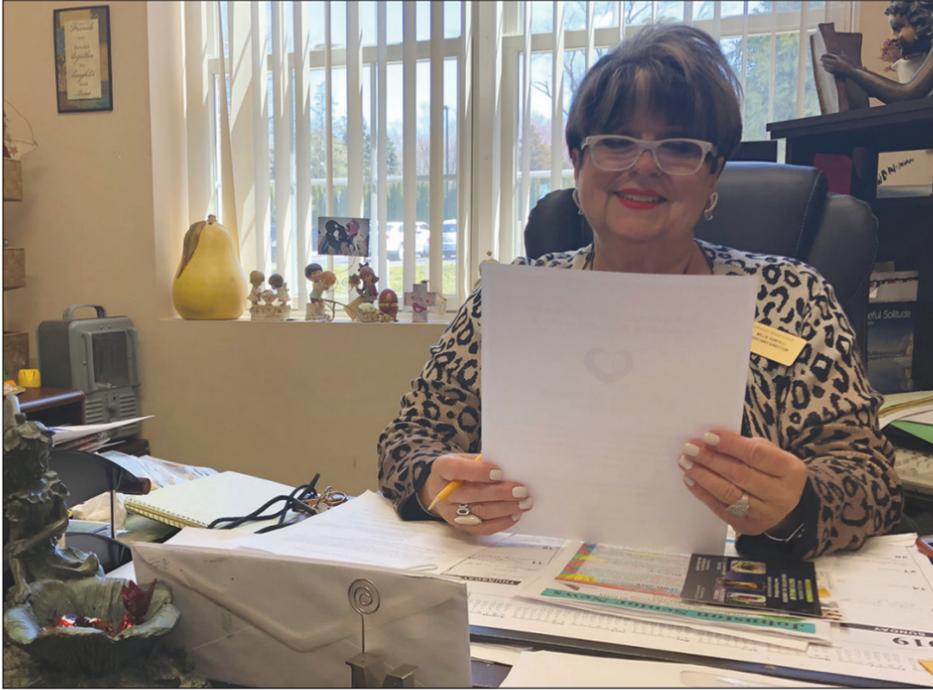


Santilli remembered as fixture of senior community



MILLIE SANTILLI

By JACOB MARROCCO

Mildred "Millie" Santilli, assistant director of the Johnston Senior Center and a dedicated advocate for those she served, died in March at 71 years old.

Her sudden passing was a shock to those who worked with her in the town, and they remembered her ever-present smile and creative mindset as the engine that kept JSC running.

Santilli and outgoing JSC director Tony Zompa had run the center since it was operating out of an industrial building on Priscilla Lane. The two were integral to building the current structure on Hartford Avenue, which has routinely played host to events that keep local seniors active and en-

gaged.

"We worked very well together, actually building the senior center from the ground up," said Zompa, who worked with Santilli for more than two decades. "We were together in the old highway garage on Priscilla Lane near St. Rocco's. She ran the place, no question about it, and the staff worked well with her."

Center coordinator Denise Bell said Santilli embodied the senior center and its values, and that the community will "never ever be the same." She vowed that everything she does to benefit members of the center going forward will be in Millie's memory.

"I want to continue to honor what Millie has built here, what Millie and

Tony have built here," Bell said. "I want to make her proud. I don't want everything that she created here to be lost. It's unfortunate because of the pandemic that we have to rebuild, but everything we rebuild here will be based on the foundation that Millie helped to build here along with Tony."

Santilli tried to adapt events to fit the protocols of the COVID-19 pandemic, with one example being her outdoor Zumba classes offered in partnership with Denise Moio-Touchette at nearby Anchor Bay Pocasset.

Santilli had previously worked as the activity director and marketing director in two separate stints at Anchor Bay, and

■ MILLIE - PAGE 7

Honoring their sacrifice

After brief RI display in Warwick, Boots on the Ground returns to Fort Adams

By JACOB MARROCCO

Operation Stand Down Rhode Island's Boots on the Ground for Heroes Memorial is making its full return to Fort Adams State Park in Newport this Memorial Day weekend.

The coronavirus pandemic forced OSDRI to suspend its usual display in favor of a downsized tribute to the 29 Rhode Islanders who have died fighting in the Global War on Terror since 9/11. OSDRI executive director Erik Wallen, development director Dee DeQuattro and Gold Star mom Lynn St. Germain each spoke during a video, filmed at Beavertail State Park in Jamestown, honoring those Rhode Islanders' sacrifices. The annual tribute, which launched in 2016, moved from Roger Williams Park to Fort Adams in 2019.

While all 7,000 boots will be laid out at Fort Adams in 2021, Wallen said there will be a special display honoring the 29 Ocean State soldiers this morning at Warwick City Hall. He said the promotion is a "great way to bring attention" to the main event in May.

"It's a way to give folks on the West Bay the opportunity to see the boots that represent the Rhode Islanders of the Global War on Terror, and encourage people to see the full display on Memorial Day," Wallen said. "Warwick is obviously one of the oldest cities in the state, it's got a magnificent Town Hall with a war memorial out in front, and we felt it would be a good central and accessible location for the boots in a city that has a great history."

Wallen said Fort Adams is requiring that attendees wear masks when viewing the memorial, and he doesn't expect any issues with crowd size. While thousands people visit the boots every year, Wallen said they usually don't stay for longer than an hour and there shouldn't be more than 100 people inside the fort at any given time.

Since it's an enormous, open-air fort, social distancing shouldn't be a problem either. He said folks "will feel safe to attend."

"It's a perfect outdoor event," Wallen said. "The display itself is almost the entire size of a football field, it takes up a majority of the interior of Fort Adams, so as we kind of break out of this period of quarantine and folks kind of hunkering down in their homes with family, this is going to time well as Rhode Island opens up and we return to

■ BOOTS - PAGE 8



LENDING A HAND: U.S. Sen. Jack Reed announced \$40 million in federal aid aimed at tackling food inequality and hunger in Rhode Island, including a 15 percent increase in benefits for all SNAP recipients. RI Community Food Bank CEO Andrew Schiff looks on as Reed speaks. (Sun Rise photo)

'There's no vaccine for hunger'

Reed announces \$40M in aid to curb food insecurity

By JACOB MARROCCO

U.S. Sen. Jack Reed stopped by the Rhode Island Community Food Bank's Niantic Avenue headquarters Monday afternoon to announce \$40 million in federal aid to help fight hunger and food inequality in the Ocean State.

Reed said that the funds included in the American Rescue Plan would go toward several measures aimed at reducing child poverty and feeding families. A 15 percent increase in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, benefits was extended through September. The senator said the hike presents an additional \$27 per Rhode Islander per month, or \$108 for a family of four.

He also discussed a "substantial influx" of money into the Pan-

dem Electronic Benefit Transfer, or P-EBT, program, through the end of the COVID-19 crisis. He said the initiative "helps families purchase food for children whose access to meals through their schools have been impacted by COVID."

Reed said \$3.4 million would be dedicated to administrative costs related to food assistance, such as websites, outreach and connecting eligible residents to programs. Larger allotments to national agencies will benefit the Ocean State, too. He said \$750 million was committed to Meals on Wheels, while the USDA received \$880 million to "deliver more expandable access to fruits and vegetables for mothers and children."

"There is a light at the end of

the tunnel, but we're not out of this crisis yet. We've got to be vigilant, we've got to ensure the pandemic doesn't turn into a deeper economic crisis with a eviction epidemic and a hunger epidemic, on top of the public health emergency. The Food Bank is essential to this effort. I salute their incredible work," Reed said. "Unfortunately, there's no vaccine for hunger. We've got to make it our mission to ensure everyone in our community has a place at the table."

Food Bank CEO Andrew Schiff said that the organization's statewide network saw a significant increase in need when the pandemic began last year. Member agencies went from helping

■ FOOD - PAGE 11



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Lopez leading charge to stop medical waste facility

By JOHN HOWELL

Not until she learned of a proposal to operate a medical waste facility on Division Street in West Warwick did Denise Lopez hear of the word pyrolysis.

Now, Lopez - who lives in East Greenwich about a quarter-mile away from 1600 Division St., where MedRecycler plans to process 70 tons of medical waste daily - is a leader in the fight to stop the project.

From her point of view, there are too many unanswered questions for the Department of Environmental Management to issue the New Jersey-based company a permit. For starters, her research has found that the only operation in the world to use pyrolysis to dispose of medical waste is in New Mexico, and that was recently closed.

That's one of many red flags she has raised. She questions why Rhode Island needs MedRecycler when it already has a company to dispose of medical waste; why MedRecycler has proceeded with a 10-year lease and acquired equipment when it has yet to gain state and town approvals - is there a deal here? - and how DEM is going to evaluate the MedRecycler application when it doesn't have standards by which to judge pyrolysis. She's dug deeper.

She's questioned the Environmental Protection Agency about what's proposed here and researched the major investors in Sun Pacific Holdings, the mother company to MedRecycler. She's followed the Sun Pacific stock, read its reports and concludes it is financially in trouble. MedRecycler is seeking \$17 million in state tax-exempt bonds to finance the facility.

Lopez has researched Technotherm, the South African company that is operating a pyrolysis plant and is providing the technology to MedRecycler. She's asked

whether the Department of Transportation should have a role in the permit process, since this medical waste is going to be transported by truck, and whether they are prepared if there is an accident. This Monday, she questioned the West Warwick Planning Department's one-year extension of master plan approval to site the operation at 1600 Division St. The town Planning Board granted master plan approval, a first step in the approval process, in May of 2019.

The board granted a one-year extension of its approval. Lopez watched the hearing and was prepared to speak, but public comment was not part of the process. Nonetheless, she sent a letter to the board chair, questioning the initial approval.

She has read correspondence between MedRecycler and DEM as well as researched state health medical waste regulations. She has found that state health regulations "require that for DEM to approve any alternative technology to treat medical waste, the technology must be "proven, on the basis of thorough tests to be protective with respect to total impact on the environment, and ensure the health, safety and welfare of both facility employees and the general public."

That has her asking how DEM is going to evaluate the MedRecycler proposal.

"If you don't know how you're going to test it, why would you approve it?" she asks. "Why put public health and welfare at risk?"

What is pyrolysis?

The "it" is pyrolysis, and the question is whether the process can effectively destroy medical waste.

As described in a fact sheet released in February by the Department of Environmental Management, "Pyrolysis is similar to incineration in that they both use high heat to break down organic materials such as cloth and plastic. It differs from incineration in that the heating is done in an anoxic (without oxygen) environment. The process produces a flammable gas that is then burned in the presence of oxygen to produce electricity."

MedRecycler claims the pyrolysis of medical waste is safe, that it won't release harmful gases. But that's questioned by a growing number of area residents, with Lopez one of the leaders, who don't buy it. With an April 14 deadline for comment approaching, DEM has ready received 600 comments, a DEM spokeswoman said Friday.

"Stop medical waste" signs have mushroomed throughout nearby residential neighborhoods as well as on major roads in East Greenwich, Warwick and West Warwick. In addition to the written comments,

opponents have submitted a letter with more than 1,500 signatures.

Lopez grew up in East Greenwich and graduated from East Greenwich High and URI, where she majored in accounting. She then left the state for jobs in New York City and Boston, where she worked in mutual fund operations before transitioning to technology doing business analysis/project management for asset management. Lopez has been swept into beating this project on the basis that it's the wrong place for processing medical waste; that it is an unproven technology that is not needed and puts people at risk.

She is well suited for her role of public defender. Her unabashed concern for the community manifests itself in long, detailed emails, fearless questioning of officials, phone conversations that slide from topic to topic, and even dressing up as a bunny on Saturday to wave to motorists on Route 2 while swinging a "stop medical waste" sign.

She's read up on medical waste, the science of pyrolysis and state and federal regulations on air quality. It's become technical and it already has become legal. The town has appealed the DEM's issuance of an air quality permit to Superior Court, and at the judge's direction, the parties are in arbitration.

"Do I have to go back and get a law degree to fight this?" she asks.

The Stop the Medical Waste campaign has heightened community awareness and anxiety.

"Daily I get calls, people are freaked out," she said.

Calls to MedRecycler president Nick Campanella were not returned. The DEM spokeswoman said the agency could not comment on the application beyond what it has already been released.

Asked how DEM would evaluate a process for which it has no regulations, the spokeswoman emailed: "The application is being evaluated to determine if it meets the specific requirements of DEM's regulations; the technology must be shown to effectively destroy pathogens in a way that is protective of human health and the environment."

Following the closure for written comment on April 15, DEM has 90 days to render a decision. Regardless of which way it falls, West Warwick Town Planner Mark Carruolo is convinced it will be appealed. He wouldn't be surprised to see this battle stretch out for a decade and even reach the state Supreme Court.

At this point, Lopez is committed. She's not backing out.

She laughs recollecting the return to her hometown 14 years ago to raise a family.

"I've become the town vigilante," she said.



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The rise of Sabina Matos

TALKING POLITICS



by
IAN
DONNISS

When Sabina Matos won election as president of the Providence City Council in 2019, it was impossible to know that she'd win the pick a few years later to be Rhode Island's lieutenant governor.

