



## BACKYARD SPACE

Combining love of astronomy, photography, Johnston man captures out-of-this-world images

### ROSETTE NEBULA:

Lucas “Luc” Maguire captured the above image of the Rosette Nebula from his backyard in Johnston. He stacked 45 individual images, each exposed for 300 seconds, and then used computer software to combine them to make the final photograph. At left, mounted his DSLR camera to his refractor telescope, and now explores the galaxy from his Johnston backyard.



By RORY SCHULER

Lucas “Luc” Maguire spends a lot of time in his Johnston backyard. He loves both the stars and photography. One day, he decided to combine his passions.

“Ever since I can remember I have always been fascinated with what’s right above us and the night sky, but I also had a great passion for photography growing up and was fond of graphic design in high school,” he said. “In early 2019, I started to take my DSLR camera and mount it to my refractor telescope and take images of the moon, but there was that constant voice in my head that wanted more.”



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## Officer’s freedom of speech lawsuit settled

By RORY SCHULER

The Town of Johnston and its police department have settled a freedom of speech lawsuit filed by a former officer.

Following up on her previous court ruling, which found the Johnston Police Department violated now retired Detective James Brady’s First Amendment rights, U.S. District Judge Mary McElroy has signed off on a consent judgment settling the case.

The settlement terms include, among other things, revocation of a departmental policy and the discipline imposed on Brady, removal of the incident from his police employment records, compensation for the unlawful two-day suspension he received, and more than \$57,000 in attorneys’ fees, according to a press release from the American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island.

The judge ruled in February that then-Johnston Police Chief Richard Tamburini violated Brady’s free speech rights after he was disciplined following an incident in July 2015, when he spoke to the press as a union official.

Tamburini disciplined Brady, the International Brotherhood of Police (IBPO) Local 307 Union president at the time, after he spoke with a Providence Journal reporter regarding the suspension of then-patrolman Adam Catamero.

Catamero faced a two-day suspension for “conduct unbecoming an officer” following a traffic stop that summer, and was later fired for “continuing problems.”

Brady spoke with a Providence Journal reporter while the matter was pending in District Court.

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## Donkey on the lam

Officials: If you spot the animal, don’t corral, call the police

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston is developing a wild reputation.

“You heard of the horse with no name?” Asked Mayor Joseph M. Polisena. “We have a jackass with no name.”

Police started getting calls about a donkey roaming the streets of town late Sunday night.

“We have police officers on alert; animal control officers on alert,” Polisena said.

By Wednesday morning, the animal was still on the lam, and

town officials were warning residents to keep their distance if they spotted the furry fugitive.

“Although a donkey is a domesticated animal, this one is not very tame,” said Johnston Police Chief Joseph Razza.

“We encourage the public, if they encounter the donkey, to call us or Scituate police, and we will make arrangements to hopefully capture it safely.”

According to Razza and Polisena, the donkey was unloaded


DONKEY - PAGE 16



**ON THE RUN:** A donkey is on the loose in Johnston. Local resident Ed Plasse shot a video of the animal running down Route 6. This image was captured from his video.

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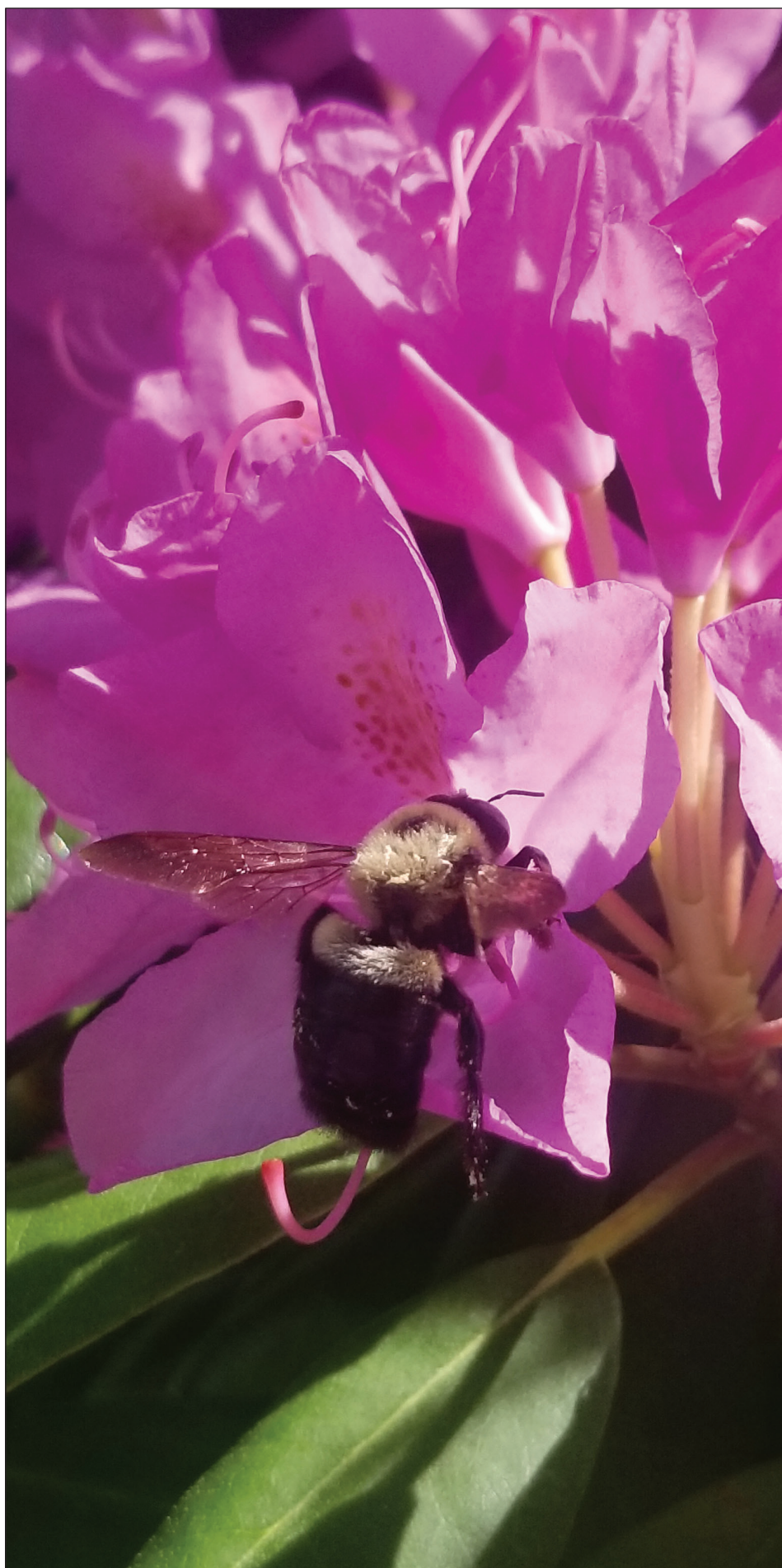
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Bees of all shapes tasted the bursting pink flowers of a huge round rhododendron bush at Highland Memorial Park Cemetery in Johnston. Fat yellow bumblebees' wings flapped so furiously that they generated a small breeze, pushing oblong green leaves and hot pink pedals aside in search for pollen. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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**Gas prices bump up another 2 cents to \$2.96 a gallon**

