ounces within their personal residence it would be a misdemeanor. Having more than the allowable home growing amount of three mature and three immature plants would also result in a misdemeanor. If the legislation is enacted city and town councils would also have a decision to make. City and town legislators would have the option of approving a resolution to put the question of whether voters want to have dispensaries in their municipality. If a city or town opts out by referendum, it would be ineli-

gible for cannabis revenue. To be eligible for revenue, municipalities cannot allow selective uses such as permitting retail but not cultivation. It was noted by the House and Senate leadership that the proposed bill "is only the starting point for the legislative process, during which the bill will doubtlessly undergo changes." "I would like to thank Representative Scott Slater, who has worked tirelessly on this legislation," said House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi. "I want to emphasize that the bill introduced today is not the final product - rather, it is the beginning of the public process of legalizing cannabis for recreational use in Rhode Island. We welcome input from the public as to whether or how we should implement recreational usage, and I expect robust discussions with House membership as well." On Tuesday it was explained that the proposed legislation was developed over months of discussions, which included input from legislative leaders, the

■ POT - PAGE 11

LEGAL NOTICES

PUBLIC AUCTION - DEMAND FOR PAYMENT

G. Metz Moving of Johnston RI, 26 King Street, demands full payment from the following storage tenants storing property and owing the following:
 Joe Benevides units 12, 13, 14, 201, 196, 270, Mike Carderelli unit 165, Christie Gore units 79,102,220,221, Ira Holtz & Associates unit 164, amount due \$3,053.90. Clinton Cowen Units 31,34,189, Nicola Cipolla/Ann Murphy unit 124, Ramirez & Lidia Garcia units 39,40, J.A. Passarelli unit 136, Mark Lake units 191,212,310,311, amount due \$12,095.81.
 Allen Johnson units 170,171,172, Elizabeth Viera unit 215, Jo-el Correia units 230,231, amount due \$614.96.
 Wendy Malo unit 54, & 1 Pallet 4x8 amount due 278.25. Belview unit 125, Chris Shields unit 173, Michaels unit 128, Westcott - piano, Bob Forest - 1 Couch, Radzillo - Entertainment Center.

If payments are not made in full by March 10, 2022, including current amounts due at the time of payment, an auction will be held at G. Metz Moving, 1110 Central Ave., Pawtucket RI, on March 12, 2022, pursuant to the lien set forth in your rental agreement and in accordance with Rhode Island General Laws Chapter 6A-7 - Documents of Title Section 6A-7-210 - Enforcement of Warehouse's liens.

2/24, 3/3, 3/10/22

JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD MEETING AGENDA Thursday, March 31st, 2022 at 6:30 PM Johnston Senior Center 1291 Hartford Avenue

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Review will hold its monthly meeting on March 31, 2022 at 6:30 pm, at Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Avenue. All persons interested in the following proposals are requested to be present

at this time. The assembly facilities are accessible to the handicapped. Persons requiring special accommodations shall call the Zoning Office at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting (401) 231-4000 ext 4117. Persons utilizing TDD equipment may contact the Town through "Relay Rhode Island" at 1-800-745-6675. The agenda for the evening will be as follows, subject to change:

New Business
File 2022-8 - Petition of Ray D'Amico/Greg & Lorraine Natale, Applicant for Emerald Lane, AP 60 Lot 74, zoned R-40. The petitioner is seeking a Dimensional Variance Section 340 for a proposed Single Family Dwelling.

File 2022-9 - Petition of Off Course Properties, LLC, Applicant for Plainfield Street/Capitol Street, AP 26 Lot 1, zoned B-2. The petitioner is seeking a Dimensional Variance Section 340 for a proposed Single Family Dwelling.

File 2022-3 - Petition of Johnston Winsor I, LLC/Ernie & Donna Ricci Jr., Applicant for Winsor Avenue, AP 60 Lot 4, zoned R-40. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit -subsection 5 - Public Utility Uses #2- electric Power Generating Facility in an R-40 Zone, for a proposed ground-mounted Solar Array and associated improvements.

File 2022-4 - Petition of Johnston Winsor II, LLC/Allan Hill, Applicant/Owner for 86 Winsor Avenue, AP 60 Lot 2, 20, 86, zoned R-40 & R-20. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit -subsection 5 - Public Utility Uses #2- electric Power Generating Facility in an R-40 Zone, for a proposed ground-mounted Solar Array and associated improvements.

File 2022-5 - Petition of Johnston Winsor III, LLC/The Steere Family Trust, Applicant/Owner for 112 Winsor Avenue, AP 59 Lot 15, zoned R-40. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit -subsection 5 - Public Utility Uses #2- electric Power

Generating Facility in an R-40 Zone, for a proposed ground-mounted Solar Array and associated improvements.

File 2022-6 - Petition of Johnston Harilla I, LLC/28 Harilla Johnston Realty, LLC, Applicant/Owner for 28 Harilla Lane & Off Greenville Avenue, AP 51 Lot 11 & 9, zoned R-40. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit -subsection 5 - Public Utility Uses #2- electric Power Generating Facility in an R-40 Zone, for a proposed ground-mounted Solar Array and associated improvements.

File 2022-7 - Petition of Johnston Elmgrove/Domenic & Michelle Lancelotta, Applicant/Owner for 25 Elmgrove Avenue, AP 51 Lot 4, zoned R-40. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit -subsection 5 - Public Utility Uses #2- electric Power Generating Facility in an R-40 Zone, for a proposed ground-mounted Solar Array and associated improvements.

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

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

3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31/22

PLANNING BOARD MEETING
 Tuesday March 15th, 2022
 6:00 P.M.
 Johnston Senior Center
 1291 Hartford Ave.
 Johnston, RI 02919
 In Person and via ZOOM

Via Computer:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82286716874?pwd=NXhWbmFmOWI15enJ5cmE1a2Fhb3Z1d0Z09>

iPhone one tap: +13126266799 or +16465588656

Via Telephone: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 822 8671 6874
 Passcode: 537536

NOTE: Please check out the "ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS for e-meetings held via Zoom" on the Town's web page under Meetings & Events. <https://www.townofjohnstonri.com>

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL
 II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 III. NEW BUSINESS

PB 22-16 - Advisory Opinion - Sale of Town Land

PB 21-21 - Establish bond amount for Sciacca-Veltri Administrative Subdivision

PB 20-39 - A. Duie Pyle Building Expansion - 4 Green Earth Avenue AP 30 Lot 63 - Waiver Request of Site Plan Review Process

PB 21-48 - Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the request to abandon a portion of Genoa Street

PB 22-08 - Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the request to abandon a portion of Mathew Drive

PB 22-13 - Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the request to abandon a portion of Buck Hill Road

PB 19-56 - Meadowbrook Estates - Establishment of bond amount for Cross Road.

PB 22-06 - Meadowbrook Estates Phase 2A & 3A - Public Meeting on Phase 2 of a proposed Minor Subdivision for the creation of 1 buildable lot Cross Road and Phase 3 the creation of 1 lot Central Pike. Located at Central Pike AP 43/4 Lot 90 (Sub Lots 6 & 18) - Zoned R40. Applicant: Steven Perry

PB 22-11 - Stonebridge Phase II - Public Meeting on a proposed Preliminary Plan for a 3-lot Minor Subdivision. Located at Orchard Ave AP 59 Lot 338 - Zoned R40. Applicant: Peter and Pamela DelPonte

PB 22-12 - Wildflowers Estates - Public Meeting on a proposed Master Plan for a 5-lot Major Subdivision. Located at 1757 Plainfield Pike AP 27 Lots 2 & 146 - Zoned B2 & R20 - Applicant: Dennis Cardillo

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT & SPECIAL ITEMS

1. Comprehensive Plan Update
 2. 2022 Schedule of Meetings Discussion

V. ADJOURNMENT

- The Planning Board Agenda and Minutes are available for review at ClerkBase on the Town's web page or Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Planning Office, 100 Irons Avenue, Johnston.
- Items not heard by 9:30 p.m. may be continued to the next Regular Meeting or a special meeting at the discretion of the Board.
- Facilities are handicap accessible. Interpreter services may be requested from TTD (401) 792-9642 at least 72 hours in advance.