Matos, 47, nonetheless emerged as the early frontrunner for LG once it was clear that Dan McKee was on a path to becoming governor. During a news conference outside the State House last week, McKee cited various reasons for his selection, including Matos's government experience and her ability to serve as an inspiration for others.

"Sabina's story is our story, it's my story," the governor said, alluding to how immigrants from the Dominican Republic have traveled the path of earlier immigrant groups to the Ocean State.

McKee dismissed the idea that strategic considerations influenced his selection, although as a Latina from Providence, Matos is likely to help his statewide profile

when he seeks reelection next year.

In the end, there were only a few serious/politically palatable LG contenders, including former Central Falls Mayor James Diossa and state Sen. Louis DiPalma (D-Middletown), and the odds were always strong that McKee would pick a woman. Matos still faces Senate confirmation.

Matos's rise continues the significant strides made by Latinos in Rhode Island politics over the last 20 years. And the evolution of her pairing with McKee (depending largely on what happens in the 2022 election season) will offer Rhode Islanders a very different look from the mostly non-existent relationship that persisted between McKee and his predecessor, Gina Rai-mondo.

Ripple effects

The LG selection process – of little interest to regular people – punched above its weight in mindshare for the metaphorical Gang of 500 who pay rapt attention to Rhody politics. And while the debate about the necessity of the lieutenant governor's office is unlikely to fade, Sabina Matos's selection does have tangible consequences.

For starters, there's the matter of filling the Ward 15 city council seat in Providence. More significantly, Matos is no longer in the potential field

of candidates for mayor of Providence in 2022, where Gonzalo Cuervo, Nirva LaFortune, and Brett Smiley are off and running. (Does Aaron Regunberg, who narrowly lost the LG race to Dan McKee in 2018, jump in?)

Finally, assuming she is confirmed, Matos gets a leg up in the race for LG next year, with 18 months to develop her record as an incumbent. Who else runs? For now, the potential candidates include Regunberg and Sen. Louis DiPalma.

How history rhymes, RI version

Back in 1992, Joe Shekarchi managed the presidential campaign in Rhode Island of Paul Tsongas. That's noteworthy since Tsongas co-founded the Concord Coalition, a nonpartisan group that raised an alarm almost 30 years ago about growing federal budget deficits and the national debt. (For perspective on how things have changed, the U.S. hasn't had a budget surplus since 2001, and the debt to GDP ratio has surpassed 100 percent in recent years.)

While Tsongas died in 1997, Shekarchi – in his current role as House speaker – will have considerable influence over how the gusher of federal stimulus money pouring into Rhode Island will get spent. The magnitude of the \$1.9 trillion stimulus package has sparked

GOP concerns about the fiscal fallout. Democrats, including U.S. Sen. Jack Reed, respond by citing the need to bolster the economy.

Asked for comment, Shekarchi said in a statement, "I am concerned about the large federal deficit, but obviously have no control over it. I want to point out that unlike the federal government, Rhode Island is required to pass a balanced budget every year. If the federal government is going to send Rhode Island stimulus money, we are going to accept it and put it to good use. It is worth noting that interest rates are substantially lower than they were when Paul Tsongas was discussing this issue nearly 30 years ago."

Climate fight

The most significant environmental bill to emerge from the General Assembly in years, the Act on Climate, is shaping up as the first legislative showdown of Gov. McKee's tenure.

McKee said he supports the intent of getting to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, although he cited a concern this week in a letter to lawmakers; he says the bill could lead to costly and protracted litigation against the state.

The Senate sponsor of the legislation, Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Newport), downplays the concern. "[T]he reality is that the

citizen suit provisions are very common in environmental law," Euer said on Political Roundtable at The Public's Radio. "And the recovery is only injunctive relief. So basically, if somebody does sue the state, basically, the state just has to follow the law. And I'm confident that once the governor and his team get a full look at the bill, that their concerns will be eased."

The legislation has the enthusiastic backing of labor, and 70 environmental groups and individuals have signed onto a letter urging McKee to support the measure. Republicans are urging McKee to veto the bill, and he's not ruling that out, as Patrick Anderson reported in the ProJo.

The real world for RI Democrats

Welcome to "The Real World," RI Democratic Party version, in which a longtime political strategist with a track record of supporting pro-choice women candidates is hired to lead a party apparatus that has had a badly strained relationship with pro-choice women.

Kate Coyne-McCoy, speaking during a Zoom meeting last week of the RI Democratic Women's Caucus, prefaced her remarks by tempering expectations that her hiring by the RIDP signals a move to the left for the party.

"While I am super-progressive, right now my goal is to get Democrats elected and I know there is a wide swath of Democrats in Rhode Island," she said.

Coyne-McCoy said she is keen to put to rest concerns about the party's control of VAN, the vital voter-information software, and that she wants to build a structure to support a big tent of Democratic candidates.

"This is a new day," she said, recounting identifying in 2018 with the woman candidates outraged by a series of RIDP endorsements, including one for a former Donald Trump supporter. (A subsequent rules controversy led to the creation of the break-away RI Democratic Women's Caucus.)

At the same time, Coyne-McCoy indicated that she lacks ultimate authority over her work for Rhode Island's perennially dominant party: "I'm working under somebody else's marching orders and direction. Am I going to be influential in that process? I hope so. I've been at this a long time and I think I understand where the divisions are and where the challenges are."

For a longer version of this column, visit thepublicradio.org. Ian Donniss is on Twitter at @IanDon and he can be reached at idonnis@ripr.org.

JHS music department looking to pad fundraising numbers with mattress sale

By PETE FONTAINE

Jason Glander, a respected executive with a national fundraising company, has the perfect solution for people seeking a better night's sleep.

The same holds true for Ron Lamoureux, who chairs Johnston High School's national award-winning music department.

Tomorrow, April 10, for seven straight hours beginning at 10 a.m., Glander and Custom Fundraising Solutions (CFS) will team up with the Panthers multifaceted and talented group of musicians and vocalists for a unique event on Cherry Hill.

"Everyone is excited and looking forward to a super successful day," Lamoureux said with a wide smile on his face. "For lack of a better term, we're calling this the Mattress Fundraiser, and we are hoping it puts more money into the [JHS Music Department] scholarship fund."

While the Panthers



MAESTRO MATT: JHS Chorus Director Matt Gingras is decked out in a mattress cover that will be part of tomorrow's unique seven-hour sale that is open to the public and will be held inside Johnston High School. (Submitted photo)

have hosted the CFS-coordinated fundraiser in recent years, tomorrow's sale ranks as the most important of all simply because last year's scheduled fundraiser

was canceled at the outset of COVID-19 and the Cleveland-based company has been unable to schedule similar events in the state since then.

"[Saturday] will be

our first in-person sale of 2021 in Rhode Island," Glander related. "We have other schools here that participate in our unique fundraising program, but we'll be

launching this year's campaign in Johnston."

Thus, CFS will set up more than two-dozen mattresses, many of which will be top-of-the-line brand names, inside different parts of JHS during the special sale. Both Glander and Lamoureux this week announced that the event "will have many different COVID-19 protections in place, and the space that will house all 25 different styles of mattresses will receive constant sanitation, and covers will be available for people to try out a mattress or two that they might want to purchase."

Glander, who praised the energy and enthusiasm shown by the JHS music department in previous events, offered a sample of the name-brand mattresses that will be on sale tomorrow.

"We carry mattresses ranging from \$199 all the way to \$2,499 and everything in between," Glander explained. "We carry most major brands ... Simmons,

Beautyrest, Therapedic, Malouf, Wellsville and Tranquility. We also carry adjustable bases for every budget made by Simmons and Malouf. In addition, we sell pillows, sheets, mattress protectors and bean bag chairs."

The mattresses will be set up at various locations inside JHS including the foyer and adjacent corridors.

"CFS is extremely well-equipped to conduct a warehouse-like sales that is safe, socially distanced event that meets all state and school safety codes," Lamoureux said.

The popular JHS music chair also added, "this is not just an exclusive JHS sale; we welcome the general public to come and check out the many different mattresses that will be specially priced. Anyone that attends the sale, which will conclude at 5 p.m., will be eligible to purchase tickets for a number of valuable door prizes that will be on sale throughout the day."



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Watch Your MOUTH
by Rochelle Rhodes, D.M.D. and David McFarland, D.D.S.

TEACHING KIDS TO BE KIND TO THEIR TEETH

Most parents know to avoid giving their children drinks like soda because of their extremely high sugar content, but even sugar-free sodas contain enough acid to eat away at the enamel on their teeth and cause cavities. Replacing powdered and other artificial juices with 100 percent real fruit juice seems like a good idea, but even those have copious amounts of sugar and natural sugar is also bad for oral health. In most cases, the best drink you can give your child is simple tap water because it usually contains fluoride. Milk is also a tooth-healthy drink because it helps strengthen enamel. Black and green teas come in a wide variety of flavors and also fight bacteria in the mouth.

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P.S. Getting children to switch to tooth-friendly beverages can be difficult, so weening them off the sugar with drinks like chocolate milk and flavored seltzers may help ease the process.

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CALL ANSWERED: The Rev. Dr. Christopher Abhulime (second from left) helped provide vaccination shots during a recent vaccination clinic held at the Indoor Recreation Center. He is joined by Dr. Brian Kwetkowski, Johnston Police Chief Joseph Razza and Mayor Joseph Polisena. (Submitted photo)

Pastor answers call to crush COVID-19

A man of faith who is also dedicated to the pursuit of science recently helped Johnston residents most vulnerable to the effects of coronavirus receive their second vaccination shot just in time for Easter.

Two weeks ago, the

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Johnston Sun Rise

Rev. Dr. Christopher Abhulime of The King's Tabernacle Church in Johnston exchanged his white clerical collar for a white medical lab coat when he volunteered to give vaccination shots to those aged 75 and older at a clinic held in the town's Indoor Recreation Center.

"I felt the need to support the community and help stop COVID," Abhulime said. "Whatever I can do to be part of this effort to crush COVID, I have to do it. For me, it's mandatory, it is a calling as much as I do my spiritual aspect."

Known to many in the community as Pastor Chris, he is the founding pastor of the Pentecostal non-denominational church located at the former Belknap Community Church on Greenville Avenue. Less known may be his scientific background. While Abhulime earned a diploma in theology, he has also earned a master's of science in clinical laboratory sciences degree, and a doctor of veterinary medicine degree. He is a clinical/biopharmaceutical scientist with more than 15 years of experience in clinical immunology, diagnostic testing, clinical trials and lab automation.

Abhulime is also a registered nurse, and in two weeks he will finish his nurse practitioner studies at Regis College. Recently, he was named deputy chief of staff to Gov. Dan McKee.

"Professionally, I've worked in biotech for a while, but also I'm in the health care sector. To come into the vaccination clinic last week was using my skills from my nursing training. I felt the need to support the community and help stop COVID," Abhulime said. "The more hands on deck as far as participating in community ef-

forts the better it is for the community. Because I'm in Johnston and my operation is in Johnston, it was a community response for me to be there with my community and to be giving shots to people, some of whom I know."

Mayor Joseph Polisena, who also provided shots in his capacity as registered nurse, was stationed directly next to Abhulime during the clinic.

"This is a community effort and Pastor Chris is obviously vetted in our community, which is great, and I was glad he could help," Polisena said. "It was nice that he took time to help ensure that our residents are safe."

Johnston Police Chief Joseph Razza, who has spearheaded all of the town's coronavirus clinics for the last two months, appreciated the pastor's efforts.

"It's truly inspirational to work side by side and hand in hand with these devout community leaders," Razza said. "We are all committed to beating this pandemic and I truly appreciate Pastor Chris and for taking the time out of his busy schedule to assist us at our clinics."

Since the pandemic began, Abhulime has promoted COVID awareness and been an advocate for vaccination. He has also appeared in Department of Health campaigns and advertisements.

"It's humbling to be able to participate. On the other side, it's something that we have to do because if we don't control COVID we're not able to go back to life as we knew it," he said. "For me, it's really being in the forefront, whether I be on television or the radio or social media educating people, and to have conversations within

the minority community to educate everybody as far as COVID is concerned."

Abhulime said that he has been vaccinated and wants to share his personal experiences with the community, especially the minority community. He added that it was important educate men about the benefits of the vaccine, because women are currently being vaccinated at higher rates.

"We need all the men, black and white, to be out there and taking their shots," he said.

The past year has been challenging for Pastor Chris, his parishioners and his church, as attendance of services was hampered by lockdowns and restrictions placed on crowd sizes.

"I cannot have church services, people don't come to church because of COVID. We can't have people getting sick because they don't know that they should be vaccinated, so for me it's a calling to be part of this effort at all levels," he said.

Pastor Chris said that he will continue to help provide vaccinations at the town's upcoming clinics. With spring and Easter Sunday now here, he has a message about the renewal of life in a post COVID world helped by vaccines.

"The vaccine has been tested, it is safe, and it stops severe illness and death. Every single person who is qualified to take it, if it's your turn to take it, go get it," he said. "That is how we'll stop the spread of COVID, and that's how we're going to open the economy again, get schools reopened and people back to school, get businesses open, get churches and places of worship open, and that's how we're going to go back to life as we knew it."