Rhode Island's average gas price is up two cents from last week averaging \$2.96 per gallon. Monday's price is 9 cents higher than a month ago and 96 cents higher than June 7, 2020. Rhode Island's average gas price is 9 cents lower than the national average.

"Since April, we've seen a steady rise in demand for gasoline with more people

commuting to the office and taking to the roads for vacation. This increasing demand and decreasing supply—combined with higher crude oil prices—mean pump prices are likely to fluctuate throughout June," said Lloyd Albert, Senior Vice President of Public and Government Affairs for AAA Northeast. "We could see some price decreases early in the

month as the school year ends, and increases mid-month as summer travel picks up."

AAA Northeast's June 7 survey of fuel prices found the current national average to be 1 cent higher than last week, averaging \$3.05 a gallon. Today's national average price is 10 cents higher than a month ago and \$1.03 higher than this day last year.

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# Business coalition rallies against PPP tax

By RORY SCHULER

Rhode Island businesses have received approximately 17,282 federal Paycheck Protection Program, or PPP, loans totaling more than \$1 billion, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Gov. Dan McKee has proposed taxing loans over a certain threshold, while a large segment of Rhode Island's business community has united against it.

More than 100 business owners and a handful of legislators gathered at a Plainfield Pike warehouse Monday morning as part of an event organized by the Rhode Island Business Coalition.

Some are threatening to leave the Ocean State if the business tax climate doesn't improve. Most say the past year's pandemic has almost shuttered their operations, and a swelling tax burden may break them.

"I love Rhode Island," said John Hazen White, CEO of Taco Comfort Solutions. "Whether I can stay here, I don't know."

Cranston-based Taco received the third largest PPP loan in the state, \$8,158,133, according to the SBA. The company employs 478 in Rhode Island. The loan enabled the company to keep all 478 employees on the payroll. Taco also owns a factory in Fall River.

Rhode Island business community representatives have offered testimony during legislative hearings and publicly voiced opposition to a set of proposed tax increases on businesses and individuals.

Shared worries, and the coalition, brought them together Monday for the press conference at Dean Warehouse, located at 2000 Plainfield Pike in Cranston.

If the governor's proposal passes, Taco could be on the hook to pay around \$500,000 to \$750,000 in state taxes on the federal loans, White estimates.

"That is the \$64 million question," White said Tuesday morning. "We took that money and put it in a special bank account. One hundred percent was used for payroll. We kept our people employed."

The business, which manufactures heating and air-condition



**TACO MONDAY:** John Hazen White, CEO of Taco Comfort Solutions, addressed a huge crowd of business owners who gathered to object to new state tax proposals, including a tax on federal PPP loans. Cranston-based Taco received the third largest PPP loan in the state. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

valves and pumps, was deemed essential during the pandemic.

"We had to make some sacrifices," White said. "We did a tremendous amount of cost reduction to stay in business. And unfortunately, without that loan, it would have cost some jobs, like a lot of jobs."

The details of the proposed PPP loan tax have changed several times, and the exact language has not been finalized. Legislators are working to finalize the state budget now.

McKee has proposed taxing PPP loans amounts exceeding \$150,000, if the receiving business was able to turn a profit during the pandemic. Most states, and the federal government, have opted not to tax any of the loan amounts.

In response to an inquiry, the governor's office provided the following statement Tuesday: "The Governor recently had a productive meeting with members of the Rhode Island Business Coalition, during which he heard various suggestions and opinions on his proposal. He is meeting with groups and stakeholders and continuing discus-

sions on the matter."

It adds: "The Governor has said publicly that he does not support income tax increases at this time. If an income tax increase came to his desk, he would review the budget or bill and make a determination at that time."

"The issue of taxing PPP loans was proposed in Governor McKee's budget and is being considered as part of the budget deliberations," House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi said in a statement last week. "The state tax only applies to a very small number of companies that received forgivable loans over \$150,000 and recorded a profit. Those companies that did not record a profit would not be taxed."

Business organizations from across Rhode Island have been railing against proposed tax increases for weeks.

"If I knew then what I know now, I perhaps would not have taken this loan," White said. "The rules kept changing."

White further clarified his statements at the press conference, and said his decision to

leave Rhode Island would be more closely tied to estate taxes than the proposed PPP loan tax.

He said his company will not leave the Ocean State, but he might need to change his residence before he dies.

He has considered states like Florida and New Hampshire, which do not have estate taxes.

Several speakers also mentioned a reduction in the Rhode Island estate tax Monday, as well as a proposed increase in the state's top income tax bracket.

Although pending bills differ somewhat, one proposal calls for adding a new tax bracket for the state's top earners making more than \$475,000 annually, increasing their income tax rate from 5.99 to 8.99 percent.

"The tax on high-wage earners is under consideration and the House Finance Committee has heard lots of testimony, both pro and con," Shekarchi said. "I applaud all advocates for getting involved in the legislative process and we value the opinion of the business community."

Cranston Mayor Ken Hopkins addressed the crowd Mon-

day. "The business community is the engine of our economic progress," he said. "It's the heart and soul of the community, but it is getting crushed."

McKee's initial suggestion to tax PPP loans coincided with a large projected state budget deficit. Next year's budget outlook, however, has improved greatly as the economy reopens.