2/24, 3/3, 3/10/22

Legal Notice Town of Johnston Notice of Abandonment

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 24-6-1 that Rome Avenue as described in Johnston Town Ordinance 2022-2 has ceased to be useful to the public and is hereby abandoned. Ordinance 2022-2 an Ordinance in abandonment of Rome Avenue was adopted at a public hearing at the February 14th, 2022 meeting of the Johnston Town Council and is available for review in the office of the Town Clerk.

Johnston Town Council
Robert V. Russo
President

Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

3/10, 3/17, 3/24/22

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Dean Gangli of East Greenwich



Alexandra Crowshaw of North Kingstown



Jesse William of South Kingstown

Johnston High 2nd in Brain Teaser

By DANIEL FRANCHETTI

After last year's virtual competition, the annual Rhode Island Academic Decathlon assembled Sunday in-person in a demonstration of "resilient brain power," and for the first time in 39 years, the event was hosted at Bryant University's Innovation Center rather than CCRI. With the new venue came the champion: East Greenwich High School that ended an 11-year long championship held by Bishop Hendricken High School. East Greenwich alongside Johnston High School, which came in second place, are both proceeding to the national virtual competition in April. In third place was Cranston West, followed by Pilgrim. Bishop Hendricken placed fifth and Toll Gate sixth.

The Academic Decathlon is a scholarly competition of ten subjects. Each year, twelve high schools from across Rhode Island compete in teams of nine students to determine the top two teams which will proceed onto the national competition. This is determined with multiple-choice tests which includes a speaking portion to assess the general fluency of the participants. The speeches this year were presented traditionally in front of a panel of judges, but the tests were distributed online rather than being presented on paper. Every year, a new theme is chosen with the previous theme being based around the Cold War. This year's theme was simply "Water: The Essential Resource" with the information covering as far as water's influence in economics, art, and music.

With a water theme, it was only appropriate that the weather was wet and dreary as the competitors prepared for their first tests. Students filed from the round, central meeting forum of the Innovation Center into classrooms as well as the conference rooms adjacent to the central forum. The forum had a clear view of two floors of conference rooms with glass walls which allowed the coaches, "to see the kids in action," while presenting their speeches to the judges. The students were confidently focused on their speeches to take notice of this novel situation, but it provided the coaches with a deep sense of pride. It was not just the interiors of the new venue that were praised but the sprawling view of the outside from the main corridor that encircles the central forum and allowed for simple and streamlined movements that kept the day on schedule. The only complaint about the stunning new venue was that some of the catering was sub-par.

Among the new faces at the competition was Classical High School coach Bryan Cerullo. Not only was he new to the Academic Decathlon, but he is a new history teacher at Classical High School. He volunteered for the role of coach head-on to better integrate himself in his school's community. His small team has the distinction of being composed primarily of freshmen which is uncommon as most teams are comprised of upper classmen. While his team may not have won the competition, Bryan believes this year was a valuable learning experience for him and his students. He is looking forward to next year.

East Greenwich High School has consistently been in



Inge Ameer, vice president of Student Affairs at Bryant welcomes Rhode Island Academic Decathlon teams to the competition. Standing with her is Frank Lenox, RIAD executive director. (Sun Rise Photos)



Time for a breather



Keaney Bayha of Pilgrim High



Bryant University hosted the 39th annual RI Academic Decathlon.

the top three, but this year they achieved first place since 2010. Their team consists of eight members: Emmett Bassen Alexander, Guy Sanchez, Julia Xu, Zalmay Ahmad, Raj Vishnu, KC Bisetti, Cooper Jones, and Mia Pinkes. Each one of them received at least one medal, half of them had over five medals, and the team had medals in every subject test. One particularly honorable member of the team is Mia Pinkes who obtained ranked in the top three in nine out of ten events which gave way for another medal for the highest overall score for an individual participant. Upon leaving the event she was heard to joke "I think Mr. Lenox was surprised because I got a C in his class last year." Ben Revkin, the coach, had this to say about their promotion to the national competition, "the national competition is both exciting and ominous. It is harder to get students to continue to review material for another test, but they will enjoy competing with even more students from across the country." With their victory, they secure their position in the national competition that will be held in April.

Johnston High School has always performed well in the decathlon. Among the students on their team were Briana and Sam Dominique, two juniors competing for the first time. They had a rough start as they had forgotten their laptops and calculators for the math competition and had a difficult topic for their assigned speech. However, they were confident in their performance and optimistic about the team's overall performance. "Third...at least" they said cautiously when asked in what place they believed their team would finish. Their expectations were slightly off, but all for the better as the team secured a victory in second place which qualified them for the national competition that will be held in April.

Cranston High School West had a strong showing and took third place in the competition. Social studies teacher Christine Luther-Morris has served as the team's coach for 15 years and was proud of her team for their hard work this year. Since September, her students have held practices twice a week for an hour each.

"They [students] were surprised," said Luther-Morris. "When they [judges] started calling the top ten and got to eight and seven and they [students] weren't mentioned, they thought we were number eleven. I knew a little bit better having done this before started getting excited when they hit number five."

Although having spent many years of the competition at CCRI, Luther-Morris welcomed the new venue for its expansive view and aesthetics. She mentioned how COVID-19 has affected not just her own team but all the teams in the league. Besides limiting how the competition was conducted and restricted team practices, the way grading changed during the pandemic have altered how the team's members could be composed. Each school's team cannot contain more than three members of a certain academic grade and thus some of the alternate grading during the pandemic has changed the team's composure.

Luther-Morris said that after this year, all but one of their current members will be graduating. As for what Luther-Morris looks for in potential team members, there are several components.

"It's the feeling I get about a student and how they'll fit with the rest of the group as well as looking at strengths and seeing what we are lacking," Luther-Morris said.

This year's team consisted of Daniel Meyerson (captain), Emily Sullivan (captain), Ani Poghosyan, Grace Venagro, Sophia Smith, Andrew Garcia, Serena Leung, Christopher Wassmer, Sanjana Ananthula, Angela Marses and Nicholas Perrotta.

With the conclusion of the state competition, the national competition looms on the horizon. Each year, the national competition is traditionally held in a new location across the country in April. This year the competition will be performed online, like last year's competition. Students will take their tests and perform their speeches in front of their computers instead of in-person like the state competition.

spotlight ON BUSINESS

Broadway Tire & Auto Repair

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By JENNIFER COATES

When a family-owned business has grown from its original site to three locations in three major cities in less than ten years, you can safely assume that this business is doing something right, something that brings customers back time and time again.

This is the success story of Broadway Tire & Auto Repair, a repair shop which first opened its doors nearly eight decades ago. The Hallenbeck family purchased this long-standing business in 2014, retaining its brand name and pouring all the time, expertise, experience, and energy they had into it to make it the well-established business it remains to this day. At that time, Broadway Tire existed only at its 588 Broadway location in Pawtucket. Some years later, the second repair shop was opened in Warwick, and today, the Hallenbecks proudly announce that they have expanded yet again!

The residents of Johnston can now officially welcome Broadway Tire & Auto Repair to their city!

The reputation of Broadway Tire has grown over time largely because of this promise: "Our goal is to become the premier tire and auto repair facility in the state with state-of-the-art facilities. We are dedicated to giving you the very best auto repair and tire service, with a focus on upfront and honest quotes, timely responses to issues, and quality parts and products." These guiding principles are what have kept this business growing and prospering.

The success of all three Broadway Tires begins with their technicians, all of whom were hand-selected for their skill, their talent, their commitment to their work and their trustworthiness. In addition to these key team



The city of Johnston welcomes Broadway Tire & Auto Repair, the third installation of this growing family-run business! Give them a call today for all your tire and auto repair needs.

members, the Broadway Tire "extended family" includes some employees who have been with the company for over 30 years, office manager Louise who has worked for Broadway Tire for 31 years and Dale, another manager, who has been with them since 1978. Their collective knowledge has contributed greatly to the longevity of a family-run company that has endured the test of time.