JHS ready to roll out modified Homecoming

By PETE FONTAINE

Panther Pride has never shined brighter than it will Monday night, April 12, inside Mayor Joseph M. Polisen Stadium.

"This has been a difficult year at best for our students who have had to operate under the restrictive conditions that have curtailed countless activities," advisor Greg Russo said.

However, Russo – who has an affinity for helping the JHS Student Council coordinate and host what have been called "blue ribbon events" through the years – refused to "throw in the towel" and put Homecoming on hold for a second straight year.

Last year, many Johnstonians remember, was the first time in the high school's storied history that the annual Homecoming – which always featured a town-wide parade with floats and marchers of all ages,

as well as the football game and crowning of king and queen – was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, Russo – as well as some Student Council members headed by the always-energetic and popular President Nick Petrillo – began talks in hopes of finding a solution to have Homecoming 2021.

"We found some creative ways to keep some semblance of normalcy and Panther Pride alive!" Russo said.

While there won't be a town-wide parade, JHS Homecoming will be held Monday, beginning at 6 p.m. at Mayor Polisen Stadium. The event will be preceded by a ceremony honoring the senior cheerleaders, then what promises to be an exciting football game between head coach Joe Acciardo's Panthers and the visiting North Smithfield Northmen.

In addition, as Russo pointed out,

there will be Homecoming royalty along with those custom, student-made floats representing all four classes at JHS.

"There will be modified versions of the typical floats," Russo said. "However, each class will be preparing a float that will later be used for the graduation parade scheduled for June 18."

Moreover, one of the night's highlights will be crowning of the 2021 Homecoming King and Queen from a field of 10 candidates. Russo announced that Queen hopefuls are Alisha Biswas, Grace Centracchio, Angelina Dureault, Sofia Paris and Olaitan Olagundoye. The King hopefuls are Nicholas Cronan, Jacob Martins, Nicholas Petrillo, Justin Salvatore and Nick Carlino. Carlino is the only member of the court whose picture is missing from this spread.



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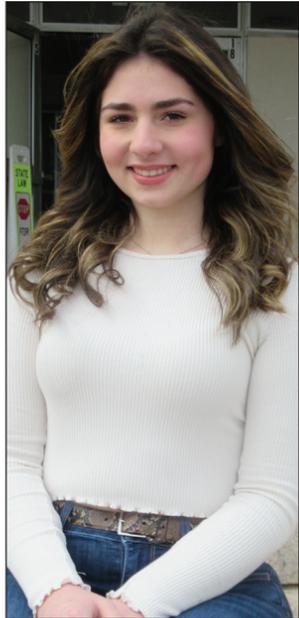
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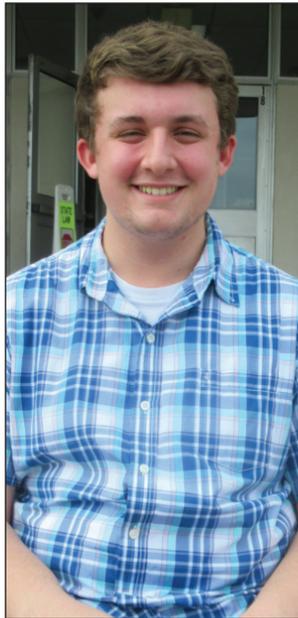
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NW Links raises hundreds for RI Community Food Bank

By PETE FONTAINE

The tea lights that were placed on marble-top tables provided soft, glimmering lighting inside a speakeasy-like setting that featured fantastic furnishings dating back to Rhode Island's colonial days.

Businesspeople, who share a common interest in providing financial support and enhancing the state's elder care, exchanged greetings on how wonderful it was to see each other again after nearly a year's absence as the result of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

While networking reigned supreme, the event was held as a fundraiser for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, which brought in a tidy sum of \$835.

It was, as Christine Soave-Crum and Jen Burns said, the first official in-person meeting of North West Links, the philanthropic nonprofit that takes pride in giving back to senior communities several times a year through highly successful networking events.

NW Links, which raises awareness and revenue for elder care mostly in the northwest part of the state, has held events ranging from cornhole tournaments to wine tastings complete with foods from all corners of the globe.

Membership, which is not limited, is composed of representatives from nursing homes, senior assisted living facilities and retirement centers who provide a variety of appetizers and munchies for each and every event.

Just last week, though, NW Links may have found its most unique networking niche ever inside The George, a new Providence restaurant and piano bar at a location George Washington is said to have visited four times centuries ago.

People marveled at the setting inside the basement, where members and their guests enjoyed cocktails and freshly made thin-crust pizza with a variety of toppings prepared by Mario Purro, the personable general manager at The George.

Some folks, in fact, event went upstairs to the main dining room to listen to owner Alex Tomasso treat fans to his talents on the keyboard inside the piano bar.

"We had some super support from three major sponsors," said Burns, who is the sales director at The Preserve in Johnston. "Thank you to Briarcliffe, Gentry Moving and Storage and The George."

Likewise, Hannon Realty Group, Concord Health Services, Burns Roofing and ABLTC, The Foundation were the night's corporate sponsors.

"We'll have other events in the coming weeks," announced Soave-Crum, who owns Cranston-based Gentry Moving & Storage. "We are a group of individuals who meet monthly to discuss the senior care industry and how we can help our seniors age with respect and care."

New members are always welcome and those people who are interested should contact Burns at The Preserve at Briarcliffe at (401) 944-2450.



NETWORKING NICHE: Jen Burns (top left), Tracy Cale (top right) and Christine Soave-Crum enjoy a lighter moment during the first NW Links event of 2021 at The George in Providence. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



FUNDRAISING FOLKS: Among those NW Links members who turned out for the nonprofit's first event of 2021 are, from left, Jeremy Dexter, Abbi Dexter, Alyson Walsh, Julie Dexter, Christine Crum, Jen burns, Lee Ann Brigido, Paula Alin, Tracy Cale, Amanda Hannon and Roberta O'Neill.

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SBA's Hayward cautiously says small businesses are coming out of the woods

By JOHN HOWELL

Mark Hayward, district director of the Small Business Administration, was ready to retire last year after serving the agency for 40 years. But when the pandemic hit, three U.S. senators begged him to stay on. They knew no one knows Rhode Island businesses the way Hayward does.

Hayward did stay, and he is frequently the only one of five assigned to the office to be at their desk, as the others are working remotely.

SBA phones ring persistently and Hayward and his staff are faced with upwards of 400 emails daily. The office is humming and it's all because the SBA is the facilitator of federal aid aimed at assisting businesses to survive the pandemic. Hayward and his office have been going non-stop since the CARES Act was passed and the first round of relief aide – the Payroll Protection Program – provided businesses with low interest loans that became forgivable based on certain factors became available about a year ago. To be forgiven, the money had to be used for payroll as well as some costs such as



MARK HAYWARD

rent over an eight-week period.

Hayward told the Warwick Rotary Club last Thursday that the SBA processed more than 17,000 PPP loans totaling \$1.7 billion. Now businesses are eligible to apply for a second round of PPP regardless of whether their loans on the first round have been forgiven. So far under the program, 9,000 businesses have been approved for an additional \$900 million. Topping that off the district office has processed 10,857

EIDL (Economic Injury Disaster Loan) loans for a total of \$579,902,599.

Hayward called PPP an employment program that brought people back to work even though the economy was suffering and some jobs weren't there. He said he is especially concerned for small retailers and those in the hospitality business.

But did PPP work? Could businesses have survived without the program?

"The dollars for salary kept many alive to the point where they could secure their staff for a longer period," Hayward said in an email exchange following the meeting.

He was also asked whether he thinks the second round of PPP is enough to get Rhode Island businesses out of the woods.

"I don't think we are as of yet. Can we see the end of the road? As long as we continue to open in an expeditious and orderly manner ... then the answer is we will get there."

The program has been subject to fraud, as some legitimate businesses are learning.

Businesses that didn't apply for the program have received notices to

file paperwork and even make loan payments.

Hayward didn't have specifics on the number of fraudulent PPP applications or the total. His guess is that false applications number in the thousands.

Asked how this could happen, Hayward replied business and individual identification information was most likely gotten from the "dark web" and the massive Equifax data breach of 2017.

After being talked out of retirement once, Hayward said in an email that he doubts he'll stay on beyond December. And what more might he care to add about running the district in a pandemic?

"We have been doing a lot for a lot of people, we have reached out to people who were in desperate need of help and I think my staff have done a great job of responding to questions. There is much more but I think you got the picture," he said.

The effort hasn't gone unnoticed.

Warwick Rotarian Bernard Rinn had this to say when Hayward concluded his remarks on the Zoom meeting: "The SBA's finest hour has been the last year."

■ Millie

(Continued from page 1)

Moio-Touchette would like to honor her service. She is in touch with Millie's family about placing a bench in her memory outside of Anchor Bay.

"She was just a kind soul [who was] ready to do anything for a senior," Moio-Touchette said. "Whatever she needed, Anchor Bay helped her through COVID, as far as the center being shut down. So they were getting very creative in having the Zumba class in the parking lot. ... We dedicated financially, paid for those classes, whoever took those classes, to help the senior center. Whatever Anchor Bay could do for the center, we basically worked with Millie."

Moio-Touchette said Anchor Bay leaders have approved of the bench memorial, but she wanted clearance from the Santilli family before moving forward. She said Millie was "just so close with her son, her daughter, her grandchildren." Santilli was even a children's book author, publishing "Lila Lu: And the Things I Love to Do" in 2018 and

"Ava's Wish" in 2020. The latter featured illustrations inspired by her granddaughter, Ava.

"She was just an amazing, amazing person. A person would feed off her energy," Moio-Touchette said. "I think the legacy would be that she was very compassionate, seniors first. Her seniors were always put first. She always wanted the best for them, even down to entertainers. She asked me who we had. She always wanted to do something special for them. It wasn't just a regular senior center. She wanted them to enjoy. She put on dinner shows, she had bingo at night for them. The trips they went on, too."

Moio-Touchette said Santilli was always "thinking outside the box" for seniors, and her compassion shined through in everything she planned for them.

"When you were talking to her and you saw the things that she had planned for the members there, it made it possible for our seniors if they wanted to go for a sight-seeing excursion, or they wanted to go shopping, or they wanted to go on a little mini-vacation over a weekend," Moio-Touchette said. "She

wanted to provide that for them. ... that they can still enjoy life even if they were not driving. There was opportunity for them."

Mayor Joseph Polisena, who has worked closely with Santilli during his 15 years in office, said news of her passing was "very shocking." He said Zompa stopped by Town Hall personally to deliver the news.

"She was a fixture up there at the senior center," Polisena said. "No one expected it. Even Tony was kind of shocked. It was really too bad. She would set up a lot of the programs for the seniors. She did a very incredible job doing that and making sure the seniors were entertained."

The senior center will forge on, but as Bell said, there is no way to replace Santilli. From helping move to a new building on Hartford Avenue, to moving events outside to keep members active, she always had seniors' best interests at heart.

"She was an integral part of the senior center," Polisena said. "She worked closely with Tony Zompa, they worked hand in hand. She was an integral part of the senior center and the senior programs."

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GETTING BACK TO NORMAL: OSDRI's Boots on the Ground for Heroes Memorial will make its return to Fort Adams State Park in Newport this May. (File photo)

Boots
 (Continued from page 1)
 a sense of normalcy. It shouldn't be lost on folks that we have a tremendous number of people who have made a great number of sacrifices for our freedom." Wallen said the veterans community is "thrilled" for the total return of Boots on the Ground. He said both Fort Adams and Department of Environmental Management

staff were "very quick and very excited" to host the event once again. "It was certainly a well attended event when we brought it to Newport in 2019," Wallen said. "They had some of their record attendance levels. At Fort Adams, it represents an opportunity to open the event season in Newport with a very meaningful and profound display of patriotism in a historic fort." Wallen quoted De-

Quattro, whom he said is on active duty with the U.S. Army in Germany right now, when he noted that Boots on the Ground is "a part of the fabric of Operation Stand Down." Its return is a welcomed sight for a group composed of members who fought for the country. "For an organization that is made up by majority of veterans - all those that we see are veterans - this is near and dear to all of our hearts," Wallen said.

"The memorial itself, the idea of it was developed by our development director Dee De-Quattro ... The veteran community in Rhode Island is very much a family. Our Gold Star family members are folks we have come to know personally and for whom we have profound respect, and to one able to present this memorial on Memorial Day and provide this very visual display of this true sacrifice is profoundly moving."