"Recent announcements by the Office of Management and Budget now project a budget surplus in excess of \$550 million, which does not include PPP loan forgiveness or new tax revenues," according to a statement from the RIBC. "Further, the numbers do not include the massive \$1.78B in federal stimulus funding Rhode Island has received from the American Rescue Plan Act. This is not the time for the State to raise taxes."

White hopes to convey a positive message as he asks legislators to consider a friendlier business tax climate in his home state.

"All of us have to be a part of the solution," he said. "We all have to work together."

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# Costco developer demands \$46M from Cranston

By DANIEL KITTREDGE

Alleging “political interference and favoritism” on the part of both the current mayor and his immediate predecessor, the developer behind the proposed Costco-anchored Cranston Crossing project at the current Mulligan’s Island Golf & Entertainment property is seeking \$46 million in damages from the city.

The accusations, and the dollar amount, are included in a “demand letter” dated June 7. Attorney Robert Clark Corrente of the firm Whelan Corrente & Flanders LLP prepared the document on behalf of Coastal Partners LLC and its managing partner, Michael DiGiuseppe.

The “demand letter” is a procedural precursor to a lawsuit, required by the section of state law that covers claims against cities and towns. The letter indicates a suit will be filed if the city does not meet the compensation demand within the statutory timeframe of 40 days.

At the heart of the complaint from Coastal Partners is its allegation that Mayor Ken Hopkins and his predecessor, Allan Fung, “unlawfully interfered” in the review process for a zoning change needed for the project to proceed.

Their supposed goal? Steering Cranston Crossing – and, as a result, Costco – away from the Mulligan’s Island property on New London Avenue and toward a different location on Sockanosett Cross Road, one owned by Chapel View developer Carpiionato Group.

The demand letter reads: “Specifically, in December 2020, Coastal became aware that former Mayor Fung and his newly-elected successor, Mayor Hopkins, had been openly working to kill the [Cranston Crossing] Project and to steer Costco to a different – and vastly inferior – site on Sockanosett Crossroad owned by Carpiionato Group, a long-time political supporter of and donor to both administrations.”

It adds: “This sort of political interference and favoritism is antithetical to any notion of open, honest, and transparent government. It is also patently unlawful and

actionable and, in a very real sense, now threatens to cost the taxpayers of the City real money.”

During a brief conversation Monday, DiGiuseppe said other communities, including Johnston, have expressed interest in housing Costco since a Cranston City Council vote last month halted a new review of the Cranston Crossing plans. He suggested Coastal Partners had no choice but to pursue a legal remedy as a result of the city’s handling of the situation.

“They sort of backed us into this, unfortunately,” he said.

Dating back to last year’s election campaign, Hopkins has been among the leading opponents of the proposed Cranston Crossing development at the Mulligan’s site. He has said he favors, and that his administration has worked to find, an alternative location for Costco within the city, although DiGiuseppe has indicated the wholesale club would only consider the Mulligan’s property if it comes to Cranston.

The mayor has also indicated he wants to see the Mulligan’s site preserved for some kind of recreational use, perhaps as the home of a new recreation center.

On Monday, the Hopkins administration declined to comment beyond the following statement: “In accordance with the advice of legal counsel, the Administration has no comment at this time.”

Reached Monday, Fung, who left office as mayor in January, described the complaint letter as “absolutely ridiculous,” “unfounded” and “from left field.”

“Mr. DiGiuseppe has not listened from day one, in the couple of meetings that I’ve had with him, and now wants to take a scorched earth approach with ridiculous allegations,” Fung said.

Gregg Perry, a spokesman for Carpiionato Group, also rejected the accusations in Coastal Partners’ demand letter.

“That’s ridiculous,” he said of the allegation that campaign contributions to Fung and Hopkins played any role in the Cranston Crossing review process. “We certainly never asked anybody to do that, never would ask anybody to do that.”

Perry also pointed to the bipar-

tisan nature of the recent vote that put a halt to new consideration of the Costco project at Mulligan’s.

“Those are the representatives elected by the people of Cranston, and clearly, that’s what the people of Cranston are indicating their thoughts are,” he said.

The Cranston Crossing project was the subject of a lengthy public hearing process in 2020, and the debate over the proposal arose again in recent weeks. Throughout the process, the residents’ group Cranston Neighbors for Smart Development has actively advocated against the project.

Last summer, Coastal Partners, which had reached an agreement to purchase the roughly 55-acre Mulligan’s property, formally sought a major amendment to the Mixed Use Planned District, or MPD, zoning that currently governs the site. That zoning, which is more specific and restrictive than more general zoning districts, was adopted roughly two decades ago to allow for the transformation of the site from the undeveloped, state-owned “Cornfields” to its current use.

After some delays and hours worth of hearings across multiple months, the city’s Planning Commission in December voted 6-1 to issue a negative recommendation on Coastal Partners’ zoning change request. Planning Department staff, in a memo, had made no recommendation to the commission, indicating their belief that there was a lack of clarity over whether the project was consistent with the city’s Comprehensive Plan.

Then, later in December, just before the full City Council was set to vote on the matter, the developer withdrew the application.

The withdrawal initiated a two-year window in which the Cranston Crossing proposal could not be reintroduced without a finding of “substantial” changes, as prescribed in the city’s charter.

Earlier this year, Coastal Partners sought that finding, filing a petition that sought City Council approval for new consideration of an altered version of the Cranston Crossing plan. The Costco, and a fueling station, remained at the center of the revised plan, although a handful of auxiliary commercial

spaces were removed.

The revised plan also left an 18-acre portion of the property currently used as a golf course untouched. Initially, Coastal Partners had proposed a residential development for that portion of the site. Subsequently, it sought to gift the land to the city for open space and recreational uses.

Last month, the council’s Ordinance Committee voted 5-1 against granting the “substantial” change finding, halting any new review of the Cranston Crossing zoning change. That set the stage for Monday’s letter from Coastal Partners and its attorney.

The letter outlines the case DiGiuseppe and supporters of the project have made throughout the review process. It touts the projected economic benefits of Cranston Crossing for the city, including “hundreds” of construction jobs, up to 450 permanent jobs, and an estimated \$800,000 annual increase in property tax revenue. It also points to Costco’s reputation as a high-paying, high-quality employer.