Today, Broadway Tire & Auto Repair is a one-stop destination for all your auto repair work, from tire rotations and installations to oil changes, brake repairs, wheel alignments, batteries, heating and A/C, belts & hoses, air filters ~ the list goes on and on. If you need a

basic tune-up or to purchase new tires, you are all set! Vehicles of every make and model are serviced here.

Broadway Tire & Auto Repair is the former home of Midas Brakes on 1307 Hartford Avenue. To learn more, to get a quote, to check out their inventory of tires, to get helpful car care tips, and to schedule an appointment, visit them at their informative website www.broadwaytireri.com. Call them at 401-450-0122. Hours are 7:30am ~ 5:00pm, Monday - Friday; 7:30am ~ 1:00pm on Saturdays.

If you live in Pawtucket, you can find them at 588 Broadway (401-725-3535) or if you live in Warwick, visit them at 1184 Warwick Avenue (401-884-2211).

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BankRI Children's Book Drive returns to Johnston



In recognition of March as National Reading Month and its commitment to childhood literacy, Bank Rhode Island (BankRI) is kicking off its annual children's book drive in Johnston, and all 20 of its branches statewide. The month-long effort benefits Books Are Wings, and offers both drop-off and virtual donation options. The Bank's Johnston branch can be found at 1450 Hartford Ave.

"It's impossible to overstate how generous our community is when it comes to our book drive, and what that support means to the work of Books Are Wings," said Patricia O'Donnell-Saracino, VP of Community Relations for BankRI. "Every single book is important - we'd love to see this be our biggest collection yet."

This marks the 12th year BankRI has partnered with the Pawtucket-based Books Are Wings; a nonprofit whose unique programs put 62,353 free books in the hands of Rhode Island kids last year alone. Books collected during the BankRI drive will support programs for Pre-K to Grade 5 children. Specifically, they will benefit the new Tale Mail initiative for preschoolers and the Read to 100 Challenge

for school-age kids.

For the drive, all BankRI branches have a marked collection bin in its foyer or in front of its entrance doors to accept donations of new and gently-used children's books. There is also the option to participate virtually by purchasing a book from an online Wish List of titles curated by Books Are Wings. The Wish List can be accessed at BooksAreWings.org/donate-books.

Books Are Wings' Tale Mail program provides families with high-quality literature and interactive learning activities to help extend literacy learning from school to home. It partners with early learning centers and preschool programs to supply books and literacy-based crafts that are shared with families. With the Read to 100 Challenge, the organization challenges students to collectively read 100 books as a classroom, as many times as they can, over the school year. Books Are Wings provides all materials, including the books and 'tracking' posters. Classrooms that meet the goal get a special book party celebration.

For a full list of BankRI branches, their addresses and hours of operation, visit bankri.com/locations.

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Pot
(Continued from page 8)

sponsors and stakeholders including health and community leaders, law enforcement, cultivators and more.

"We've been working hard since the end of last session to establish consensus on the details, but our efforts to address the issue have

been going on for many years, during which time our neighboring states have already made this move ahead of us. Rhode Island is now behind them from a competitive standpoint, since it's fairly easy for most Rhode Islanders to cross the state line to make a legal purchase," said Senate Majority Leader Michael McCaffrey. "The truth is, legal cannabis is already widely available to Rhode Islanders, but the resulting revenue is not. With

this bill, we will create jobs, revenue and control in our own state, and help address some of the inequities that have resulted from prohibition. I look forward to working with my colleagues, stakeholders and the public to ensure that we take the careful, nuanced and equitable approach we need to transform this economic sector."
(Sun Rise Editor Rory Schuler contributed to this report.)

CLARIFICATION

Due to a production error, the last few words of the final sentence of a new restaurant feature — titled "Have you flown the coop? The Chicken Coop offers wings and all sorts of tasty things," March 3, 2022 edition — were inadvertently omitted. The sentence should have read:

"Perhaps the words 'Good Food, Good Drinks, Good Friends, Good Times,' which imprinted on the front

window — and in gold script lettering — is what Tonya Antonelli, Mathew Ferruolo, Meliza and Robert Ferruolo

and The Chicken Coop Kitchen and Bar is all about."
The Johnston Sun Rise regrets the error.

Birthday Remembrance
MARCH 16, 2002 - AUGUST 11, 2020

Maryann Vita

For Your Birthday in Heaven

Your birthday is a day I treasure though you're no longer here -
It reminds me of such happy times that in heart, I hold so dear.
Even though I feel so sad that you have gone away -
I wouldn't change anything or trade one single day.
So thank you for the memories that are with me forever -
I'll treasure those always 'til we are back together.

Love ~
Mom and Dad and Michael

Maryann Vita
Birthday Remembrance
MARCH 16, 2002 - AUGUST 11, 2020

Some people leave our lives unexpectedly. We hold on to the memories and spend the rest of our lives missing them.
Rest in Peace.
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Robert & Dante

Obituaries

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

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To prepare or not to prepare



Jeffrey H. Massey
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Recently I had a business trip to Topeka, Kansas and landed during a 6-inch snowstorm. Given the fact that we recently had a blizzard followed by 9 inches or so shortly thereafter, I didn't think that 6 inches of snow was much of a big deal. Not so much in Kansas!

I guess they don't usually get that much snow so the driving was horrendous. It took about 2 hours for a typical one-hour drive. I saw several cars and SUVs off the road and a tractor trailer had jackknifed on the other side of the highway. I guess they just weren't prepared.

Snowstorm preparation is pretty basic—salt the roads before the storm and get the plows moving once the snow starts to accumulate. I felt that Rhode Island did a great job with the blizzard. Most places were open for business the next day and life went on.

Let's compare not preparing for your retirement to not preparing for a snowstorm that you know is coming.

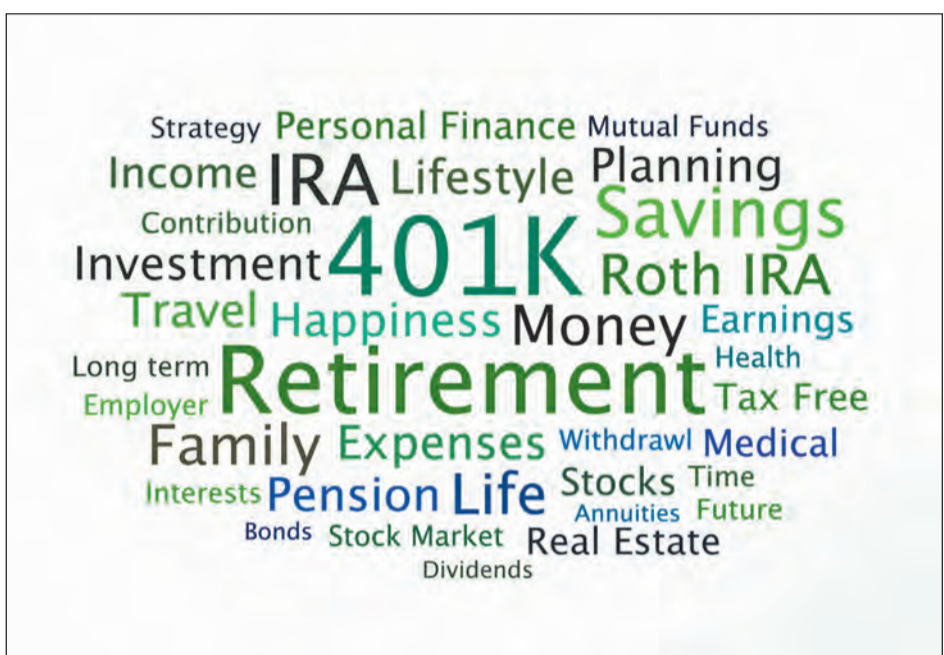
Preparing for retirement has similarities to preparing for a snowstorm. You know your retirement is coming, and likely, you know when that will be. Just like a snowstorm is forecast, and we know when that will happen. Once the snow starts to fall, you know that there are certain risks with driving and there is a risk of lost power, etc.

Retirement has certain "known" risks as well, and it is so important to prepare for those risks and mitigate them as best you can, much like preparing for a snowstorm. Preparing for retirement is like buying milk and bread and other staples to ensure that you have adequate food in the house when that storm comes. It's all about being prepared and having a plan.