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BigsRI strengthens partnership with North Providence

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island (BigsRI) and the town of North Providence have had a long-standing partnership to help keep the community's unwanted items out of the landfill and support hundreds of children across the state. Mayor Charles Lombardi and the town of North Providence have granted access to BigsRI to place their BIG Green Donation Bins at several new locations throughout the town: Greystone Elementary School, 100 Morgan Ave.; Dr. EA Ricci Middle School, 51 Intervale Ave.; Birchwood Middle School, 10 Birchwood Drive; North Providence Mancini Center, 2 Atlantic Blvd.; and Whelan Elementary, 1440 Mineral Spring Ave. Residents are encouraged to drop off bagged clothing in the green bins. BigsRI Chief Executive Officer and North Providence resident Katje Afonseca states, "I am proud that the city I live in is such a strong supporter of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island. The bin placements are convenient for all residents to easily donate their bagged clothing and textiles. When donating



MAYOR CHARLES LOMBARDI AND KATJE AFONSECA
 to in our green bins you are making an impact right in your own community." Each year BigsRI diverts three to five million pounds of Rhode Island's unwanted items from our landfill. The residents of North Providence contributed over 280,000 pounds of clothing and textiles in the past two years. The donations collected resulted in a savings of over \$6,500 for the city. Mayor Charles Lombardi had this to say: "We're so grateful for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island's commitment to our community and look forward to our strengthening partnership." BigsRI makes donating in the city easy. Residents can also schedule a free curbside pick-up at their home or drop their bagged cloth in bins throughout North Providence. Visit DonateRI.org or BigsRI.org or DonateRI.org/DonateRI to schedule your pickup online! Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island creates and supports one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. If you are interested in mentoring a child, donating to support our program, forming a partnership like this one, or more, visit BigsRI.org, call 401-921-2434 or email events@bigsri.org.

Opinion

EDITORIAL

A haunting reminder of the importance of leadership

In 1977, former Vice President Hubert Humphrey said, "The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

While Humphrey may not be the most quotable political figure in American history, he certainly hammered home a resounding truth with this statement.

Much governmental debate is heard about protecting the rights and lives of children – particularly before they are even born into this world. Elderly people, while certainly a vulnerable population at large, still have significant political sway through the ballot box and through their longstanding memberships on influential corporate boards and within legislatures. However, as Humphrey so accurately described it, our most vulnerable population – the intellectually and developmentally disabled; the physically handicapped; the chronically sick and all of those afflicted with other serious debilitations – reside squarely in the shadows of our bustling society, at the total mercy of decision makers and forces completely out of their control.

This is why – although there is no shortage of causes to be concerned with in today's world – the ongoing struggles of Rhode Island's state-run Slater Hospital continues to frustrate and concern us. Comparative to the relatively small number of patients that are left in the care of this system, the amount of scandal, mismanagement and bad news coming from these facilities is striking, and indicative that there is a major lack of leadership spearheading the fight to advocate for the most vulnerable Rhode Islanders.

It has been well documented that Slater has been institutionally kneecapped from improper funding and budgetary cuts as high as almost 20 percent throughout the past decade, just as it has been well documented that the salaries available to the selfless healthcare workers who provide day-to-day care for these individuals are chronically underrepresented and underpaid. One private company that trains these workers told the Journal they were "competing with McDonalds," when it came to salaries.

How much of this is to blame on America's overall inability to proclaim health care as an unalienable right? How much of the blame can be directed at stagnant minimum wage growth that forces healthcare workers – who are performing a thankless but essential service – to get a second or third job just to make ends meet? How much of this sad situation can be blamed on the ease with which essential services for the handicapped and intellectually disabled is deemed "expendable" when budgets get tight? How much of this problem was created by leaders kicking the can down the road rather than facing it head-on?

At a certain point, the buck has to stop with somebody. A leader intent on making the situation better must assess the current strategy as inefficient or worthy of more investment and time to make it better. And a public that considers itself part of a community that cares for its residents – all of them – must be prepared to pony up the tax revenue that will help alleviate these grievous inequities.

Gov. McKee – who has inherited a once-in-a-century problem more challenging than some governors face in an entire term – will now also bear the weight of system that has finally crumpled due to decades of neglect and financial sabotage. This was not allowed to happen on his watch, but it is now his responsibility to see that something is done to make the situation improve.

We owe it to those who cannot find their way out of the shadows themselves to guide them to the light of a better tomorrow.

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NEW BLOOD FROM THE GUV

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McKee is right, but has it backward

By JOSEPH H. CROWLEY

Recently, Gov. McKee was quoted in the Providence Journal. Gov. McKee is absolutely right in his quote, "Now is the time to focus on creating more high quality educational opportunities for all students, not fewer." Unfortunately, his suggested remedy is backwards. He was quoted in reference to opposing the three-year moratorium on charter schools.

For starters, Rhode Island has been extremely lucky. It has been reported only one charter has failed in this state. The Network for Public Education released a report in 2020 showing charter schools across the United States failed half the time during a 28-year stretch and more than one quarter of them folded within the first five years. Charter schools do not provide the stability America needs in its educational system.

There is a widely held misconception our high-poverty public schools are failing. "Failing" was a label created by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for schools which did not close the learning gaps between students receiving free and reduced lunches and those not. Learning gaps being the difference in test scores between richer and poorer students. The faulty assumption made by NCLB was the learning gaps originated in our schools when, in reality, poverty creates learning gaps.

Mistakenly assuming schools created learning gaps, billions of dollars were spent to "fix" the "failing" schools. Educators were fired or reassigned. Schools were closed. New curricula were developed. Elaborate teacher evaluation systems were created. "Alternate" schools were created. This process has gone on for two decades.

The outcome? According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress

(NAEP), our nation's report card, very little. NAEP, which tests fourth and eighth graders across the country biannually, found over 12 years test scores for everyone went up – a very modest 10 points on a 500 scale. The learning gaps that were the target of the time and money spent "fixing" schools? They were not reduced at all.

Learning gaps, for the most part, come from the difference in the homes our students come from. Children of reasonably well educated parents do better than the children living in needy circumstances. The conversations the more affluent children hear at home lead to better scores in literacy tests. Having reading materials leads to better literacy skills. Having better educated parents assisting with homework leads to better test results.

Gaps between richer & poorer

Not living in the highly stressed environments of poverty leads to better test results.

Johns Hopkins University recently completed a study of the Providence schools. There is no doubt there are issues needing to be addressed in Providence. However, to suggest all of the learning gaps between richer and poorer students are the fault of the schools is wrong. Johns Hopkins, some years back, published its "dropout factory" list of high schools. Back then, Johns Hopkins did not take into consideration every high school on their list was serving large populations of needy students. Then, as now, poverty was the real issue – not the schools.

Think about it. All across America our "failing" schools are in high poverty areas. What type of "dark force" drove all of our worst teachers and administrators into high poverty schools? How could Central Falls have only hired teachers

needing improvement while Barrington hired the "highly qualified"? It makes no sense. Poverty is the issue.

"Now is the time to focus on creating more high quality educational opportunities for all students, not fewer." So says the governor. And that is absolutely true. Some charters have found ways to reduce learning gaps – extended school days and years is an example. Now is the time to implement the successful strategies developed in charter schools in all of our public schools to provide "high quality educational opportunities for all students." We need high-quality public schools serving "all" students. Charters were created to experiment with various pedagogies to determine what worked best. They were not created to compete with our district schools. Charter schools cannot replace all of our public schools. What they are doing is drawing resources away from our district schools.

It is unfortunate charters have used their marketing

teams and lobbyists to convince parents and legislators our public schools are failing and charters are a better choice. A charter school with seven-hour school days and 190 days in a school year will have – should have – better educational outcomes than the neighborhood school limited to six hours for 180 days. It is time to level the playing field and provide neighborhood schools serving large numbers of children living in poverty with the resources to extend their school days and years.

The governor is suggesting taking funds from district schools to create "educational opportunities" for a small percentage of students. The governor is doing nothing to create "high-quality educational opportunities" for the schools serving over 90 percent of our students.

A Cranston resident, Joseph H. Crowley is past president of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals and author with Albert Colella of "Poverty & Despair vs Education & Opportunity."



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SUN RISE SCOOPS

By **MERI R. KENNEDY**

Easter Bunny to visit Johnston

The Easter Bunny will visit Johnston on Saturday, April 13, at Johnston Senior Services for breakfast, treats and more! Sponsored by Citizens Bank, the Bunny will be ready for children from 9 to 11 a.m.

Please bring your camera with you. For more information, call the Johnston Parks and Recreation office at (401) 272-3460 or visit johnstonrec.com.

FEMA funeral assistance

People can apply for FEMA Funeral Assistance starting April 12 by calling 844-684-6333. Families who have lost a loved one to COVID-19 will be eligible for up to \$9,000 in reimbursement. There is no income cap, so nearly all families are eligible.

Interested applicants should start collecting their documents now. For more details on what you'll need, visit fema.gov.

Playgrounds open in the park

The playgrounds are now open at Johnston Memorial Park. Please remember that masks are

required to be worn at all times, and be advised that the restrooms remain closed at this time.

Endangered Species Youth Art Contest

Roger Williams Park Zoo is now accepting submissions for its fourth annual Endangered Species Youth Art Contest. The deadline to enter is April 30.

In celebration of Endangered Species Day (May 21) Roger Williams Park Zoo is accepting art entries from local K-12 grade students and homeschoolers in the New England area depicting threatened/endangered species. Endangered Species Day is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of protecting endangered species, their habitats, and learn what we can do to help protect them.

Participants will have the chance to win prizes including a zoo membership and gift cards to Jerry's Artarama Retail Stores.

For more information, visit rwpzoo.org/youth-art-contest.

Summer jobs with DEM

DEM is recruiting qualified lifeguards for Rhode Island's state beaches, parks and campgrounds.

Full-time lifeguard positions are available at all state swimming areas, including saltwater beaches such as Roger Wheeler and Scarborough, non-surf beaches such as Goddard, and freshwater beaches such as Burlingame Campground and Lincoln Woods State Park. Flexible, 20-hour workweeks are available for lifeguard positions at our busiest swimming areas. Hourly rates for lifeguards range from \$13.25 to \$16.25 an hour, based on location and position level.

All lifeguard candidates must have successfully completed courses and hold valid cards in lifeguard training, first aid and CPR, including infant, child and adult.

DEM also is seeking park rangers and facilities attendants to work at recreational sites across the state. Park rangers are instrumental to a safe and fun experience at DEM properties. They give directions to beachgoers and park users, help with crowd control, provide security checks for facilities, and are the first responders in the event of emergency.

Hourly rates for park rangers range from \$10.50 to \$11.60. Applicants for facilities attendant and park ranger I must be 16 years of age or older, and applicants to park ranger positions at levels II and III must be 18 years of age or older.

For a complete list of seasonal employment opportunities and to apply, visit riparks.com/employment. Most positions are full-time and include weekend and holiday hours. Applications must be completed online. Paper applications will not be accepted. The state of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity/diversity employer.

With 50 percent fewer teens seeking jobs than 20 years ago, DEM is looking to recruit active older Rhode Islanders and retired military personnel who might want to work part-time work to make up for the lack of younger applicants.

For more information, visit riparks.com/employment.php.

Calling all golfers age 65+

Since 1959, The Over 65 Golf League, a nonprofit organization, has worked with the public golf courses in Rhode Island to offer league play for all seniors. The group's bylaws state, "The purpose of the League is to encourage and promote the Game of Golf and kindred activities through friendly competition among its Members."

If you are interested in golfing on Mondays or being a spare in a mixed senior league, please register to come to the group's

annual Open Membership Meeting on Wednesday, April 21, at Harbor Lights, 150 Gray St., Warwick, starting at 9:30 a.m.

Preregistration is required due to COVID-19 restrictions on meeting size. The membership dues for season play, playoffs, TBA tournaments, and a banquet with distribution of prizes are \$55 (\$30 for spares not attending the banquet). To preregister for the meeting, join, or just get more information, contact Carol Desforges at Desac63@gmail.com or call (401) 738-0319.

Focus on mental health

NAMI Rhode Island is the state affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. It offers an array of education and training programs and services for individuals living with mental illness, family members, schools, providers, and the general public. These programs draw on the experience of individuals with mental illness and family members who have learned to live well with their illnesses and are eager to help others, as well as the expertise of mental health professionals and educators.

Programs are free and virtual. For more information on programs or becoming a volunteer, visit namirhodeisland.org, call (401) 331-3060 or email info@namirhodeisland.org.

Rent Relief RI

Rhode Island has received \$200 million in rent relief funds from the federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program. This program, Rent Relief RI through RI Housing, will provide rental and utility relief payments to help eligible renters maintain housing stability during the pandemic.

For more information, visit rentreliefri.org

Be Kind RI

Be Kind RI is a new program that connects volunteers to their neighbors across Rhode Island through text alerts to coordinate food deliveries from grocery stores and food pantries. To sign up go to BeKindRI.org. Volunteers must be 18 or older and undergo our background check. Be Kind RI is open to those in RI experiencing COVID-19 risk factors including seniors 65+, anyone with underlying health conditions, those in quarantine or isolation, anyone experiencing a lack of childcare, and those who would otherwise experience difficulty in obtaining food. For assistance signing up, call 877-958-8785.

Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library

Free craft and activity

kits for children are available at the library. Stop by the library to pick up one, or email Ms. Meri meri@mohrlibrary.org or call 231-4980 to make a reservation.

Looking for '78 Blizzard photos

The Johnston Historical Society is looking for photos from the Blizzard of '78 that include recognizable backgrounds in Johnston, such as businesses, landscapes and street signs. Please email them to JohnstonHistorical1825@gmail.com.