Cranston Crossing, the letter states, would provide a “long-term, highly-productive use” of the Mulligan’s site. The owners of Mulligan’s have said the current operation at the location is unsustainable.

The letter also indicates that under Coastal Partners’ plan, 40 percent of the Mulligan’s property would remain undeveloped, well in excess of what the city’s ordinances require.

The letter outlines what Coastal Partners and its counsel view as the problems with the process to this point in Cranston. A number of the concerns raised during the review, it states, have either been addressed or would be during later stages.

In terms of the timeline of the review process, the letter alleges that the Planning Commission’s December vote for a negative recommendation was not based on the advice of Planning Department staff or the “merits of the application,” but “was instead denied based on the blatant and unlawful influence of the previous and current mayoral administrations and their longtime political and finan-

cial supporter, Carpiionato Group LLC.”

It continues: “In doing so, the mayor’s office unlawfully interfered with Coastal’s existing contract with Costco and Coastal’s other tenants, and with its legitimate expectations for the completed development of the Project. In addition, the mayor’s office deprived Coastal of its fundamental right to a fair and lawful approval and permitting process, untainted by political favoritism.”

In terms of the dollar amount associated with the demand, the letter indicates Coastal Partners has estimated its “suffered damages” as a result of the project’s denial at between \$30 million and \$46 million. That includes the value of a 20-year lease, with multiple five-year options, for Costco, as well as the projected overall value of the project.

Costco has previously been linked to Carpiionato Group. On Monday, Perry said the company had discussions with Costco in 2017-18 about bringing a store to Sockanosett Cross Road.

A letter of intent was signed and the permitting process began, Perry said, “but there was never a lease finalized ... the two sides just couldn’t come to an agreement and walked away.”

Perry also pushed back against the idea that Carpiionato was opposed to Cranston Crossing.

“It’s certainly no secret that the intersection of Route 2 and Route 37 is really the hub for retail in Rhode Island these days ... Whoever builds in that area, we welcome that. What’s good for one is good for everybody,” he said.

In terms of the political connections among Fung, Hopkins and Carpiionato Group, a check of campaign finance records shows both mayors have received contributions from the company’s principals.

Records show a \$500 contribution to Hopkins from the late Alfred Carpiionato in 2018. Fung, meanwhile, has received more than \$10,000 in contributions from Carpiionato and members of his family over a number of years, along with a \$175 contribution from Kelly Coates, now president of Carpiionato Group, in 2011.

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■ **Speech**

(Continued from page 1)

Speaking in his capacity as an IBFO representative, he “revealed what he believed to be improper conduct” and “favoritism in issuing parking tickets.”

Soon after the story was published, Tamburini started proceedings to punish Brady for violating the department statutes regarding conduct unbecoming and public information dissemination. Brady was later suspended for two days without pay.

McElroy ruled the disciplinary action was unconstitutional.

ACLU of RI cooperating attorneys Elizabeth Wiens and John Dineen represented Brady in court. They sought a court order invalidating the policies under which he was disciplined, as a violation of the First Amendment.

In her February ruling, the Judge found the department’s actions against Brady to be “an unconstitutional effort to stifle protected speech that any reasonable superior officer should have understood violated First Amendment rights,” according to court records.

“The outcome in this case sends a clear message to officials that sanctioning employees for speaking out on matters of public concern is an abuse of government power and a blatant violation of the First Amendment,” said Steven Brown, ACLU of RI executive director.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, according to the ruling, protected Brady’s comments as a union official.

McElroy noted that Tamburini’s disciplinary actions were “an unconstitutional effort to stifle protected speech that any reasonable superior officer should have understood violated First Amendment rights.”

“In contrast, Detective Brady did not disclose confidential information or interfere with an ongoing investigation,” McElroy wrote in her February ruling. “Chief Tamburini observed that Detective Brady made comments about potential corruption in the police department and for that punished him.”

The ACLU took up Brady’s cause in an effort to protect free speech.

“I’ve always said, I was just doing my job as union president,” Brady said in February. “I had a 38-year career as a police officer with an untarnished reputation when I was investigated and disciplined by the Town for representing my member. I am happy to know that the unlawful suspension will be removed from my record because I did nothing wrong.”

“The Town should have known better than to discipline a union president for speaking out on a matter of public concern on behalf of a union member,” Wiens said in February. “This decision should also serve as a reminder to municipalities that overbroad policies that deter employees from speaking out on health and safety violations, misconduct, corruption and other matters of public concern not only harm society, they’re unconstitutional.”

Current Johnston Police Chief Joseph Razza declined comment on the court’s decision and department policy going forward.



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**OUTSTANDING OFFICIALS:** Secretary Margaret Philbrook, President Joe Pingitore and Vice President Ron Rossi are the long-time leaders of the Ocean State Vintage haulers, who put on another super show for the 27th year Sunday in Johnston. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

# Ocean State Vintage Haulers hold 27th annual truck show

By PETE FONTAINE

Last Sunday's 27th Annual Ocean State Vintage Haulers Show featured upwards of 60 vehicles that ranged from pick-up trucks with those one-rime running boards to even a class motorcoach sporting the once-famous name Trailways painted on two sides.

"I never saw anything like that at a show like this," offered Joe Pingitore, president of the unique Rhode Island-based truck association that is also an officially sanctioned chapter of the American Truck Historical Society. "That (motorcoach) was quite a large spectacle."

The entire show, in fact, which brought truck-owners from Massachusetts and Connecticut to Johnston's jewel – a.k.a. War Memorial Park.

"This is like a little boy's dream come truck!" Pingitore exclaimed while watching his friend Karl Russo's grandchildren – Hunter 2-1/2, and Autumn, 7 months – scoot in-and-around huge trucks used for hauling every-

thing from gravel to asphalt and more. "Children are always amazed with trucks; the larger the vehicle the bigger their eyes seem to get!"

Meanwhile, Pingitore's shiny red 1979 Ford Louisville – which was featured on the decorative T-shirts club members sold throughout the six-hour show – and Vice President Ron Rossi's heavy hauling vehicles were also among Sunday's super show-stoppers.

While there was only a sprinkling of military vehicles, Sunday's 27th edition of the Ocean State Vintage Haulers was without question a show-place for Rhode Island's famed Fire Truck Club.