When saving for retirement, it is important to diversify your asset types. Most have heard the adage, don't put all your eggs in one basket. Although true, it is also important to have money in different categories as well. Typically, you should look for three key elements—safety, liquidity and growth. Unfortunately, you cannot get all three elements in one asset category.

Therefore, it is important to have some money in banks or credit unions for your emergency fund and expected short-term expenses such as a new appliance, furniture, a new roof, etc. This will provide safety and liquidity, but not much growth at the current low interest rates.

On the opposite side of safety is investing in the stock market. I know that likely isn't a great topic given the recent volatility that the market has been experiencing this year. However, for long-term growth the stock market has repeatedly shown that over long periods of time, the market will grow. The S&P 500 has grown 700% since



March of 2009. That is not a typo, 700% in 13 years. (*S&P Global Market Intelligence, n.d.*) That is enormous growth! To help combat inflation, some of your retirement money should be invested in the stock market. I am NOT advocating taking excessive risk. It is important to work with professional advisors that have a bias towards more conservative growth to lessen the likelihood of big losses when the

stock market has its next big correction or a long-term bear market. The closer your retirement date, the lower the risk you should have in your portfolio. Part of our proprietary process is to determine the level of risk that you may have in your portfolio and adjust that risk as may be appropriate for your circumstances.

Investments in the stock market will also provide liquidity as your invest-

ments can be sold on the open exchange.

Between these two "bookends" are insurance-based contracts that allow you to track an index, such as the S&P 500 (there are many others) yet, not be directly invested in the S&P 500. In these contracts that have been available since 1995, you share in the growth of the index, (you don't get all the growth) but never experience a loss if the index goes down during your term, which is typically one year.

These are longer term contracts that can be 5, 7 or 10 years in length. They allow penalty-free withdrawals up to 10% of the contract value annually, starting in year two. Much like a long-term CD will have penalties until maturity, these contracts do as well. Properly implemented, these contracts can provide a level of safety and growth potential that is tied to a market index but has guarantees backed by the claims paying ability and financial strength of the insurance company.

As always, I recommend that you work with an experienced team for your retirement planning to learn about these products and other strategies that may be a good fit for your situation. Having a plan to be prepared for your retirement will always be better than having no retirement plan at all!

At Massey And Associates, Inc., our retirement planning process is precise and thorough. Once we get to know our clients' goals and current situation, we're able to create a plan to help them make their dream retirement a reality. Reach out to one of our advisors if you have any questions.

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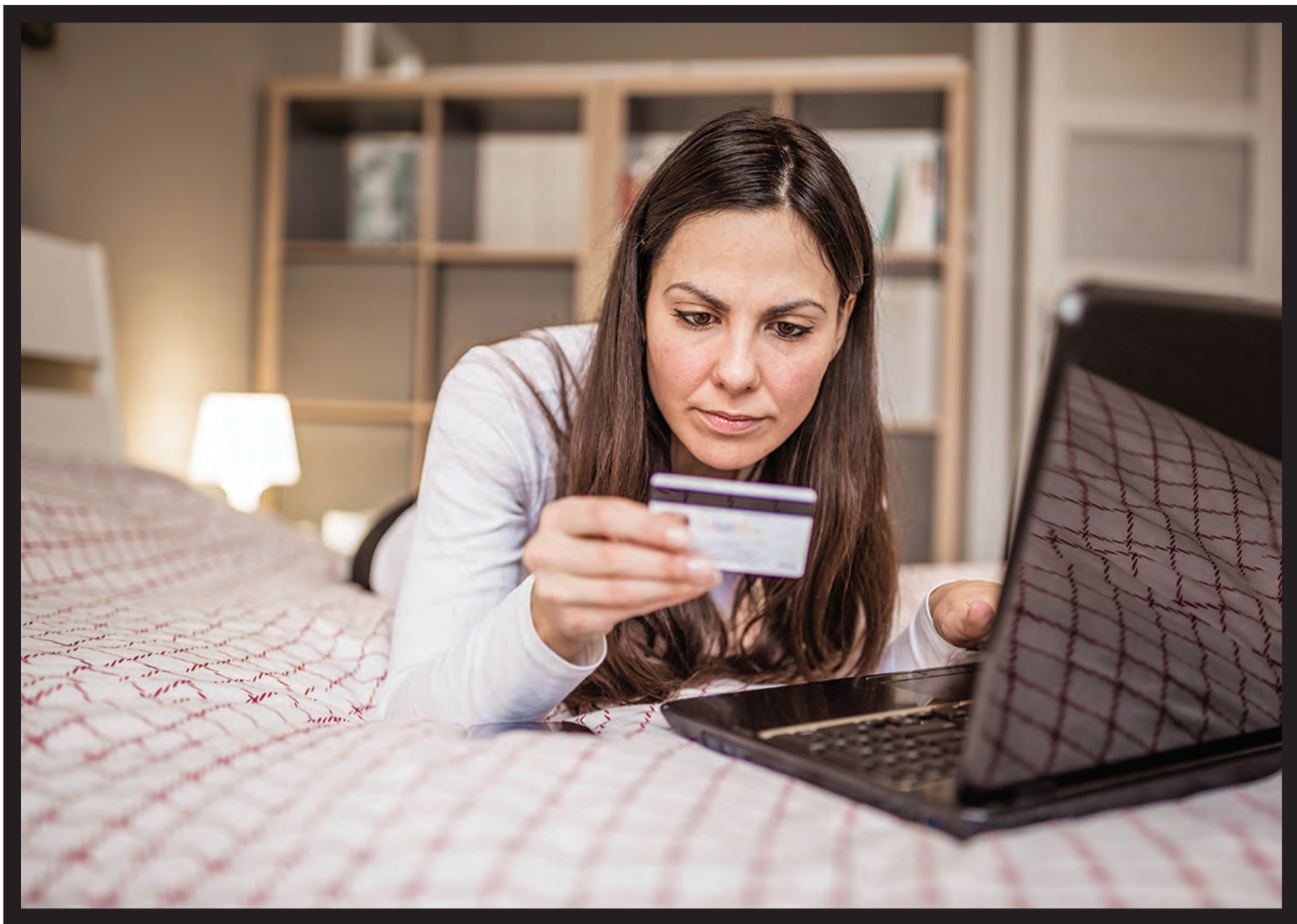
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What affects credit score?



METRO
 Credit is defined as a customer obtaining services or products before payment with the trust that payment will be made in the future. Credit affords people purchasing power they would not have if they had to pay for something outright at the time of checkout. In addition, credit enables men and women to finance expensive automobiles, buy homes or furnish those homes, contributing much to the foundation of a strong economy.

A strong credit history and score is vital to personal finance. The steps people take concerning their finances can greatly affect their credit. Identifying the behaviors that may be detrimental and those that are beneficial can help customers reevaluate their habits and improve their creditworthiness in the eyes of lenders.

Payment history

The financial advisement resource Credit Karma says one of the most important factors affecting credit scoring is payment history. Having a long history of making payments on time is essential for a strong

RhodyMoney

credit score. Missed payments and a reputation for paying late can drive ratings down. It can take some time to recover from late payments. Failure to recognize late or missed payments may result in bankruptcy or tax liens, which are a heavy black mark on credit.

Credit utilization rate

Credit utilization refers to the amount of credit you have available, based on credit card limits, compared to the amount of credit you're actually using by way of the balances on credit cards, advises the credit tracking company Experian. Lenders prefer to see ratios of around 30 percent or less. To calculate credit utilization rate, divide your credit card balance by your credit limit. So if your balance is \$600 and your limit is \$1000, that's a utilization rate of 60 percent.

Number of accounts

The number of open accounts you have affects your credit score. Scoring models often look back and consider how many accounts are open and if there are any outstanding balances.

Length of credit history

The length of your credit history is another factor that affects your score, according to Investopedia. Credit scoring takes into account the age of your oldest account, if you've used that account recently, as well as the average age of all your accounts, including the newest. Closed accounts can stay on your credit report for up to 10 years, but when an account closes, this will affect your credit history average. Credit scoring rubrics will determine just how the ratio of new to old accounts and frequency of use will impact your score.

Credit scores are important. Understanding them further can help people secure their financial futures.