News from the Mohr Memorial Library

Mohr Library is currently accessible to the public during reduced hours but continues to offer curbside pickup and other services during its regular schedule. Services include curbside delivery; reference help by phone, email or in person; recommendation lists and one-on-one help to explore interests in reading, viewing and listening; printing from home or your device; use of computers and copier; and a free notary public, evenings and Saturdays by appointment.

Johnston Community Library Book Club

Kids ages 8 to 10 can meet online, by invitation, Thursdays at 3 p.m. to hear readings and discuss books with library trustee and volunteer Denese Carpenter.

Interested in other times or want to suggest a book for discussion? Let them know.

Parents can learn more about sign-up procedures by contacting Library Director Jon Anderson. Email info@mohrlibrary.org or call 401-231-4980, ext. 7.

Artist applications now open for the Wickford Art Festival

There are new changes to the festival set to bring artists back to Wickford after last year's cancellation due to COVID.

Artist applications are now open for the annual Wickford Art Festival, which is slated for July 10 and 11. Produced by the Wickford Art Association since 1962, this year's festival will aim to feature top artists from the state, region and nationally but will have a new look and feel due to changes since COVID-19 rocked the art and event industry. This year, Wilson Park, located within Wickford Village, will be the base for the festival in order to safely spread-out artists, patrons and adapt to any necessary state guidelines in place come July.

For the first time artists will be able to apply to this year's festival

through a new online application. Accepted artists will also be featured on a new virtual festival platform that will be heavily promoted throughout the entire summer through the end of September.

The Wickford Art Festival is a juried fine art show. Work will be juried on originality, workmanship and professional presentation. Jurors also consider total show composition and for the first time will be accepting a limited number of talented artists that create fine functional art pieces - including ceramics, decorative fiber, furniture and jewelry - will be able to apply to the festival. Applications will be open through April 15.

For more information visit the Wickford Art Association website for details on the festival, application instructions and jury information or contact the Festival Director, Ainslie Daly, at wickfordartfestival@gmail.com.

For more information on individual exhibits or programs, visit wickfordart.org.

Support the Johnston Historical Society

The Johnston Historical Society has T-shirts available for sale in sizes small through extra-large in slate blue, sand and a few in light green.

The JHS is an all-volunteer organization. Its museum is not staffed, but they are happy to open up by appointment for a tour of the museum, the house, and to purchase T-shirts and copies of books.

Call 231-3380 and leave a message with the color and size you would like.

Teen virtual programming during COVID-19

The Mohr Library is currently offering virtual versions of some of its teen programs as well as drop-in chats. They are all invite-only programs, so please contact the teen librarian at marissa@mohrlibrary.org to register or if you have any questions.

Art Club meets every Tuesday at 3 p.m. History Club meets monthly on the first Wednesday at 3 p.m. Drop-in chat days differ weekly, so please ask when registering.

SunriseScoops@aol.com. Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit events as well as virtual events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.

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Town of Johnston

Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 24-6-2 that the Johnston Town Council will hold a public hearing at the Johnston Municipal Court, 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919, on **April 12, 2021 at 7:00 pm.**

This will be a virtual meeting which can be accessed using the Zoom virtual meeting platform. The virtual meeting can be attended by visiting <https://zoom.us/> and clicking on "Join Meeting". Enter the following information:
Webinar ID: 857 5768 4873
Password: 568750
If you do not have a computer or mobile device-Dial in by phone:
833 548 0282 (Toll Free)- 888 788 0099 (Toll Free)

The purpose of the public hearing is to consider proposed **Ordinance 2021-3 (Formerly 2021-CP-22)**, an ordinance regarding the abandonment of a portion of **Elmhurst Avenue**, located on **Assessor's Plat 16**. All persons interested in the above Ordinance may attend the hearing and be heard. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.

Per Order:
Robert V. Russo, President
Johnston Town Council

Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

3/26, 4/2, 4/9/21



HELP FOR ALL: Kathleen Gorman, director of the Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America at the University of Rhode Island, was pleased to hear the SNAP increase would apply to all beneficiaries. She noted that initial assistance in 2020 left out a majority of recipients.



STILL WORK TO DO: Rilwan Feyisitan Jr., executive director of the Community Action Partnership of Providence, cautioned that the pandemic isn't over yet. However, he was grateful for Reed and the congressional delegation's work to provide a "shot in the arm" for the community.



Food

(Continued from page 1)

53,000 people each month to more than 68,000. He cited research from Brown University that showed, three months into the pandemic, one in four Rhode Island households "could not afford adequate food."

He said the disparity was even worse for the state's Black and Latinx households, which saw a one-in-three rate.

"Food pantry lines are like a barometer of human suffering, and no one's ever just hungry," Schiff said. "The people standing in line for food assistance also need help paying their rent, utilities. Today, we are optimistic and hopeful for an end to the COVID-19 crisis, as more people get vaccinated, and get protected from disease, but we also need to make sure that people are protected from the economic hardships caused by COVID-19."

He took a moment to thank Reed and Congress for passing the "life-saving and life-changing" American Rescue Plan that made the aid possible.

"Fortunately, the American Rescue Plan recognizes both the depth and the severity of the current crisis," Schiff said. "So through the American Rescue Plan, Congress recog-

nized that it's going to take a while for the economy to recover. It's going to take a lot of government assistance to repair the damage done to our economy, in Rhode Island, we can thank our congressional delegation, led by Sen. Reed, for enacting the American Rescue Plan."

Kathleen Gorman, director of the Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America at the University of Rhode Island, said the Families First Coronavirus Response Act provided some "initial advancements" for SNAP benefits last year. It wasn't nearly comprehensive enough, though, she said. More than half of Rhode Island SNAP recipients weren't eligible for enhanced payments, so the provision in the American Rescue Plan to apply the 15 percent increase to all beneficiaries was essential.

"That has just made a tremendous difference for seniors, for families, for working adults, for adults who are no longer working because they've lost their job," Gorman said. "One of the things we know is, not only people who lost their jobs, but so many individuals particularly women, had to leave their jobs to stay home with their children because childcare centers closed, because the schools closed, because

they went on the hybrid models. What happened to the children? They lost their breakfast and lunch programs, or they had it some days and not other days."

Gorman added that she hopes the P-EBT program becomes an institution over time.

"[P-EBT] allows families to have SNAP benefits, additional benefits for their children and if they're not SNAP recipients, low-income households that qualify for free and reduced lunch, they can get an EBT card, a debit card, and have an added benefit so they don't have to worry about where their children are going to get their next meal," Gorman said. "So both of those, along with so many of the other great things that are in the American Rescue Plan, help to extend and fortify this effort."

Rilwan Feyisitan Jr., executive director of the Community Action Partnership of Providence, serves on the Food Bank's board of directors. He said the American Rescue Plan is a "great lifeline," but the work to end food inequality is far from over.

He said CAPP looks forward to serving the community during the recovery phase of the pandemic, but the state isn't quite at that stage yet.

"I get to be a leader of an organization that's

FEEDING RHODE ISLAND: RI Community Food Bank CEO Andrew Schiff said that the organization's member agencies went from serving 53,000 people per month to 68,000 during the pandemic. (Sun Rise photos)

serving and will continue to serve the recovery base, so as we go through this rescue phase, we are looking forward to recovery. We're not there yet," Feyisitan said. "So that's that cautionary tale that last year, we see people who will directly be impacted because of this work that the senator has done, we've got much more work to do. As we all know in Rhode Island, before the pandemic, but we had too many people that are struggling. Our economy was struggling, people were struggling to get jobs."

Feyisitan said that people who had previously donated to the organization had become recipients of its help over the past year, and residents are still struggling even as glimmers of hope appear.

"So we're excited to be able to roll up our sleeves with the senator, and we're hoping that Congress in a bipartisan way will really work to the next level of recovery," he said. "It's hard to even talk about that when we're still in the middle of it, but what this rescue act has done is give us the shot in the arm that we needed, next to the COVID vaccine. So now we're looking for getting people back into a robust economy and a place where we're helping our neighbors in need like we've never done before."

OBITUARY

Joseph C. Beaulieu Sr.



Joseph C. Beaulieu Sr., 92, of Manuel Avenue, Johnston, passed away at home on March 23rd, surrounded by his family. He was the beloved husband of the late Norma F. Beaulieu with whom he shared 70 beautiful years.

The youngest of five boys, he was born in his family's home in Johnston and lived there his entire life. Ever the accountant, he catalogued every aspect of his life with countless records and photographs - from the tomatoes and flowers that grew in his amazing gardens to a photographic history of family events large and small. He was a WWII Army veteran and avid golfer. He was our master tax preparer and skilled bread baker. His love for us was boundless and kisses and hugs were mandatory.

He leaves behind his children, John Beaulieu of Durnellon, FL, Christine Beaulieu of Greenville, Carol Beaulieu-Gonsalves of Greenville, William Beaulieu of Cape Canaveral, FL, Robert Beaulieu and his wife Karen of Hernando, FL, his daughter-in-law Susan Beaulieu of Warwick, his grandchildren, Joseph Beaulieu III of Charleston, SC, Jaclyn Cambio of Cranston, Keith Beaulieu of Ocala, FL, James Beaulieu of Warwick, Edward Beaulieu of Warwick, Kyera Shea of Greenville, Joseph Gonsalves of Freehold, NJ, Megan Gonsalves of Buffalo, NY, Emily Gonsalves of Greenville, William Beaulieu, Jr of Grapevine, TX, Kevin Beaulieu of Albany, NY, Geoffrey Heeks of Fall River, MA, eleven great-grandchildren, and many dear nieces and nephews. He was the father of the late Joseph Beaulieu, Jr. and James Beaulieu and brother of the late George N., Earl, Raymond, and William Beaulieu.

A graveside committal service for Joseph and Norma, and their son, James Beaulieu, will be held Thursday, April 15th at 12:30pm in the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery, Exeter. Social Distancing and facemasks are required. For messages of condolence please visit www.andersonwinfield.net.

Obituaries

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

Should you desire our services, kindly inform your funeral director, or call Sue Howarth at (401) 732-3100 or email sueh@rhodybeat.com for additional information. Obituary prices start at \$50. You may place the obituary in any of our other newspapers for half price. *Thank you.*

spotlight ON BUSINESS

Jain's Laundry

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Jain's Laundry

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By JENNIFER COATES

There is nothing in the world quite as wonderful as the Downy-fresh smell of clean clothes and clean linens. This familiar aroma evokes images of newly-washed clothes, hung on a clothesline to billow in the wind and dry in the warm summer sun.

While there are no clotheslines hanging in Jain's Laundry, it is a common, daily experience to have your clothes and linens smell just as Downy-fresh as this sensory memory, every time you bring them home from this tidy laundromat on Putnam Pike.

Jain's Laundry is a family-run laundromat in Johnston that has been in continuous operation since it was first opened by the Jain family in 1993. It is a place that has earned a reputation for cleanliness, trustworthiness, affordability, consistency, and friendly customer service. It is a place

that provides an invaluable service for today's modern family ~ both as a place where one can do all their wash in "one fell swoop" or take advantage of their convenient, same-day, wash-dry-fold service.

Cleaning your clothes and household linens is "essential work" but it does not have to be drudgery! If time is your most precious commodity, then why not bring your laundry to Jain's Laundry for their drop-off service? Why not spend your time doing the things you love this spring and let Kaushal Jain help you carry the load?

For an incredible .69/pound, Kaushal will wash, soften, dry, and even fold your laundry - all in one day. Besides the convenience of this great service, this price also covers the cost of the softener, bleach, soap and hangers! What a bargain!

For the most competitive prices in the area, you will find both the wash-fold,

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

There are large capacity machines available for all size loads, from 25 pounds to 65 pounds. The top loading machines are available here for only \$2.00 per load compared to \$2.50 in most other places. Vending machines are also on-site if you need to re-stock your supply of detergent, softener, or laundry bags.

There is plenty of parking and a friendly, helpful staff here, ready to meet the needs of both residential and commercial customers.

All Covid-19 guidelines remain in effect at this local laundromat, including the wearing of protective face coverings and social distancing. All surfaces are constantly sanitized.

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



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Sports



BREAKING OUT: Johnston native Hanna O'Connor competes in the 800. (Photo courtesy of URI)

O'Connor breaking out with URI track

By ALEX SPONSELLER

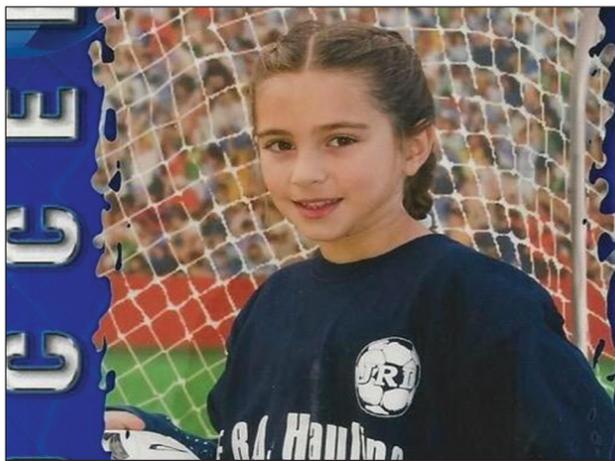
Johnston native and Bay View graduate Hanna O'Connor is off to a strong start on the track this season for Division I University of Rhode Island.