One of those headliners was, in fact, a memorial to the late Frank J. Quetta Jr., a one-time Providence Fire Department Battalion Chief who was killed while on the job many moons ago.

Thus, his brother Richard Quetta, who lives in North Providence, led the fire apparatus on display with his 1957 Ward LaFrance.

"Richard has always supported our show and so have the other members of different fire club groups such as the Meshanticut Volunteer Fire Department that also has a museum in Cranston," Pingitore said. "Now what little child doesn't like seeing – and hearing – fire trucks with sirens and flashing lights?"

Families like the Russo's – including Dale and Samantha Russo – who made Sunday's show a special family affair, walked all around Johnston War Memorial Park admiring each and every vintage vehicle that formed a circle of trucks.

Then there was Jessica Dalessandro and Richard Almedia, who served countless customers from their mobile barbeque kitchen – Little BN's BBQ of Scituate. The BBQ on wheels added another plus for the free public show presented by the Ocean State Vintage Haulers, who will now focus on plans to participate in the Bristol Fourth of July Parade along with the RI Fire Trucks Association.



**FAMILY FUN:** The Russo's – Dale, Karl, Hunter, Autumn and Samantha – were among the many families that enjoyed the large selection of trucks during Sunday's 27th annual Ocean State Vintage Haulers annual show.

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### Hero's resting place

In remembrance of the veterans who lost their lives serving the nation, Johnston's scouts placed more than 1,500 American flags throughout Highland Memorial Park Cemetery before Memorial Day. One flag graced the flat grave marker of Frank J. McLaughlin, a private who served in the 173 Aero Squadron during World War I. Aero Squadrons were the first United States Army aviation units used in warfare, not long after the invention of the airplane. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

## OSCIL distributing grocery gift cards to qualified residents

Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL) is launching a new grocery gift card assistance program to help Rhode Island residents with disabilities and their families who have experienced hardship and food insecurity due to COVID-19 and the associated economic downturn.

OSCIL will be distributing grocery gift cards and supplies to qualified Rhode Island residents on a first come, first served basis from June 21 to 25, 2021. Pre-registration is required. Hours and location will be shared during the registration process.

To qualify, residents must meet the following criteria:

Applicants must be Rhode Island residents with at least one member of the

household having a disability.

Applicants must attest to financial hardship due to COVID-19.

Applicants must complete an application.

Those living in a congregate care settings are not qualified for this program.

For more information about this program, visit the OSCIL website at [www.oscil.org](http://www.oscil.org), call 401-738-1013 or send email to [info@oscil.org](mailto:info@oscil.org).

These grocery gift cards are made possible by funding from the Federal CARES Act. The program is limited to one grocery gift card per qualifying household and gift cards are available on a first come, first served basis until all cards are distributed.

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

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**Johnston Sun Rise**



**PROUD PROMOTER:** Richard Zambarano, who owns and operates Hope Service Inc., is excited hosting his first-ever Car Show that will be held this Sunday, Sept. 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the tiny Hope Village of Scituate. (Submitted photo)

# Hope Service Car Show on Sunday

By PETE FONTAINE

It's ironic that the iconic Hope Service Center, which is located at 1 Hope Ave in the Scituate village of Hope, will host everything from classic cars to antique autos and even street rods during Sunday's first ever car show.

The show, which is being organized by Gary Maddocks and Tina Brodeur, formerly of Johnston Street Machines, is also a "terrific testimonial to Sam Brown" from Richard Zambarano, who has been part of the gas station/auto repair facility for upwards of 25 years.

"I wouldn't be where I am today," Zambarano said with emotion ringing in his voice, "if I hadn't worked for Sam Brown through the years. He mentored me into the mechanic I am today. I watched how Sam treated the customers – parts vendors and his employees – and knew someday I would want to purchase the business.

That day, Zambarano recalled, came during 2020 when, as Zambarano noted "a year filled with so much uncertainty and pandemonium, I have to ask myself if this is the right time to buy a business?"

Nonetheless, in September of 2020, Samuel "Sam" Brown, who along with his wife Maureen, operated and owned Hope Service Center, the sale was complete and Zambarano's "dream came true" as well as changing the name to Hope Service, Inc., where countless cars have been repaired and gallons of gasoline have been pumped through the years.

"It's a great story about Richard becoming the popular proprietor he is today," said Maddocks, a former Deputy Police Chief in Johnston and retired head of the Global Resource Recovery Center security force. "Add to that the purpose of Sunday's show and it's easy to figure out why Tina (Brodeur) and I have agreed to help organize the show."

Zambarano, who has been part of the Hope Service fabric for three decades and counting, explained that Sunday's show is bring the community together to support two local charities while also offering classic car aficionados yet another look at vintage vehicles through the years.

"We're asking people to come and bring along some canned goods that we will donate to the Scituate Food Pantry," Zambarano explained. "We also use money from the registration of cars, motorcycles and raffles for The Izzy Foundations at Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence to assist families with children who are battling pediatric cancer."

While there is no admission charge for spectators, Maddocks, Brodeur and Zambarano – as well as other committee members – said: "We will gladly and graciously accept any donation, no matter how much it may be, that will benefit the children who sadly have been stricken with cancer."

Owners of hot rods, pro street, street rods, antique/classic cars, motorcycles and choppers who come to Sunday's show will pay a \$10 donation that will benefit the designated charity but if they bring canned goods, they will receive a \$5 discount.

Show organizers have set Sunday, June 27 as the rain date and Sunday's show will also feature music by disc jockey Johnny Nardolillo of the famous DJ Car-Guy Productions.

"Now that 2020- is behind us, Zambarano, whose son Zachary served as Class President for the Johnston High School Classic of 2019 and was active with the J-DAPA non-profit, concluded: "Hope Service is committed to its community and dedicated to giving back to local charities. We hope we will see you Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to see all the classics and help boost The Izzy Foundation."



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# JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

## ASSAULT

On May 10, at 8:17 a.m., Johnston Police responded to a Hopkins Avenue address to investigate a report of disorderly conduct.

On the scene, police spoke to the man who called police, Joseph Maggiamo, who said that prior to the arrival of police, he and another man, later identified as Marvin Gamez Carrascoza, argued and fought.

Maggiamo told police that Carrascoza picked up a garden hoe and struck him in the back twice.

Maggiamo told police that he punched Carrascoza in the face in self-defense.