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Air purifying plants

Popular peace lilies, snake plant, pathos among plants that remove air pollutants, toxins

By EMMA BARTLETT

When you open the door to Yard Works Inc. on Warwick Avenue, the smell of flowers, soil and assorted greenery fill the room. Customers may not know it when they walk in, but this store could have some of the cleanest air in the city. According to a NASA study, plants remove 87 percent of toxins from enclosed spaces in a 24-hour period which may benefit individuals' health.

"Any plant is going to help clean the air," said Bridget Bugbee, Yard Works Inc. manager of the family-owned landscape business.

Benzene and formaldehyde are two toxins found inside homes and are caused by plastics, resins, synthetic fibers, dyes, detergents, pesticides, building materials, smoke and more.



PART OF THE COLLECTION: Yard Works Inc. sells a variety of household plants including snake plants (pictured here) and peace lilies.



SUCCULENT SUCCESS: If you don't naturally have a green thumb, start off with a low-maintenance succulent plant.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF SPIDER: Individuals looking for a hanging plant may consider spider plants, which remove 95 percent of toxins from interior spaces.

When household plants absorb carbon dioxide through photosynthesis, they take along toxins, according to a study by Wireless Sensor Network in 2018. If individuals breathe in these air pollutants, the American Lung Association said people's eyes, nose and throat can become irritated. During the process of photosynthesis, plants absorb carbon dioxide and toxins through the pores of their foliage and metabolize it; they then release oxygen in return for humans.

Bugbee said many customers will purchase houseplants during the fall and winter. When the days get shorter and darker, plants can increase people's moods. As for types of air purifying plants that individuals like, Bugbee knows them by heart.

"Peace lilies, snake plants and pathos are the three most popular houseplants," Bugbee said.

She said the peace lily is a resilient plant that has a lush look - Bugbee even has one at home. The elegant flower absorbs air pollutants such as benzene, ammonia, trichloroethylene, xylene and formaldehyde. It also prevents mold formation, removes mold spores and absorbs acetone vapors according to an article from Greenkosh. Peace lilies need watering every five to seven days and their average lifespan is three to five years.

Snake plants (which Yard Works Inc. sells along with peace lilies) reduce the "risk of developing allergies and airborne diseases due to their filtration qualities," according to Clear it Waste Collection. This plant thrives in areas with little and lots of light and lasts five to 10 years.

Pothos is the perfect plant for anyone who doesn't have a green

thumb. According to Clear it Waste Collection, this plant requires minimal watering, little sunlight and eliminates formaldehyde, benzene and toluene from the air. Pet owners may want to stay away from this plant since it harbors toxins that are harmful to dogs and cats. Pothos can live up to ten years if properly cared for and should be watered once a week in warmer months and every two weeks during colder months.

Bugbee mentioned that succulent plants or cacti are great options for individuals who have trouble keeping plants alive.

As for hanging plants or one that could be used in a terrarium, Bugbee suggested spider plants. According to a Gardenine article, spider plants "remove up to 95% of toxins commonly found in homes like fuming solvents, benzene, trichloroethylene, xylenes and ammonia." The plant thrives in brightly lit places and also increases humidity within the home and lasts 50+ years if properly cared for.

As for maintaining a plant's health, Bugbee said 90 percent of the time, people kill house plants through overwatering. The best rule to follow is to stick your finger in the soil, and if it comes back dirty, the plant has enough moisture.

Additionally, one misconception people have is that these plants need to be right in a sunny window. However, when these plants are grown in the tropics, they are usually part of the underbrush and thrive in bright and indirect sunlight.

While the end of winter may not be the prime season for purchasing houseplants, research shows they do wonders for removing toxins from the home. And what better way to start your spring cleaning than with some fresh air inside your home.



PACKED WITH PLANTS: Yard Works Inc.'s greenhouse is filled with household plants that can help purify the air in your home.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Central mail bureau
- 4. Member of the family
- 7. Partner to flow
- 10. ___ Angeles
- 11. Military mailbox
- 12. Patriotic women
- 13. Shallow lake
- 15. Tear apart
- 16. Middle Easterner
- 19. Eat to excess
- 21. Stained
- 23. Certain peoples of equatorial Africa
- 24. 1st day of month
- 25. Skin disease
- 26. Skating figure
- 27. Annelids
- 30. Gracefully slender
- 34. Kids need it
- 35. Swiss river
- 36. Indents
- 41. A sheer fabric of silk or nylon
- 45. Belgian River
- 46. ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
- 47. Originate from
- 50. Rugged mountain ranges
- 54. Made less clean
- 55. Professions
- 56. 3s
- 57. Scarf
- 59. Yellow light
- 60. Bird noise
- 61. Opposite of start
- 62. Bar bill
- 63. Northeastern Mass. cape
- 64. American rocker Snider
- 65. Midway between northeast and east
- 17. Exclamation to convey truth
- 18. Passports and licenses are two
- 20. Ebert's partner Siskel
- 22. Long skirt
- 27. Part of company name
- 28. Drugmaker ___ Lilly
- 29. Electronic countermeasures
- 31. Klutz
- 32. Chinese statesman
- 33. Stir with emotion
- 37. Flat-bottomed boat
- 38. Go-between
- 39. This (Spanish)
- 40. A plot of ground where seedlings are grown before transplanting
- 41. Small waterfall
- 42. Modern tech necessity (abbr.)
- 43. Utter repeatedly
- 44. One of the bravest
- 47. Sun up in New York
- 48. Space station
- 49. Chilean seaport
- 51. Hasidic spiritual leader
- 52. They ___
- 53. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 58. Single unit

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Scandinavian drink
- 2. Washington river
- 3. Fast-running flightless bird
- 4. Nerve conditions
- 5. Indicates near
- 6. Immediate relevance
- 7. Things you can eat
- 8. Receptacles
- 9. Retired Brewers great
- 13. Month
- 14. Happy New Year!

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The invention of cell phones came with a whole other category of political correctness. Users had to learn to shut their phones off during meetings, movies, church services, presentations and such where a ringing phone, even with a delightfully joyful and cute ring tone, would be disruptive. Each time in such situations, I would shut my phone off, often forgetting to turn it back on after the activity. Imagine my surprise, when, watching the commercial with the parental-life coach from Progressive Insurance working with a group of clueless adults, he informed them they could just quiet the ring with the push of a little button on the side. "Everyone knows that", he said. But I didn't! All these years I have been shutting my phone completely off when all it would take is a gentle push on a little button

on the side would silence it! Another "invention" I recently discovered was on the dashboard of Hubby's van, which I have been driving because my own car is out of commission. Climbing into it is comical. I have to lean over the driver's seat and grab on and try to shimmy up to the step to get into the vehicle. This was especially embarrassing on one of those very windy days when I was wearing a dress. The gas tank on the van was almost empty the other day, so I found myself driving into a gas station that was charging ridiculously high prices for gas, over \$4.00 a gallon! I pulled up to the pump and shimmied out of the driver's seat, only to look and see that there was no cover to the gas tank on that side. Scaling back up into the seat, I drove the car around to the other side of the pump, and again clumsily

Life Matters



with LINDA PETERSEN

popped myself down on the ground to finally fill the tank. It was only later that I glanced at the dashboard and noticed that the fuel indicator had a picture of a gas tank AND a little arrow pointing to which side of the vehicle had the gas tank. In all of my years of driving, this icon had never made an impression on me.

This got me thinking...what other little tidbits have I missed out on? Google, here I come!

Purchasing a super-sized Diet Coke at fast food restaurants is a bad habit of mine, but my economical side appreciates the fact this drink will be available to me all day long. It IS a little annoying at work that the beverage causes a large condensation stain on my desk, but I have learned that the top can be turned over to form a coaster, perfectly fitting the ring of the cup and collecting all of the condensation.

I learned that the drawer at the bottom of my stove is NOT for storing cookie sheets, but to act as a warming space for food to sit while the rest of the meal is being cooked.

In case my car descends into a river, and I am locked in underwater, a swift removal of the head rest provides strong

metal prongs that can serve as a window breaker. Even though I do not foresee this event happening, it is good to know if it DOES, I will be able to get out. This knowledge helps me sleep better at night.