The Rams traveled to nearby Bryant University on March 27th and the sophomore standout won the 800 meter run while setting a personal record with a time of 2:15.70.

"I started training in September with a focus on the 800, then our winter season got canceled, but

luckily I was able to run a 1,000 meter race and an 800 meter race in our dual meets. We opened at Bryant and I ran a good time, a personal record, I was pretty impressed with myself. I'm starting to see all the training that I've been doing start to come together," said O'Connor.

URI has another big meet coming up this Friday when the Rams travel to the University of Connecticut. This race will



OLD DAYS: Hanna O'Connor during her time with the Johnston recreation soccer club. (Submitted photo)

O'CONNOR- PAGE 15

Hawks stay step ahead

The second week of the high school football season was filled with ups and downs. Of course, that can be said for any week on the schedule, but for our teams this past weekend, that old cliché perfectly summed it up.

Well, not totally. There was one up and four downs.

Let's start with the up. After falling behind 17-0 early, the Bishop Hendricken Hawks came back to stun North Kingstown in a heavy-weight battle. Hendricken was the slight favorite heading in, but the Skippers gave them everything they could handle

My pitch



by ALEX SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

ALEXS@RHODYBEAT.COM

once again in what is becoming the state's best rivalry.

What did this show us about the Hawks? Not much if you ask me, it just confirmed what we

PITCH- PAGE 14



COMEBACK WIN: Hendricken's Isaiah Emmanuel and Ryan Shurtleff. (Photo by Ryan D. Murray)

Hawks rally to shock Skippers

By RYAN D. MURRAY

The Hawks were down 17-0 before they rallied to beat the North Kingstown Skippers 30-24 late Saturday afternoon during a Division I Football clash between the states' top two teams at Bishop Hendricken.

Keith Croft, Hendrick-

en's head coach, loved the resilience of his team following a slow first half.

"We showed a lot of character," Croft said. "We never really doubted, but that's a heck of a football team over there. I think we're going to see them again."

HAWKS- PAGE 14

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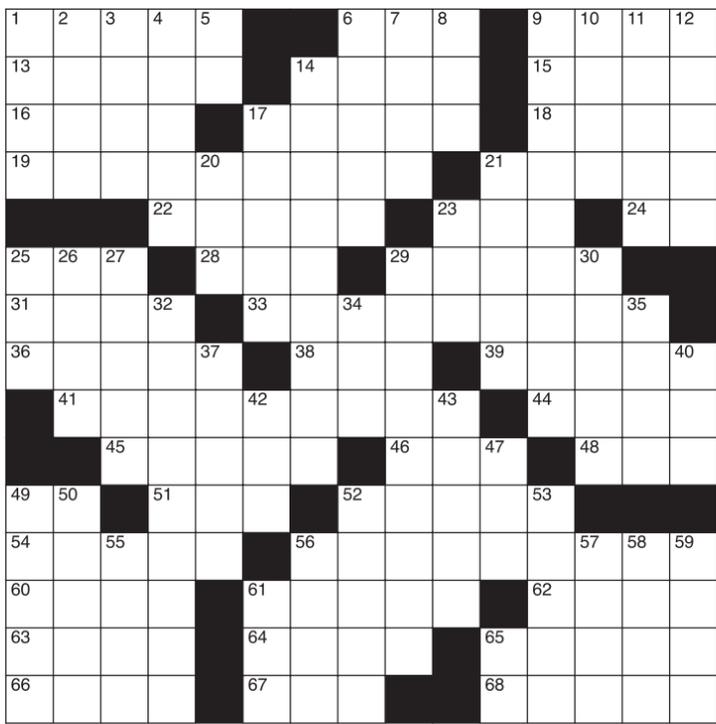
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. One who manufactures
- 6. Science degree
- 9. Database management system
- 13. Desert
- 14. Inventor Musk
- 15. Welsh valley
- 16. Round Dutch cheese
- 17. Saying
- 18. Comedian and TV host
- 19. Uppermost portions of the brain
- 21. City in Transylvania
- 22. Where astronauts go
- 23. Men's hairstyle
- 24. Indicates position
- 25. One point east of due south
- 28. Businessmen may have one
- 29. Grass part
- 31. Running back Gurley
- 33. Unwavering
- 36. Options
- 38. Annoy
- 39. Greek mountain
- 41. Pastas
- 44. Fishes
- 45. Wrap
- 46. Potentially a criminal (slang)
- 48. Seize
- 49. The Constitution State

CLUES DOWN

- 51. Upset
- 52. 1991 men's Wimbledon champ
- 54. Central Chinese province
- 56. Predisposition
- 60. A notice of someone's death
- 61. One-time Kentucky Rep.
- 62. Swiss river
- 63. Dried-up
- 64. Finger millet
- 65. ___ Allan Poe
- 66. German river
- 67. Brew
- 68. Kenyan river
- 14. What students receive
- 17. Semitic peoples
- 20. Beats per minute
- 21. Family of drugs
- 23. Atrocious
- 25. Type of microscope (abbr.)
- 26. ___ or bust
- 27. Icelandic poems
- 29. A citizen of Pakistan
- 30. Very pale
- 32. Metric linear unit
- 34. Sea eagle
- 35. Biblical judge of Israel
- 37. Isaac's mother (Bib.)
- 40. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- 42. Cool!
- 43. Large hotel room
- 47. Type of boat (abbr.)
- 49. Picked
- 50. Type of hookah
- 52. Attack
- 53. Directs
- 55. Belgian WWII resistance fighter
- 56. Finished negotiation
- 57. Heroic tale
- 58. Middle Eastern country
- 59. Protein-rich liquids
- 61. Malaysian Isthmus
- 65. Spielberg's alien

■ Pitch

(Continued from page 13)

were feeling after their week 1 win. This team, as always, is elite in all areas and will be seated in the driver's seat the rest of the way. It will take a big upset to knock these guys off.

We'll see how things shake out the rest of the way, but it obviously seems that the Skippers will be right in the hunt as well and these two could very well duke it out once more to determine the state champion.

I'd still pick Hendricken. I know that North Kingstown proved its worth and is a nightmare matchup for any defense. But overall, the Hendricken program is just so stable, so impenetrable. Any team can be beat on any day, but it will take something unusual to knock these guys off.

Now, the downs.

Both Warwick public schools came up short as well as our two Cranston teams. Up north in Johnston, the game was canceled against Scituate so the Panthers were out of action for the weekend.

The defending Division III champion Pilgrim team hit the field for the first time this season after missing the first game due to a cancellation.

Despite holding an early lead against Rogers, it would not be enough as the Vikings turned things around late to earn the 14-6 win.

Pilgrim has a new look roster this season, and by new look, I mean very new look. The Pats graduated 20 seniors from the championship roster including the vast majority of its starters. It's essentially a new team that is being asked to move up a division.

Although a loss is a loss, to play such a competitive game and to be leading for as long as they did isn't entirely a bad thing. With a team with so many new pieces, all you can really hope is to have a chance to win late in games and that is exactly what happened. Back to the drawing board, but overall, not a bad start just not a good one, either.

Toll Gate got a tough win during its opening week matchup against Smithfield, but the momentum was short lived as Ponaganset traveled south and took it to the Titans in a 33-0 shutout.

Ponaganset is better than Smithfield. There's no denying that, but at the same time, you never want to fall to a team by 33 points. Toll Gate is a good enough team to compete with anyone in its division, so this lopsided win I'm sure was a gut punch.

Instead of getting the wind knocked out of them, I hope to see the Titans use

this as a wake up call and make some adjustments. They're not a perfect unit, but they should be a playoff team. Let's see how they respond.

As for Cranston, East Greenwich rolled past West 42-6 while South Kingstown beat East 34-8.

Let's start with East.

As we know, this is a rebuilding program. It was the youngest team in Division I last season and is still younger than the average this season. Point being, we shouldn't take any loss as much of a surprise.

To be honest with you, and I am not just pulling for the hometown team, but this game was far more competitive than the scoreboard indicated. SK jumped out to a 21-0 lead in the first quarter but then were shut down for the next two quarters. East had a few chances to get back in it, but unfortunately, there were some obvious signs of inexperience that reared their ugly head and the Bolts just couldn't capitalize.

The Bolts have three playoff teams remaining on their schedule to wrap up their season, so it will continue to be tough sledding. If they can play stingy defense like they did in the middle quarters of Saturday's game and take a step forward on offense, then progress should be made in the final stretch regardless of what the record will finish at.

As for West, there was a lot of hype surrounding this East Greenwich team, especially on offense, and it felt like this was their breakout game. EG scored early and often and the game seemed out of reach by halftime.

It's gut check time for the Falcons. They've dropped their first two games, and with only three remaining, they'll likely have to win out.

Is it time to panic? I don't think so. At the high school level, there's never a reason to truly panic. But I do believe that the problems at West will have to be sorted out ASAP.

When watching the game on Friday, it didn't look like West lacked talent or discipline. It simply seemed like they fell behind early, felt the pressure and lost some confidence. The past two seasons, that was never an issue.

With a crop of new guys stepping up this season, it will be up to them to regain that confidence. It comes with experience, but these lows are where we really see what teams are made of.

Granted, Central and East Greenwich is a pretty tough draw, many teams would fall to 0-2 in that situation. But overall, it's swim or sink time for the Falcons, and we will see this weekend which way they go.

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■ Hawks

(Continued from page 13)

North Kingstown free safety Tyler Pezza picked off Hendricken senior quarterback Zach Lavergne late in the opening quarter and returned the ball to the Skippers 31.

The Hawks received the ball to start the second half down 17-3, and after a touchdown, running back Isaiah Emmanuel rushed 59 yards to the North Kingstown 31. Emmanuel finished the drive with a 2-yard rushing score and pulled Hendricken within 17-10.

During the ensuing kickoff, Rice's kick ricocheted off the helmet of North Kingstown's Owen Moynihan and into the hands of Hendricken freshman Rushuane Vilane at the North Kingstown 30, and the Hawks offense took over possession from there.

"That was huge," Croft said. "That obviously isn't something we planned and I think the sun got into their kids' eyes. It's unfortunate. That's the way the ball bounces sometimes, but luckily one of our guys were there."

Hawks senior running back Shyne Fernandes capped that drive with a 3-yard touchdownrushandevenedthegameat17.

"It's human nature when they've got that 17-0 lead," Croft said. "You're not feeling too good, but you knew, a field goal before the half, and then a touchdown to start the second half that we'd kind of chipped our way back into it."

North Kingstown grabbed a 24-17 lead with 3:54 remaining in the third quarter when Carr completed a 17-yard touchdown pass to senior Drew Schwab. During the Hawks next drive, Lavergne connected with wide receiver Andres Andujar, who took the ball ten yards to the 5.

Next, Emmanuel rushed it in for the score, for his second touchdown of the game, while knotting the game at 24.

It was a productive day for the veteran running back.

"He had a few long runs in the second half, which really gave us a little spark, a little momentum, and he's got a lot of talent," Croft said. "He's a tough kid. He's been in the program now for four years, so he's a senior, a kid who's paid his dues."

Next, during a North Kingstown third and 10, Hendricken's Vilane sacked Carr and forced the Skippers to punt from their own 17 with 9:31 remaining. Hendricken started its next possession with great field position at the North Kingstown 45. On first down, Emmanuel rushed 24 yards to the 21.

Then, during a fourth-and-inches, with the ball at the North Kingstown 1, Lavergne, with the help of the Hawks offensive line, plowed their way into the end zone and gave Hendricken a 30-24 edge with 4:53 remaining.

"I think he's got a lot of guts," Croft said of his new starting quarterback. "He's a competitive kid. We're looking forward to seeing him. He's getting a little bit better week to week."

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■ O'Connor

(Continued from page 13)

determine which athletes will qualify for the eventual conference finals, and O'Connor hopes to earn her spot especially considering the smaller selection pool.

"With the pandemic, most of our classes are online which gives us more time to train and more (flexibility) with when we practice. I see myself getting better in these upcoming races. This week at UConn, I'm running the 800 and am hoping for another personal best. I am trying to get the time down to qualify for our conference meet," said O'Connor, who feels that she may have to even improve on her personal best to get the job done. "I'm pretty confident. I look at times from past years and what girls have run. Looking at my time at Bryant, it looks like I have a pretty good chance at getting there. To really feel confident and secure it, though, I'll probably have to bring it down a second or two."

After a down freshman season, O'Connor is excited to emerge as a key contributor to the URI team and hopes to build some momentum for the future.

"I didn't expect (to break out my sophomore year). Last year I didn't have the best season, going from high school to college is a really hard adjustment, especially at Division I. There are other girls my age that are running with me and are doing a good job as well. There are many girls that are waiting to see what they have in store," said O'Connor. "It gives me a lot more confidence. Last year I was getting a little discouraged, but now that I am seeing improvement, I am getting more confident that I will continue to get better. This season is setting me up for the next two."