Police noted a red mark on Maggiamo's back, consistent with the wooden handle of the garden hoe. Maggiamo told police that he wanted to pursue a criminal complaint. He completed a hand-written statement.

Next, police spoke to Carrascoza, who presented a Guatemalan identification card. He told police that Maggiamo was upset with him because he missed a week of work. He said that Maggiamo called him "an illegal" and at that time he became upset.

Carrascoza told police he confronted Maggiamo, who responded by punching him in the face.

Police noted dried blood under Carrascoza's nose. Carrascoza told police that when he was punched, he had been holding a garden hoe, and that Maggiamo had tried pulling it away from him after striking him in the face.

Carrascoza told police that Maggiamo was kicking him at this time, and that they wrestled to the ground.

Carrascoza told police that he struck Maggiamo in the back with the garden hoe in self-defense.

Carrascoza said he was in fear that Maggiamo would keep assaulting him, police wrote in their report. Carrascoza completed a handwritten witness statement and said that he wished to pursue criminal charges against Maggiamo.

A witness on the scene told police that he observed Maggiamo giving Carrascoza a hard time about not coming into work. When the witness turned around, he observed the two men fighting. He told police he saw Carrascoza trying to defend himself with the garden hoe. The witness filled out a statement.

Later, police reviewed video surveillance, which showed Carrascoza working, while Maggiamo walked around him and made an unknown comment.

Police said Carrascoza immediately became visibly upset and confronted Maggiamo.

Carrascoza was using the garden hoe to clean a front-loading tractor, police said.

Police said that Maggiamo pushed Carrascoza, who struck the ground while holding the garden hoe.

Police watched on video as Maggiamo once again confronted Carrascoza, and struck him in the face with a closed fist and pulled the garden hoe away from him, according to the police report.

Police said the two men wrestled for the garden hoe and both men kicked each other multiple times. Maggiamo fell to the ground, and at that time Carrascoza raised the garden hoe over his head and struck Maggiamo in the back twice, according to the police report.

Carrascoza immediately began to retreat, while still holding the garden hoe, police said. Other employees then arrived on scene and kept both parties separated until police arrived.

Based on the investigation and video surveillance footage, Johnston police charged Carrascoza, of 104 Canton St., Providence, with Felony Assault and Disorderly Conduct.

Maggiamo, of 99 Tallman Ave., Cranston, was charged with Simple Assault and Disorderly Conduct.

Since Maggiamo complained with back pain, he was not taken into custody, but released on the scene with a 3rd District Court Summons, requiring him

to appear in court on Aug. 2. Johnston Rescue personnel transported him to the hospital.

Photographs of their injuries were taken and added to the police report.

Carrascoza was taken into custody, handcuffed and transported to police headquarters. He was processed and photographed, and transported to court for arraignment.

## FUGITIVE

Alishia T. Cinami, of 67 Joslin St., Apt. #R, Providence, was taken into custody by Johnston Police on June 1.

Cinami was wanted by the Seekonk Police Department for larceny-organized retail.

She was taken into custody, placed in hand cuffs and transported back to police headquarters.

Cinami appeared before Justice of the Peace Joseph Solomon in reference to Fugitive from Justice charges stemming from an active extraditable warrant out of Seekonk, Mass. As a result, a Writ of Habeas Corpus and Mittimus was completed and Cinami was transported to Womans ACI Intake Center pending the extradition process.

## SHOPLIFTING

Around 2:45 a.m. on May 24, two Johnston police officers responded to the East Providence Police Department to pick up Lynn Turner, who had an active Johnston Police warrant.

Johnston Police wanted Turner, of 50 Starr St., Johnston, on Shoplifting and Willful Trespass charges.

The charges stem from an incident on March 28, when police responded to The Home Depot, 100 Stone Hill Drive, for a report of shoplifting.

Upon arrival at 4:40 p.m., police met with the loss prevention manager who stated a woman entered the store and proceeded to the electrical department where she took two electrical breakers, valued at \$198, and three electrical plugs, valued at \$165.

Loss prevention told police a woman concealed the items in her handbag, and then proceeded to leave the store with the items, walking past all points of purchase, making no attempt to pay, and fled just before police arrived on the scene.

Store security provided a video recording of the incident. Police took photos of the suspect and uploaded them to the police report. The incident was forwarded to the Johnston Detective Division.

Detective Thomas M. Dwyer picked up the case and went to the store to view the video surveillance. Upon viewing the video, Dwyer said he immediately identified the suspect as Turner.

Turner was allegedly pushing a shopping cart with a baby carrier in the carriage. A blanket covered the carrier, police wrote in their report.

Police performed a criminal background check and found that Turner had five previous charges, including two previous shoplifting charges. On Sept. 18, 2020, a trespass notice was issued on Turner after an arrest at The Home Depot for shoplifting electrical equipment.

On March 29, at 12:50 p.m., Dwyer contacted Turner and asked her if she had been to The Home Depot on March 28. Turner allegedly told police that she was at the store but did not make a purchase, due to a loss prevention officer confronting her before she exited the store, Dwyer wrote in the police report.

Turner told Dwyer that she removed the items from her pocket book, which consisted of a bedroom light pull cord and turned around and placed them on the shelf inside the store, according to the police report.

Dwyer told Turner that the incident was captured on video and the loss prevention officer witnessed her conceal the electrical equipment, which she neglected to purchase, in her pocket book, according to the police report.

Dwyer said that Turner denied the allegations and said that she was not aware of a trespass order, restricting her presence at The Home Depot, according

to the police report.

Dwyer said that Turner was issued the no trespass order when she appeared in court on Nov. 9, 2020.

A copy of the video surveillance flash drive and still shots of Turner allegedly exiting the business, pushing a carriage with the unpaid concealed electrical items and a baby carrier (with no baby) were tagged as evidence.

Police also logged photos of the loss prevention officer running out of the store and stopping Turner before she entered the parking lot, according to the police report.

Police said that at no time did Turner remove any articles from her pocket book and then return back into the store and place them on the shelf as she stated.

Police prepared an affidavit and arrest warrant for shoplifting and willful trespass. Turner contacted Dwyer at 2:05 p.m. on April 6 and told him she would be turning herself in at headquarters the next day. On April 7, however, Turner did not contact Dwyer again, and did not turn herself in at headquarters, according to the police report.