Another good worry preventer involves BIC pens, which are utilized daily. Chewing on the cap is a bad habit of mine, but I never thought of the real danger of swallowing the cap. However, a hole in the end of the cap would allow air to continue to circulate until it could be surgically removed.

Tennis balls can be used in the dryer to fluff up towels. Lemon oil can be used as a bug repellent. Nail polish can be used as a liquid bandage, and coffee grounds can be scattered outside to repel animals.

My brain is ready to explode with all of the possibilities!

ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Laurel Leaf Photography

PUPPIES!

Puppy Palooza is happening at the Heart of RI Animal Rescue League. If you have been in search of a puppy then head over to the shelter this week located at 44 Worthington Road Cranston, RI. This adorable puppy is just one of over thirty puppies available now! They are all different colors, mixed breeds and various ages, someone for everyone! You can visit their website for more information at www.heartofri.org or call 401-467-3670. Their hours of operation are Wednesday 3-7, Thursday and Friday 12-2 and Saturday 10-2, no appointment is necessary. Spring is coming, it's a great time to add a new furry friend into your heart and home!

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



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Movies



Batman was always my favorite superhero, way before movie screens were saturated with them.

Batman movies were always better written and acted, with deep moral issues emphasized.

"The Batman" is no exception.

From the opening scene to the closing scene three hours later, the action is overwhelming, and the moral issues are confronted on the two theatres' huge screens with surround sound.

The comfortable recliner chairs look and feel like they would put you to sleep, but "The Batman" won't allow that.

When we say the movie is "dark," we mean that in every sense of the word. The sun never shines, and the rain never lets up in Gotham City.

Batman is fairly new to the role of vigilante, and already he is questioning whether he can make a difference.

The Riddler has murdered the mayor and continues his spree of other prominent city officials.

Batman, a.k.a. Bruce Wayne, teams up with the police lieutenant to investigate the serial murders, with the Riddler dropping clues all over the city.

He also becomes romantically involved with Catwoman, as they join forces to track down the bad guys.

Robert Pattinson makes a stoic Batman, dedicated to fighting crime in his decadent city, while never holding back on his brutal violent actions toward the criminal element.

His quest to capture the Riddler becomes a vigilante vs. vigilante episode.

We learn a bit about his parents and what brings him to this point in his life long before Robin comes onto the scene.

Colin Farrell is great as the Penguin. Besides being unrecognizable, he adds to his character with his slight waddle.

The special effects are over the top, especially the closing scene, with Gotham City being under attack by surging water.



Robert Pattinson is "The Batman?"



"Lucy and Desi" provides a peek into the lives of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.

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LUCY AND DESI

If you grew up watching "I Love Lucy" or watched the endless re-runs, you will enjoy this hour and 40-minute documentary produced by Amy Poehler and featuring their daughter Lucie recalling events in the family's life.

Videotapes of classic TV moments are mixed with tapes of their personal lives, revealing the ups and downs of their relationship in front of and behind the cameras.

Although the couple divorced, they continued working together and demonstrated their love for each other right up to the end.

The Cuban exile and former showgirl made for an odd couple that took the world by storm with their fresh and very funny TV show that remains one of the best comedy series ever on television.

Lewis Black goes 'Off The Rails' at The Vets

By **ROB DUGUAY**

The past few years have been crazy and the stress and uncertainty it has brought upon us all can be overwhelming. Perhaps the best way to react to it is to blow off some steam and have a laugh at the absurdity of it all. That's where stand-up comic, actor, playwright, and correspondent for Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* Lewis Black comes in. He's never been afraid to sound off on politics, history, religion and cultural trends and this could be as good of a time as ever to hear him rant about the current times. Folks can hear what he has to say when Black's "Off The Rails Tour" comes to the Veterans Memorial Auditorium on 1 Avenue Of The Arts in Providence on March 12 at 8pm.

We had a talk ahead of the show about being cooped up during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, loving to be able to perform again, reflecting on the past few years and him already working on his next special.

Rob Duguay: Right before the COVID-19 lockdown in March of 2020, you performed at the Four Winds New Buffalo Casino in New Buffalo Township, Michigan and it ended up becoming the special *Thanks For Risking Your Life* that came out later in October of that year. What was it like for you after that show when everything changed? Were you on the road at the time? Did you have to fly or drive home? How did it work out for you?



LEWIS BLACK

Lewis Black: I was in my tour bus and I was originally supposed to fly home from O'Hare Airport in Chicago, which is actually the first place where the COVID-19 virus got transmitted from one person to another so I wasn't going to go there.

On a good day that place is a s**thole, so I ended up using my tour bus to take me back home to New York and then like everybody else I was in lockdown for 12 weeks and the amount of time until I did another performance is what this current show I'm doing is about.

RD: How does it feel for you to be back on the road performing? Do you feel a sense of relief and excitement because it was so long since you've gotten to rant in front of an actual audience?

LB: I love being able to perform again, it's helpful when it comes to returning to some form of mental health. It was like being divorced because that's my primary relationship, with folks who show up to see me, and it was really tough to be cut off. The whole time of being at home for over 500 days, I didn't cope with it well.

RD: I can totally imagine. Going from that time in 2020 when the pandemic changed everything to now with Joe Biden getting elected President, the attempted insurrection on January 6th of last year, a bunch of vaccines and variants, the current conflict with Russia and Ukraine and the country still being more divided than ever, what are your thoughts on these past couple of years?

LB: Once I make this current tour into a special and that'll be the next special, really. It's something that I've been thinking about now because partly I have to get over the shock of the fact that there were no adults in the room for the past four to five years. None, none. That's my difficulty, I feel like we didn't learn anything in my lifetime and we were no more prepared for this than we were when they said when I was nine in case of nuclear war to get under your desk. If there's a nuclear bomb heading towards your elementary school, the best way to protect yourself is to put your hands over your head and get under your desk. The only thing getting under your desk will do is that it'll help you burn faster.

That's what I felt the first moment they started telling me what we were going to do with this pandemic. I felt, "Wow, we have not come a step closer" and there was no sitting down between Republicans and Democrats. I don't care what he was up to, there was no sitting down between both parties and declaring that we have a real problem that we have to face. They left the American people to a howling wind, it's ridiculous.

RD: I couldn't agree more.

LB: Nowhere along the line did the CDC, Fauci, anybody that I saw explain why these current vaccines were different from other vaccines. I don't talk about the vaccines a lot in my act but I do talk about how it would have been nice if they explained it. It's funny, maybe we'd be further along but they didn't, they literally treated it as something else to divide people up. It's madness and it doesn't make sense. In my act I talk about how I'm still trying to recover from the thought that everybody seemed to be waiting for the vaccine and when it came along that everybody would get it but no.

That really stunned me, so coming up with this is going to be interesting in terms of the next set. I'm starting to work on that now, I got two of the pieces that I dropped out of this current set so the focus can be on what I did during the pandemic because I seriously think it's very

funny. I also included some things about healthcare because I recently got treated in Ireland for a severe health problem. I talk about the differences between our government and the Irish government where we talk about having the best healthcare in the world, which isn't true. Then I talk about how it relates to gun violence and I've waited a long time to find something to use it with because it actually happens, it's not something you can argue against whether it exists or not.

Around those things, I'll start to figure out what I'm going to say about what has happened over these past four years. It's appalling.

RD: I'm looking forward to seeing how the next special is after this tour you're on. Outside of stand-up, you've been doing a lot of voice work in films and television over the past few years with *Spongebob Squarepants*, the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* reboot and the film *Inside Out*. Do you find that your experience as a playwright and in theater translates to voice acting or do you view it as a way of conveying your personality and who you are into a character?

LB: What I think is great about voice acting is how it gives you a sense of how to read a line. I'll read something someone has given me and I'll have a sense of what they want that line and what they want to convey. When I'm given a line for voice over work I get what they want from me and generally they want something that sounds similar to me. With *Spongebob* I've gotten to play Santa which is just phenomenal, I've gotten to play Santa three times and you can't beat that. I'm not performing in front of a camera so especially in *Inside Out* they really create what I'm doing and what I'm doing physically. When you take all of that out I can just focus on the words, which is great.