INDOOR TRACK: Hanna O'Connor during a race over the winter season. (Photo courtesy of URI)

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Anglers say wind farm has benefited fishing

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

"Anglers who fish the Block Island Wind Farm (BIWF) say it has been beneficial for fishing," said a study published in Marine Policy, an international journal of ocean affairs.

"Interview findings revealed anglers' enjoyment of the offshore wind farm as an enhanced fishing location, due to catch and non-related aspects of the experience ... Respondents also value the wind farm as symbolic of progress towards green energy," said study authors Tiffany Smythe of the United States Coast Guard Academy, David Bidwell and Grant Tyler of the University of Rhode Island.

An advanced online copy of the May, 2021 issue of Marine Policy can be found at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0308597X>.

The study titled "Optimistic with reservations: The impacts of the United States' first offshore wind farm on the recreational fishing experience" said, "Anglers reported concerns about increased crowding around the offshore wind farm and raised concerns about potential fishing access restrictions around this and future projects."

In public hearings surrounding northeast offshore wind farms the United States Coast Guard has repeatedly said they will not restrict fishing around or in wind farms. And, developers have said, they do not have the jurisdiction (or desire) to restrict fishing in and around their wind farms. I am not aware of any fishing restrictions that have occurred at the Block Island Wind Farm since it became operational in December, 2016 except during limited maintenance periods to ensure work crew and boater safety.

Anglers are encouraged to provide state regulators and wind farm developers in their area with negative or positive input on offshore wind developments. For a list of offshore wind farms active off Rhode Island and Massachusetts visit the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) website at www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities.

Slow down for right whales

There is a 10-knot small vessel (less than 65' overall) speed limit in Cape Cod Bay to protect endangered right whales from the threat of ship strikes. During the late-winter and early-spring, right whales migrate into and aggregate in Cape Cod Bay where they feed on zooplankton.

On March 21, an aerial survey of the Bay sighted 89 right whales, including 3 mother calf pairs. As we move into the spring, these whales begin to feed closer to the surface and become more susceptible to ship strikes. Ship strikes are a significant source of mortality to these endangered whales. However, the lethality of ship strikes is greatly reduced when vessels are operating at less than 10-knots speed.

For more information regarding the management of protected marine species in Massachusetts, please visit our website (www.mass.gov/marinefisheries) or call DMF at 617-626-1520.

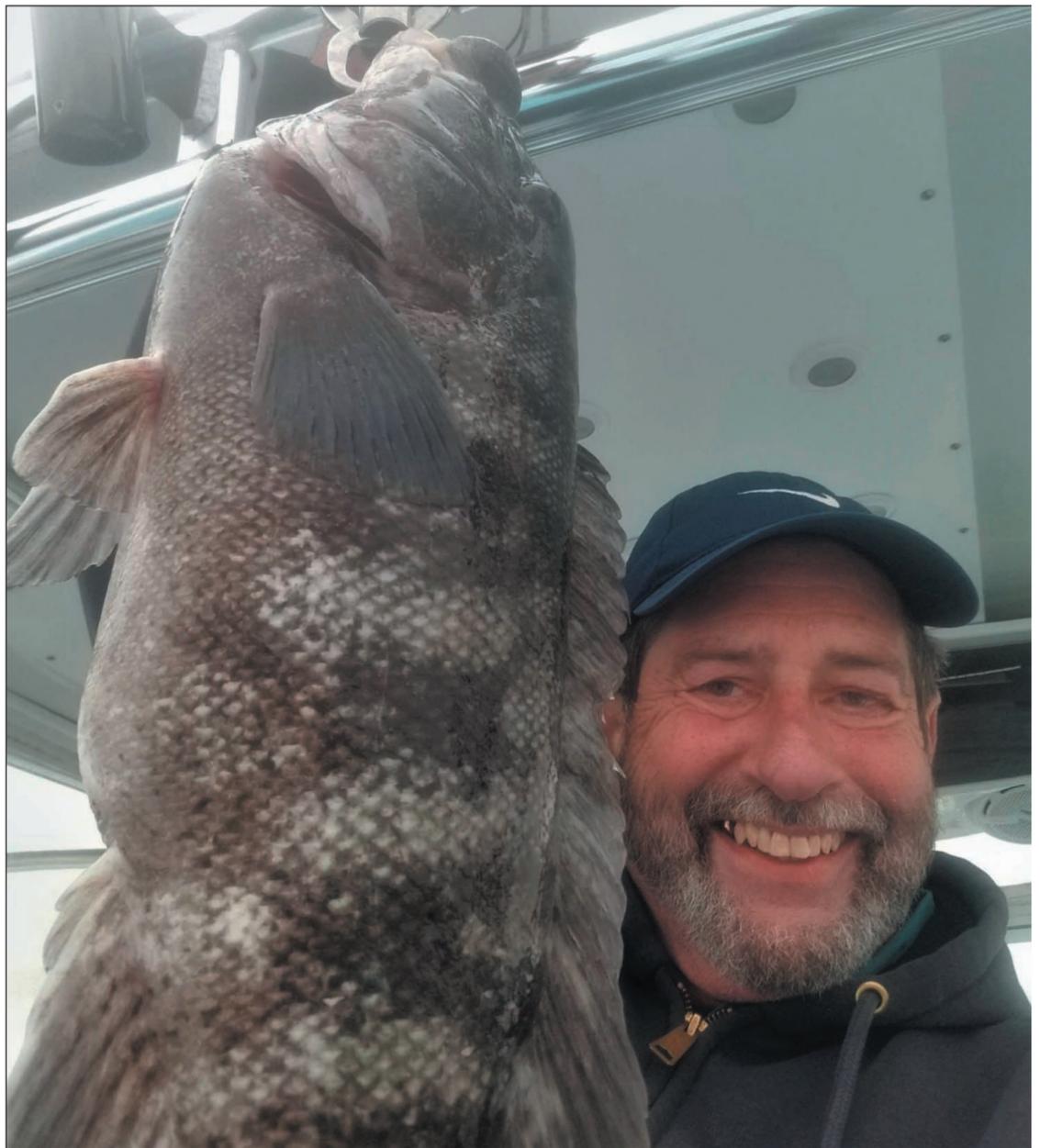
More stocked ponds in Rhode Island as trout season opens

The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) announced that Rhode Island trout stocked lakes, ponds, rivers and streams opened for fishing on Wednesday, April 7. The trout season in Massachusetts has been open.

For a list of trout stocked ponds in Massachusetts visit www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-trout-stocked-waters-list and in Rhode Island for a complete list of stocked waters and links to regulations and licenses visit www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife/freshwater-fisheries/troutwaters.php.

Late last week DEM announced that as a result of improved water level and access conditions, three additional fishing areas were stocked for the opening of trout season. They included Lake Tiogue, Coventry; Spring Grove Pond, Gloucester; and Wallum Lake, Burrillville.

DEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife is stocking over 60,000 hatchery-raised rainbow, brook, golden rainbow and brown trout in more than 100 waterways across the state. In addition, 4,000 Sebago



NK TAUTOG: Tautog season opened with a three fish/person/day limit, 16-inch minimum size. Maximum of 10 fish per vessel. Capt. Monti with a tautog caught. (Submitted photo)

salmon will be stocked statewide.

Where's the bite?

Freshwater trout season opened Wednesday, April 7, see above links to Rhode Island and Massachusetts stocked ponds. John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, Riverside, said, "When anglers are getting out (cold weather detriment for some) they are catching largemouth in the two pound range. Not a lot of large fish being taken. One customer was

doing well fishing Bad Luck Pond, Rehoboth where he caught a couple of three pound fish." Tom Giddings of the Tackle Box, Warwick, said, "Customers are doing well with pickerel and pike and Sand Pond and Little Pond in Warwick. They are taking pike on shiners and largemouth working slow moving spinners and jigs."

Tautog fishing opened April 1 with a 16-inch minimum size in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

There is a three fish/person/day limit from April 1 to May 31. Tom Giddings of the Tackle Box said, "Customers are starting to target tautog, not a lot of anglers actually fishing but an awful lot of them are getting ready as the weather warms up." "Not many customers are targeting tautog yet, but I expect with this warm weather this week anglers will be getting out," said Ken Ferrara of Ray's Bait & Tackle, Warwick.



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Rhody Health

If you have diabetes, you are not more likely to get COVID-19 compared with the general population. However, it has been shown that COVID-19 can cause more severe symptoms and complications in people who have diabetes. To this point, I would highly recommend that everyone who has diabetes obtain one of the COVID-19 vaccines which are currently available. All of the clinical vaccine trials had patients with diabetes and they were all deemed to be safe for them. There is also no advantage in getting one vaccine over another. It is important to stay hydrated and rest plenty after getting the vaccine. It is possible that glucose levels may become slightly more elevated for 24 to 48 hours following the injection but this is to be ex-

pected and not of any concern unless this persists. The vaccine has not been shown to interact with any of the diabetes medications including insulin. It is however recommended that insulin injections, glucose sensor applications or insulin pump infusion sets avoid the vaccine administration site for a number of days afterwards.

These are some general tips for managing diabetes during the pandemic. Please refer to the piece written by RD CDE Lauren Talbert below with regards to dietary tips. The other key things which I would like to recommend are staying relaxed and establishing an exercise routine at home. Because stress contributes to poor diabetes control, one way to minimize this is to incorporate regular breathing exercises as

Staying Healthy



by
KENNETH K.
CHEN, MD

they have been shown to promote mental health, minimize anxiety, sharpen focus and improve sleep quality. Getting some fresh air in the garden or through an open window on a daily basis also helps to reduce stress greatly. An adequate amount of sleep each night is

also important in maintaining a good immune system which is important during this pandemic.

Regular exercise has been shown to improve insulin sensitivity which means that your blood glucose can enter your muscle cells to provide energy instead of causing elevated blood glucose levels which tend to make you feel unwell and tired. Weight training at home has been shown to be extremely beneficial in building and maintaining muscle mass which in turn is helpful in improving insulin sensitivity. Examples of this include using dumb bells or even just water bottles. Gentle aerobic exercise in the form of walking up and down stairs is also extremely beneficial in preventing high glucose levels. Video

instruction of yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates and Zumba can also be considered. Staying hydrated throughout any form of exercise is very important.

Lastly, it is important to maintain regular contact with friends and family virtually as social isolation can lead to depression and anxiety.

Kenneth K Chen, MD is Director of Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism, CNE; Director of Obstetric & Consultative Medicine, WIH; Associate Professor of Medicine & Associate Professor of ObGyn, Clinician Educator, Alpert Medical School of Brown University; Co-chair of Health & Public Policy Committee, American College of Physicians, RI Chapter.

Living with diabetes during the COVID-19 pandemic



When you have diabetes, figuring out what to eat or avoid can be confusing. During this pandemic, you may be motivated to make healthier choices with a goal to improve your overall health. With so many choices at the grocery store, deciding what to purchase can seem overwhelming. Registered dietitian and diabetes educator Lauren Talbert provides three simple tips to eating healthy with diabetes.

The first tip is to focus on fiber. Fiber is found in whole grains, legumes (beans, peas and lentils), fruits and nuts. Fiber slows the absorption of carbohydrates (sugar) and therefore helps to prevent spikes in blood sugar after eating. Fiber rich foods keep you feeling fuller longer helping to control hunger. To eat more fiber switch from processed grains

like white bread or white rice to whole grains such as whole wheat bread, brown rice or quinoa. Also experiment with eating more legumes, add beans and lentils to salads or soups. If you haven't yet tried legume pasta (made from chickpeas or lentils), pick a box up during your next grocery shop.

The second tip is to choose lean protein rich foods which include chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, low-fat dairy, legumes and nuts. Red and processed meats including beef, pork, lamb, sausage and deli meats are often high in unhealthy saturated fats. It is important to include protein at all meals and snacks to better manage post meal blood sugars as protein takes longer to digest and also helps to prevent spikes in blood sugars after eating. Since people with diabetes

Staying Healthy



by
LAUREN
TALBERT,
RD, CSO,
LDN, CDCES

have an increased risk of heart disease choosing lean protein that is either naturally low in fat or contains healthy unsaturated fats is recommended. To eat more lean protein, consider swapping ground beef for ground turkey, or choose grilled chicken in place of roast beef for a sandwich.

The last tip for eating healthy

with diabetes is to limit added sugars. Added sugars are found in several foods including sugary beverages such as soda and juice as well as desserts and snack foods like cereal bars or cookies. Foods with added sugars often are high in calories but low in nutrients like vitamins, fiber and lean protein. When you consume more added sugars you likely are missing out on important nutrients that help to support overall health. If you are wondering how much added sugar you consume, look at the food labels of what you eat. Added sugars can be found under total carbohydrates. About 4 grams of added sugars are equal to a teaspoon of table sugar. The American Heart Association recommends that women consume no more than 6 teaspoons and men limit to

less than 9 teaspoons in a day. To cut back on added sugars, drink more water and less sugary beverages. Also, when choosing a snack, reach for a piece of fruit and a handful of nuts instead of a sugary bar or cookie. Not only will you limit the amount of added sugar, this snack will provide fiber and lean protein to keep your energy levels up.

The main message when it comes to nutrition is to keep it simple. When you plan your meals and snacks around fiber and lean protein rich foods the healthy benefits will follow.