East Providence Police took Turner into custody on May 24, and she was turned over to Johnston Police.

## DANGEROUS DRIVING

On May 21, Johnston Police Officer Charles M. Psilopoulos responded to the intersection of Killingly Street and Cedar Street for a multiple vehicle collision with injuries.

Upon arrival, Psilopoulos saw a vehicle facing east, another facing south, and a motorcycle facing north, all on Killingly Street.

Providence and North Providence Fire/Rescue personnel were on scene attending to all involved. Photos were captured on scene and added to the police report.

As a result of Psilopoulos's investigation, one driver was charged with several counts.

Police charged one of the drivers, Leah M. Fiocco, of 37 Lafayette St., Johnston, with two felony counts of Driving so as to Endanger, Resulting in Physical Injury, and misdemeanor counts of Reckless Driving and Obstructin an Officer In Execution of Duty, according to the police report.

On May 26, Fiocco willingly turned herself in to police headquarters. She was processed and held pending arraignment. Later that day she was arraigned before Justice of the Peace Emili Varizi and released on \$10,000 bail with Sixth District Court date of Sept. 14.

## SUSPENDED LICENSE

At around 10:10 p.m. on May 9, Johnston Police responded to 464 Central Ave. for a report of a disabled vehicle.

Upon arrival on scene, Johnston Police Officer Kevin W. Lyons met with the owner and driver of the vehicle, Peter Delellis, of 464 Central Ave., Johnston.

Delellis told police that he was driving on Atwood Avenue when his front passenger side tire began to come off.

He told police that he immediately drove to his residence and while he attempted to park, his car's front passenger side wheel fell off the axle.

Police observed the vehicle to be inoperable and parked in the middle of Central Avenue. He tried pulling into his driveway, and as a result, damaged his mailbox and the mailbox belonging to a neighbor.

A background check showed Delellis had a suspended license, police wrote in their report.

Police said Delellis was issued a District Court notice to appear on Aug. 30 for Driving with a Suspended License-Third Offense, and released at the scene.

A registration check of the vehicle did not come back to any vehicle, police said. A VIN check showed the vehicle to be unregistered.

Delellis was also mailed a summons for Operation of an Unregistered Vehicle and Improper Use of Evidences of Registration. The vehicle plates were seized and the vehicle was towed from the scene.

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# ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

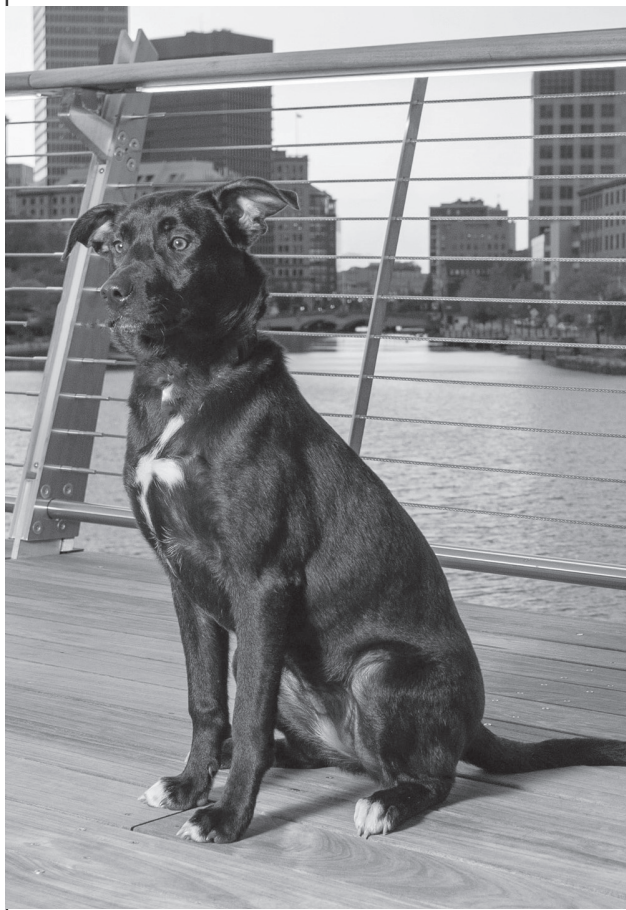
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Photo credit: Penny Souza Pet Photography

## Meet Kiera!

We got to meet her recently on our evening photoshoot at the Providence Pedestrian Bridge and wow is she a true beauty...such a super model!! She's just a young girl, very smart and only about 6 months old so very much a puppy! Kiera is a Lab mix, medium size and has been through enough for such a young girl. She is a little shy but warms up quickly and in a loving home she will blossom into an amazing forever friend. Please contact Rhode Home Rescue for more information on how you can meet Kiera. Email [hillary.rhodehomerescue@gmail.com](mailto:hillary.rhodehomerescue@gmail.com) or visit their website to fill out an application at [www.rhodehomerescue.org](http://www.rhodehomerescue.org) Please spread the word about Kiera – she deserves all the love you have to give!

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# SUN RISE SCOOPS

By MERI R. KENNEDY

## Summer concerts returning at Garden City Center

Your favorite summer tradition is back at Garden City Center!

Join in on Wednesday nights in July and August for good tunes, family fun and memories that will last well beyond the dog days of summer as part of the shopping center's Summer Concert Series.

Garden City will be making these concerts even more exciting than ever, so stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks!

As of now, the schedule includes Funk Night featuring XS BAND on July 21; Tropical Night featuring The Copacetics on July 28; A night on the boardwalk featuring Elton John vs. Billy Joel on Aug. 4; and '80s night featuring Fast Times on Aug. 11.

As always, the concerts are free of charge. To learn more, follow Garden City Center on Facebook or visit [gardencitycenter.com](http://gardencitycenter.com).

## 19th Rochambeau Strawberry Biscuit Tea

The Cranston Historical Society invites members of the community to attend the organization's first 2021 event after the COVID shutdown.

The Rochambeau Strawberry Biscuit Tea at the Joy Homestead will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, June 18, with a rain date of June 20.

Celebrate the 240th anniversary of General Rochambeau's march through Cranston, Scituate and Coventry on June 18, 1781, on the way to victory over the British at Yorktown.