RD: Sounds like it's relatively simple.

LB: All I have to do is come into a studio, read my lines and do the next thing I have to do so it's perfect.

RD: You've talked about how after this "Off The Rails Tour", you plan on working on your next special and

everything but do you have anything else going on this year outside of touring and performing?

LB: I got this Rantcast that I do and it comes out weekly. I started it during the pandemic and it's kind of how I got through it. It came from me not wanting to do any virtual comedy and I didn't want to put myself in the position of performing in any way, shape or form in a socially distant way. I wanted to be vaccinated and sure of my health before I went out in front of an audience. The Rantcast kept me in touch with the comedy because the one thing I knew I could do while indoors was reading rants, I could write a rant and I could read somebody's rant.

For the past few years I've done a live video stream called *The Rant Is Due* where after every show I go back out in front of the audience and do a live stream that's broadcasted throughout the world and I read rants written by other people. These are usually from people who live in the places I was visiting so in the last year before shit hit the fan, the rants were unbelievable so we included them in the Rantcast. I would talk about stuff going on that week during the beginning and I was never really as happy with that because I had no audience as my backboard and I need an audience to know if the punchlines hit or not. I kind of babble on but if I have an audience in front of me I can focus on coming up with the joke and they really help me write my comedy. Reading those rants was how I stayed in touch because that's what I knew how to make funny, I didn't need an audience for that.

I've been doing it for over 20 years on *The Daily Show* so it's been really easy to do. When I make my way to Providence, I hope folks go to lewisblack.com to find out how to send in rants. I basically try to read the rants sent in by people in that area. We started doing it again since I've been back on the road and I'm really pleased because it brings me up to speed and the rants are getting better and better again.

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COLLECTIBLES

Moses Mosman: Colonial Doctor and Gunsmith



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

A few weeks ago, I talked about gun making at the outbreak of the American Revolution. Recently I picked up a fowling piece that is a prime example of gun making around the start of the war. I had seen this gun in the 1990s and had forgotten about it till I received a call from the

daughter of the previous owner that it was time to go to a new home. I eagerly ran over to pick it up.

The gun is a wonderful small game or fowling piece. It is small in stature and caliber having a .52 bore, a barrel length of 40", and an overall length of 56". It has a French-style butt with a Roman

12 shillings for 9 days working on the town's guns to prepare them for the militia as things heated up between the British and Provincials. He was married on April 2, 1775, to Mary Willard in Lancaster, Massachusetts, just days before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War and they had 5 children, the last being his son James, born January 1, 1782. In 1816, Moses wrote his will, and it states, "I give and bequeath into my beloved son James Mofman/ my little gun and all the equipments thereunto belonging." He also left James his "tools for gunwork." On August 16, 1817,

Moses died of ulceration of the urethra at 75 years old. The next day, his wife Mary died at 66 "by her own hands." Son James died young in 1819 at 37 years old, and in his 1820 probate is listed a fowling piece that was sold to a J. Jones, as well as horns and bullet molds. This may be the gun he had received from his father in 1817 after his passing.

This gun has a wonderful history and research has enabled us to put his story together. But Mosman didn't make the lock of the gun or the barrel. They were purchased at a retailer, and he stocked or assembled the gun. While he didn't make all the parts himself, the assembly process is still a lot of work and requires fine skills. It is obvious looking at this fine piece that Doctor Mosman had those skills.



n o s e , raised carving around the barrel tang, lock, and side plate. The butt plate, side plate, trigger guard, and ramrod pipes are brass. The lock has a stepped tail, and the lock plate is marked "M/Mosman." The best part is the marking on the top of the barrel, "Moses Mosman of Sudbury 1774."

Dr. Moses Mosman was born in Sudbury, Massachusetts on February 22, 1742. While he was a doctor in town, he also built and repaired guns. A bill in the Town of Sudbury records book states that on October 3, 1774, Mosman was paid 1 pound

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Sports



Surprises aplenty this postseason

One of my favorite parts about covering high school sports is the unpredictability. Sports in general are pretty unpredictable, but at the high school level, it's about as volatile as it gets.

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

ALEXS@
RHODYBEAT.COM

This past weekend marked another few days of postseason action, and there were plenty of surprises for our teams.

Perhaps the biggest surprise was the Barrington boys swim team knocking off Bishop Hendricken at the state meet. Since 1989 - the last time Barrington won - the Hawks have only come up short once.

That was back in 2014 when Smithfield swam away with the win.

Hendricken's dominance in the pool is legendary. Swimming is not as popular as many other sports and for that reason, many overlook how impressive the Hawks' run has been over the past three-plus decades. There is Mount St. Charles hockey, Hendricken's current football dynasty, and Hendricken's swim. Sure, there have been plenty of dominant teams that have imposed their will for years at a time, but Hendricken swimming was truly on an all-time great run.

This does not mean Hendricken's run is over, either. The Hawks came in

second. For their current standards, that is a poor showing, but for most other teams a second-place finish is a reason to celebrate.

As surprising as this defeat was, there were some signs of it being possible this winter season. Barrington edged the Hawks in the season opener, not to mention the fact that Hendricken was fresh off of graduating CJ Sheldon - one of the state's best swimmers ever.

Still, Hendricken was the favorite and had everything it needed to win, but Barrington was simply the better team.

I can't wait to see what Hendricken looks like next season now that it will have a chip on its shoulder. Win or lose next year, it will be fun to follow. The Hawks will either reignite their program or will look for new ways to get back on top. As a spectator, either is fine with me.

■ PITCH - PAGE 20

Panthers receive postseason awards

A handful of Panthers were recently named All-Division and All-League for their performances this past winter season, including Derek Salvatore (pictured above), who was named First Team All-Division and Second Team All-League. To see the other Panthers that were honored, check out page 21. (Photo by Mike Zawistoski)

Local legends named to RI Hockey HOF 2022 class

By PETE FONTAINE

It's ironic - as well as fitting - that the Rhode Island Hockey Hall of Fame's Class of 2022 will be enshrined inside one of the state's most hallowed halls.

Ageless and famed Rhodes-on-the-Pawtuxet - which has hosted countless extraordinary events for decades upon decades - will be the site of the prestigious group's induction ceremony on Saturday, Aug. 20.

Vin Cimini, who founded the RI Hockey Hall of Fame, noted during the Class of 2022 announcement that "the new inductees-elect are among the most accomplished hockey players out state has produced. Aside from their professional careers and play representing the nation, they each earned legendary status on the ice at their respective schools."

Moreover, as the RIIHOF Fame leader - is a former ice hockey standout - emphasized: "Each member of the Class of 2022 has brought honor and glory to their city/town, state and nation."



NEW YEAR, NEW CLASS: Members of the RI Hockey Hall of Fame unveil the new class at a recent press conference. (Submitted photos)

Locals swim at state meet

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The RIIL Swimming State Championships were held last weekend at Brown University and a handful of locals made some noise.

Cranston West's Gavin Kiernan, Trenton Kiernan, Alexander Tremblay and Logan D'Arezzo finished eighth in the 400 free relay. Gavin Kiernan took 11th in the butterfly for Cranston West.

Cranston West's Alexander Tremblay, Logan D'Arezzo, Gavin Kiernan and Trenton Kiernan took 13th in the 200 medley while Trenton Kiernan took 15th in the 200 IM. Tim Dietrich took 15th in the 500 free for East.

East's relay team of Dietrich, Alexioff Orion, Jessiel Loeza and Kenny Dias placed 13th in the 400 free relay.

Cranston East's Elaine Wu, Maddison Dutra, Lily Maguire and Ruby Houle

took 12th in the 200 free relay. Dutra took 12th in the breast stroke while Maguire took 15th.

East's team of Wu, Houle, Maguire and Dutra also took 12th in the 400 free relay.

West's top girl performer was Bianca Asencio, who placed 17th in the 200 IM. Toll Gate's Oce Lowe took first place in the 500 freestyle for the Titans.

Nick Andrews won the 200 freestyle for Hendricken as well as the 100 yard free. Hendricken's relay team of Tristan Jordan, Matt Walden, Tim Andrews and Nick Andrews won the 400 free relay.