Lauren Talbert RD, CSO, LDN, CDCES is a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist; Board Certified Specialist in Oncology Nutrition; Registered Dietitian, Department of Medicine Women & Infants Hospital.

Understanding asthma as allergy season returns

The arrival of spring and summer is typically welcomed with open arms. Warm air, green grass, colorful flowers, and, of course, vacations are just a few of the many reasons to celebrate spring and summer.

Spring and summer also marks the return of allergy season. According to the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, allergies are the sixth leading cause of chronic illness in the United States. A 2017 survey found that 27 percent of Canadians age 12 and older reported having allergies. For many people, allergies are a minor seasonal nuisance that are overcome by taking over-the-counter medications or staying indoors on days when allergen levels are especially high. But the World Allergy Organization notes that a history of allergies is a known risk factor for developing asthma. In fact, Statistics Canada reports that, among people diagnosed with allergies, 63 percent also reported having asthma.

What is asthma?

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute defines asthma as a chronic condition that affects airways in the lungs. The airways carry air in and out of the lungs, and when people have asthma, these airways can become inflamed and narrow, compromising a person's ability to breathe.



Who gets asthma?

Many asthma patients are diagnosed during childhood. The ACAAI reports that most children with asthma exhibit symptoms prior to their fifth birthdays. Asthma symptoms also may appear in adults older than 20, and such instances may be attributed to adult-onset asthma. Certain adults may be more likely to get adult-onset asthma than others. For example, WebMD reports that women who are experiencing hormonal changes, such as those who are preg-

nant or in menopause, may be more likely to get adult-onset asthma.

What are the symptoms of asthma?

The ACCAI notes that it can be hard to recognize symptoms of asthma in very young children. That's because the bronchial tubes in infants, toddlers and preschool-aged youngsters are already small and narrow. Head colds, chest colds and other illnesses may further narrow these airways. So symptoms of asthma could be mistakenly associated

with colds or other illnesses. A nagging cough that lingers for days or weeks or sudden, scary breathing emergencies are two symptoms of pediatric asthma. Parents also can be on the lookout for these symptoms:

- Coughing, especially at night
- A wheezing or whistling sound when breathing, especially when exhaling
- Trouble breathing or fast breathing that causes the skin around the ribs or neck to pull in tightly
- Frequent colds that settle in the chest

Like pediatric asthma, adult-onset asthma can be easy to miss. That's because of natural changes in muscles and a stiffening of chest walls, both of which are associated with aging and therefore often attributed to age. The symptoms of adult-onset asthma are similar to those of pediatric asthma, and adults who suspect they might be experiencing asthma symptoms despite no history of the condition can ask doctors to conduct some specific tests designed to detect asthma. A lung function test and a methacholine challenge test are two ways doctors can detect adult-onset asthma.

Allergy season has arrived, and that could make some people more vulnerable to asthma. More information about asthma is available at www.accai.org.

TF215945

Tips for reducing stress

Seme Eroh - life coach, IT security professional, and author of *When the Fog Lifts: Gaining Clarity After Chaos and Confusion*

- 1. Identify your triggers so you can avoid them.** Our lives are so busy and we get many things that add to stress but there are only a few things that really cause stress. Learn to peel the onions slowly (pace yourself) and identify the real cause of your stress so you can learn how to deal with it. Ignoring or hiding stressors under layers harms you in the long run.
- 2. Formulate a plan.** Develop a system or community to relieve stress - take a walk in the park, meditate, go out with friends, check in with a close friend, watch

a movie or whatever makes you feel less stressed.



Melanie Gibson - black belt in taekwondo and author of *Kicking and Screaming: A Memoir of Madness and Martial Arts*

- 1. Look for the root cause.** Don't be frustrated with your stress; be fascinated. When you are feeling stressed, pause to figure out why. Sitting with the discomfort of anxiety can feel uncomfortable, but you are building the skill of finding the root cause of your

distress and taking action to address it. Journaling is a great way to build self-awareness of your emotions. You'll see patterns, triggers, habits, and choices that you didn't notice before.

- 2. Redirect.** Distractions get a bad rap. They can also be the best medicine for stress. A distraction pulls our attention away from the cause of our stress and can help give us a different perspective or lighten our mood. Take a walk, listen to music, watch a funny video, work on a puzzle, do a sport—do anything to take your mind off the cause of your stress, even if it's just for a few minutes. This gives you a chance to relax, regroup, and refocus.



Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry

The Rhode Island Department of Health maintains a registry for Rhode Islanders of all ages—infants to seniors—who have speech, cognitive, developmental, mental health, sensory and mobility disabilities, chronic conditions, and/or other special healthcare needs. The Registry allows first responders and emergency management officials to plan, prepare for, and respond to the needs of the community in an emergency.

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A thirst for exploration



MOBILE GUIDE: The Brewery Passport app helps people discover new local breweries and plan routes to visit multiple spots. It's a helpful way to keep track of where you've been. The app is available for iOS and Android services, and can be found through the Guild's website, ribrewersguild.org. (Photo by Olena Kagui)

As weather warms and restrictions ease, RI Brewers Guild's Brewery Passport app offers a new way to check out state's growing beer scene

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originbeerproject.com
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Proclamation Ale Co.
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proclamationaleco.com
(401) 787-6450

By **OLENA KAGUI**

After a long winter, spring has sprung. And local Rhode Island breweries are embracing the warmer weather by opening their outdoor seating – and brewing up a storm.

Now, with the help of the Rhode Island Brewers Guild and its Brewery Passport app, everyone can join in and explore Ocean State's 30-plus breweries.

"Rhode Island is a beautiful state to travel around and now has a plethora of breweries that offer a wide range of beer styles," said Matthew Gray, president of Portsmouth's Ragged Island Brewing Co. and a member of the board of directors for the Brewers Guild. "Some offer ever-changing recipes. Some offer tried-and-true recipes that have been perfected over the years. Some offer new and consistent beers. Every brewery has its own story and its own vibe, feel. We encourage people to explore them all."

The Brewery Passport is available for iOS and Android services, and can be found through the Guild's website, ribrewersguild.org.

The app was launched in 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic – "not an ideal time to roll out a travel app," Gray notes. Nonetheless, there have been over 2,000 downloads and 5,500-plus check-ins.

"We anticipate that number climbing over the next few months as restrictions ease and people start to explore Rhode Island more," Gray said.

The Brewery Passport app helps people discover new local breweries and plan routes to visit multiple spots. It's a helpful way to keep track of where you've been, and when you visit a brewery, you will be able to virtually "stamp" your passport. Each stamp earns the user a point.

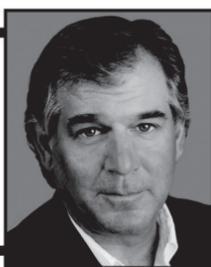
COLLECTIBLES

Is it a Cutlass, a Pistol, or Both?



A few weeks ago, I talked about martial pistols and the progression of firing mechanisms from the late-18th century to the mid-19th century. While the basics of the guns were the same, a lock, stock, and barrel, the flintlock had become old technology. The percussion ignition was the latest in firearms technology being more waterproof in wet conditions as well as more likely to go off at all because of the percussion cap. Most of the guns, flint or percussion, look very similar with minor variations in details and form. But there was one pistol in the early 19th century that did not look at all like any other.

It was the U.S. Navy Elgin Cutlass Pistol. It came into use circa 1838 though not in large numbers as only 150 were ever produced for the navy. There are some variants made for civilian use that are also extremely rare, but they do not hold the same value as the military version. It is an awkward looking thing with a long wooden grip with a steel back strap for strength, a knuckle bow similar to a Bowie knife or sword, and trigger guard that is one piece and connected to the large knife-like blade mounted under the barrel. It had a percussion ignition system which was its first



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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use by the United States military. It also has an octagonal barrel which is of .52 caliber. In our period we think of that as huge bore for a pistol but was quite common in the 18th and 19th century. At 2 1/2 pounds it is not all that heavy, but the weight of the blade on the front makes the gun a little nose heavy and hard to aim.

The gun was patented by George Elgin and produced by Cyrus B. Allen of Springfield, Massachusetts with the cutlass-style blade being made by the N.P. Ames company, also of Springfield. Ames was famous for their sword and blade production, so the partnership makes a lot of sense if building an arm of this type with a large blade.

It was the only combination gun/knife produced for the military use of the United States and saw some limited use. They were, however, issued for use during the Wilkes-South Sea Exploring Expedition between 1838 and 1842. This expedition was for surveying and collecting information in the South Sea that was previously unknown. During the expedition when landing parties went ashore there were frequent battles with Pacific island natives and men on both sides were killed.

Although today this Bowie-knife looking pistol is a little strange, it must have been quite imposing and scary to some of the island Natives when confronted with it.



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■ Brewery
(Continued from page 20)

With those points, users can win prizes along the way. Visiting 10 breweries earns a Brewers Guild enamel pin. Visiting 10 more earns a hat of glass.

“We offer a prize package for those that complete the whole passport,” Gray said. “Once the passport is complete, you will be mailed your prize packets. For the first two tiers, the prizes are awarded at the breweries.”

If you forget to “stamp” your passport when you are at the brewery, you can submit a selfie from the brewery to receive the stamp. Needless to say, customers are expected to make a purchase of some kind at the brewery to be eligible for a “stamp.”

The Brewers Guild website features Ryan and Alex, who set a record by completing the Brewery Passport in just five days. Gray issues a word of warning about this, stating that there are no official records, and the Guild does not encourage folks to try to go to too many breweries in one day.

The app also includes information on upcoming events at the featured breweries. New breweries are added to the app immediately.

The Brewers Guild was established in 2013, when five founding breweries and brewpubs came together. At the time, there were only seven breweries in the state.

The Guild is organized and operates exclusively for nonprofit purposes to promote beers made in Rhode Island and the breweries that make them; facilitate technical collaboration between Rhode Island brewers; and be an advocate for Rhode Island Brewers in government and community affairs.

“We work with legislators to create new bills that will benefit breweries,” Gray said. “We have a legislative committee, currently headed by Matt Richardson of Tilted Barn Brewery in Exeter.”

Past Guild president Brent Ryan chimed in on the two key legislative items that have been successful for the organization. Legislation passed in 2013, allowing up to 72 ounces of beer to be sold at retail. It also added terminology to the manufacturer’s license allowing for the serving of samples, which we now know as beer tasting.

Later in 2016, the Brewers Guild worked to negotiate with retailers and wholesalers to pass legislation that expanded off-premises sales limits to 288 ounces (12/24 case) and included the first limits for on-premises consumption at 36 ounces.

“These two legislative changes opened the doors for many more smaller Rhode Island breweries to open with a taproom-based model,” Ryan said. “They were no longer reliant on just selling products through distribution.”

Brewers Guild membership is open to any licensed brewery in the state. The vast majority of the state’s breweries are members already. Gray says that the Guild is looking to add a few more before the end of the year. All members get votes to choose the members of the board of directors, which facilitates the work of the Guild.

“Ragged Island joined the guild as soon as we opened,” Gray said. “We have had a great experience with the Guild.”

ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Sunny

Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

Make everyday in your home a Sunny day!! Meet Sunny, she's young just a year old and very shy. She will need an adult only home and someone with kitty experience. Sunny will need lots of love, time and patience so that she can blossom on her own terms. She is absolutely beautiful with her orange and white coat and golden yellow eyes, a true beauty! If you think you might be the right home for Sunny please contact Scruffy Paws Animal Rescue at scruffypawsanimalrescue@gmail.com for more information. They are currently looking for a foster or forever home for her so please reach out to them. Sunny can't wait to be in a loving home!

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



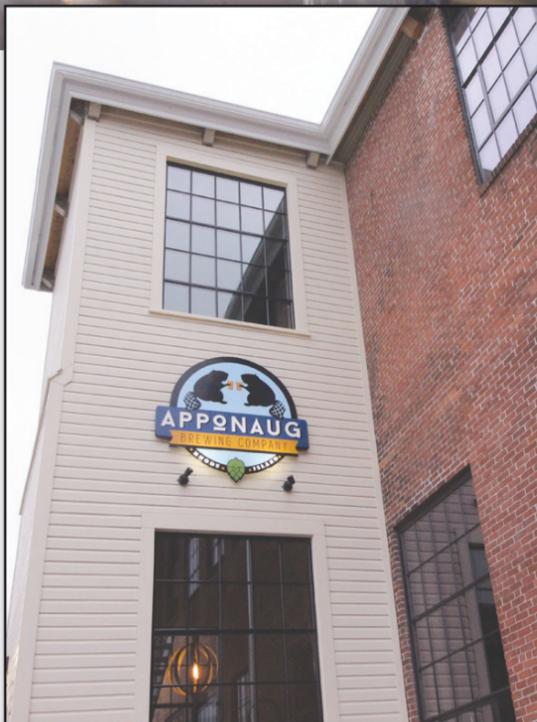

Amigo

Photo credit: Penny Souza Pet Photos

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SOMETHING'S BREWING: The beer is served directly from the tanks at Apponaug Brewing's 310-gallon Brewhouse. (Photos by John Howell)




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