Hendricken's relay team of Walden, Aidan Curry, Alex Walsh and Aidan Briceno finished second in the 200 medley relay. Walsh, Curry, Nick Andrews, Tim Andrews also finished second in the 200 free relay.

Tim Andrews later took third in the

200 IM and the 100 butterfly, while Walsh finished third in the 100 free. Walden finished third in the backstroke as well. Walden took fourth in the 200 IM.

Hendricken's Jordan placed fifth in the 100 free for the Hawks. Ryan Kornacki placed fifth for Hendricken in the 500 free.

Alex Sulyma finished sixth for the Hawks in the 200 free, while Curry took sixth in the breaststroke.

Kornacki later finished seventh in the 200 IM, while Johnston's James Guilmette took seventh in the breaststroke.

Johnston's Alexander Quesada finished eighth in the 100 free, while Sulyma took eighth in the 500 free. Briceno placed eighth in the backstroke. Cranston West's Gavin Kiernan, Trenton Kiernan, Alexander Tremblay and Logan D'Arezzo finished eighth in the 400 free relay.

Walsh would finish ninth in the 500 free for Hendricken

Damon Buchanon took 10th in the 200 free for the Hawks, while Johnston's Guilmette finished 10th in the 200 IM. Briceno later placed 10th in the butterfly

■ Pitch

(Continued from page 19)

The other big surprise was the Hendricken hockey team beating rival La Salle in two games to punch its ticket to this weekend's state championship.

I know, the Hawks beating the Rams is never really a surprise. In this case though, this was about as big of a surprise as we've seen in the rivalry.

La Salle was enjoying the best season in the state and one of its best in program history. The Rams were unbeaten in league play and topped the Hawks in each of their regular season meetings.

Hendricken was confident going into the matchup, as the two teams played near even when power-play goals were excluded. The Hawks felt that if they stayed out of the box, then they would be every bit as good as their rival.

That turned out to be the case and more as Hendricken rolled past La Salle.

I will say, I do feel a little sorry for La Salle.

Last football season, the Rams were the favorite over Hendricken. In that instance though, Hendricken was right there in the conversation for the state's best team. La Salle and Hendricken were so even, but the Rams were just a little more explosive on offense. That's why when Hendricken won, no one batted an eye because the teams really were even.

In this case, though, this felt like La Salle's year. Sure, the Rams won a few years ago, it's not like they have never had their moment, but they were just so dominant this season, so consistent.

As a Warwick reporter, I am far from disappointed because now it provides us with another week of fun. But, I did cringe a bit when thinking of how down the La Salle players must have been. To be the clear favorite to take it all, just to get smashed by your rival whose number you thought you finally had.

Like Hendricken swimming, there was a sign that the Hawks had a chance in hind-

sight.

Early in the season, the two teams battled in a holiday exhibition. The two teams rolled out much of their starting lineups that day and the Hawks rolled to a five-point win. As a scrimmage, not much was made of it, but looking back on it, I think that should have told us something.

The next upset of the weekend was the Cranston West girls basketball team, which continues to roll in the tournament.

I'll pat myself on the back because for those of you have been keeping up with my column, you'll see that I have been predicting a Falcons' run.

West got off to a rough start this season but took off down the stretch. Since late January, early February, West has been arguably the state's best team. It just had to get healthy which it ultimately did.

West beat both East Providence and Rogers last week to advance to the upcoming Final Four. Neither of those wins were shocking, but both could realistically be considered upsets. If you were to ask anyone a month ago how far West would go, I don't think a single person would have guessed the Final Four.

I am not going to predict a state championship, but I do think West gets by Juanita Sanchez this weekend. Juanita Sanchez has an unbelievable offense - I was lucky enough to see it at work when it played Cranston East a few weeks back. However, West is deep, experienced, in a higher division, and has too much momentum. I think a state finals appearance is in the cards and at that point, anything is possible.

The last upset is Toll Gate's Oce Lowe winning the 500 yard freestyle at the swimming states.

In the four years that I have been in Rhode Island, I had yet to see one of our girls win a title. I was thrilled to see Lowe pull it off because it is such a statement for Warwick swimming.

Pilgrim and Toll Gate have had some good swimmers that have put up solid times at states. For Lowe to finally break through and reach the top of the podium is special, and should not be overlooked.

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Anthony Corsinetti, who was named Second Team All-Division. (Photo by Mike Zawistoski)



Emily Iannuccilli, who was named Second Team All-Division.



Alena Rizzo, who was named Third Team All-Division.



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HOF

(Continued from page 19)

Thus, the Class of 2022 is: Cranston natives Ralph Warburton, Tom Mellor and Harvey Bennett, Jr. as well as Rob Gaudreau who once starred at Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick.

The Class of 2022 is rounded out by Bob Bellemore, who once ranked among the nation's all-time best fast-pitch softball players who starred at La Salle Academy and Providence College and backstopped the Friars' to their first ECAC championship Final Four NCAA title bid back in 1964.

Bellemore, who organized and coached Smithfield High School's first hockey team, also served as an assistant coach with the Friars under the legendary Lou Lamoriello and became the long-time goalie coach for the NHL's New Jersey Devils. He returned to PC to coach the Lady Friars' goaltenders for 19 years and has been honored as the nation's "Assistant Coach of the Year" in women's ice hockey.

Upon the former inductions on Aug. 20, the number of honorees will total 37 and as Cimini noted last week "We are all excited about being about to have a live induction dinner and having it at Rhodes; tickets are now on sale on our website RIHOF.com.

The popular Hockey Hall Chairman, who is highly-respected in the game as well as this state's public relations-advertising community, also offered brief biographies about Warburton, Tom Mellor, Harvey Bennett, Jr., and Robbie Gaudreau.

RALPH WARBURTON: The former La Salle great captained Dartmouth College to the NCAA title during its famous 47-game unbeaten streak in the 1940's then became RI's very first Olympian scoring a remarkable 16 goals in the 1948 Games at St.-Moritz before lading the RI Scarlets to our state's first National Amateur Hockey championship later that year. He was previously honored by the Hall of Fame in 1028 as the first Malcom Green Chace Award recipient for lifetime contributions to the game.

TOM MELLOR: Tom graduated from Cranston's CLCF youth hockey program his father Don co-founded and starred at the Northwood School in Lake Placid, NY before earning All-American honors at Boston College where his retired jersey hangs in the rafters of Conte Forum. He played for Team USA on three occasions taking home a Silver Medal in the 1972 Olympics before joining the NHL's Detroit Red Wings. He ended his hockey career being named MVP of the International Hockey League in 1977.

HARVEY BENNETT, JR: Harvey is member of one of the state's most famous hockey families, He led Cranston East to the RI state and New England championship before starring at Boston College and playing for five NHL teams in his pro career. He twice represented the USA in international play with his brother Curt, who he will join along with his father Harvey Sr., who are both charter member of the Hockey Hall.

ROBBIE GAUDREAU: The decorated Bishop Hendricken grad tied the finale-season goals scored at Providence College and later earned All-American honors. He was also New England Player of the Year and a finalist in 1991 for the Hobey Baker Award as the USA's best collegiate player. He also scored the most goals of any Rhode Island to ever play in the NHL. He will join his father Bob Gaudreau, Class of 2021, Hockey Hall.

Coro, Pierce receive LEC honors

Rhode Island College senior outfielder Joey Coro (North Providence, R.I.) and freshman designated hitter Lucas Pierce (Chepachet, R.I.) were recognized for their respective performances in five games for the RIC baseball team at the RussMatt Invitational (Fla.) last week.

Coro was named the Little East Baseball Player of the Week. He played in five games, starting all of them. Coro batted .450 (9-for-20) with five runs scored, nine hits, one double, two homers, seven RBI and one stolen base. He owned an .800 slugging percentage, a .476 on-base percentage and a 1.000 fielding percentage.

Pierce was named the Little East Baseball Rookie of the Week. He played in four games, starting three of them. He batted .333 (4-for-12) with two runs scored, four hits, a double and four RBI. He owned a .500 slugging percentage and a .385 on-base percentage. Pierce went 1-for-3 with a run scored and a double in a 7-4 win over Crown on March 4.



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