The Joy Homestead, a historic site on the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route, a National Park Heritage Trail, celebrates this march to victory. The biscuits symbolize the local citizens giving food to the French soldiers as they marched along. The wagon carrying the bread and biscuits tipped over on what is now Biscuit Hill Road in Coventry, just before the Waterman Tavern.

At the event, there will be tea and homemade biscuits and strawberries. The suggested donation is \$5 donation. To RSVP, call (401) 944-9226. For more information, follow the Cranston Historical Society on Facebook or visit [cranstonhistoricalsociety.org](http://cranstonhistoricalsociety.org).

## Warwick Center for the Arts Summer Art Camp

Warwick Center for the Arts, located at 3259 Post Road in Warwick, will hold its 2021 Summer Art Camp from June 28-Aug. 13.

The camp will feature a variety of courses, such as "Comics and Coloring Books," "The Art of Musical Theater," and much more. Spend your summer creating, making friends and having fun.

For cost and times, and additional information, visit [warwickcfa.org](http://warwickcfa.org), call (401) 737-0010 or email [danielle@warwickcfa.org](mailto:danielle@warwickcfa.org).

## Trivia for a Cause

Join in for "Trivia for a Cause" on Tuesday, June 15, at the Thirsty Beaver Cranston to benefit the Elizabeth Bufum Chace Center.

The nonprofit center serves individuals and families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. Organizers of the trivia event are asking for a \$15 suggested donation per person. There will also be over \$1,000 in raffle prizes.

To purchase tickets, visit [eventbrite.com/e/trivia-for-a-cause-tickets-154453637989](http://eventbrite.com/e/trivia-for-a-cause-tickets-154453637989).

## Time to get back to networking

As COVID-19 restrictions relax, longtime networking organizer Pat Paolino Cruz is ready to get back to business. The Rhode Island Network-

ing "Getting Back To Business" event, with limited tickets, will be held on June 16 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Chapel Grille in Cranston. To preregister, find the event on [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com). Online registration ends at 3 p.m. the day of the event and tickets are \$10 in advance and \$20 at the door.

Bring plenty of business cards. This is a great way for others to get to know you face-to-face and learn what you do. No speakers or sales pitches – just a few valuable hours of connecting, communicating and collaborating with real people in a relaxed atmosphere. There will be light appetizers and a cash bar provided by Chapel Grille. Parking is free.

If you would like to showcase your services or products with a vendor table at the event, there are five tables available. Vendor tables cost \$75 and must be reserved in advance through Eventbrite only. Table registration comes with one entrance ticket.

If you would like to donate a basket, product or gift certificate for event raffles, contact Paolino Cruz at (401) 261-3300. Businesses that donate will be included in a spotlight email following event to all guests.

Masks are encouraged if you have not yet been vaccinated, and all COVID-related state enforced guidelines will be followed.

## Garden City SWEAT

Every Saturday, Garden City Center will present its new fitness series, Garden City SWEAT. Each week, they will be bringing you outdoor group workout classes led by instructors from local fitness community, including CORE Studios and Haven Fitness. They mix it up with different styles and intensities, so there's something for yogis, HIIT-lovers and everything in between.

Plus, a lucky participant in each class will win a \$50 gift card to either lululemon or Athleta. Spots are limited. Register and learn more at [gardencitycenter.com/sweat](http://gardencitycenter.com/sweat).

## Tender Love & Healing Day

Have you been hurt by past trauma? Have you been in a domestic violence situation or relationship? You're not alone!

The RI Dream Center and Delicately Loved Women proudly present Tender Love & Healing Day, free of charge, on Saturday, June 12, at Praise Tabernacle Church on Park Avenue in Cranston.

Attendees will have the opportunity to pamper themselves at one of the free beauty stations, enjoy a few minutes of relaxation in the stretching station, listen to music, and enjoy food and refreshments. Child care will be provided and lots of fun planned for children as well. Each woman and child will receive a gift to bring home and there are lots of giveaways planned.

For more information, visit [ridreamcenter.com](http://ridreamcenter.com).

## Spring Craft & Vendor Show

The St. Mary's Feast Society Ladies' Auxiliary will hold a Spring Craft & Vendor Show on Saturday, June 12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Mary's Feast Society building on Phenix Avenue in Cranston.

Vendors are asked to contact the St. Mary's Feast Ladies Auxiliary or Maria Manzi for more information. Find the organization on Facebook.

## Friends of the Mohr Public Library

Friends of the Mohr Public Library is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to Mohr Library.

Members of the Friends plan and run book sales and carry out other fundraising activities to allow Mohr Library to increase services and programs.

The Friends welcome new members who are willing to provide support through donations, membership dues, or volunteering their time.

To find out more, contact the library director at 231-4980 (press 7).

## Mental health education

Anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, post traumatic stress, suicide – all are topics many people prefer not to discuss, so the heartbreak and stigma continue.

If you have a loved family member or a friend who is struggling with a mental health issue, then the Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness can help. NAMI-RI ([namirhodeisland.org](http://namirhodeisland.org)) provides free and virtual education, support and resources. It is currently accepting registrations for its upcoming Family-to-Family course.

For more information, call (401) 331-3060 or mail [beth@namirhodeisland.org](mailto:beth@namirhodeisland.org).

## CCAP Chip for Charity golf tournament

Save the date – CCAP has announced plans to hold its 2021 Chip for Charity golf tournament on Wednesday, Sept. 15, at Harbor Light Golf Club in Warwick. Sponsorships and foursomes are available. For more details, contact CCAP's Lee Beliveau at (401) 562-8353 or [lbeliveau@comcap.org](mailto:lbeliveau@comcap.org).

As a nonprofit community action program, CCAP needs to raise funds to assist families it serves. A large number of families CCAP serves have lost their jobs, suffered an illness, or experienced a different type of crisis, usually through no fault of their own. Last year, CCAP touched the lives of more than 40,000 people and provided over \$1.2 million in uncompensated services.

Chip for Charity, presented by Neighborhood Health and Mutual of America, is CCAP's largest fundraiser during the year to benefit its programs and services.

## Playgrounds open in the park

The playgrounds are now open at the Johnston Memorial Park. Please remember that masks are required to be worn at all times. Please be advised that the restrooms remain closed at this time.

## 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](http://BeKindRI.org). Volunteers must be 18 or older and undergo our background check. Be Kind RI is open to those in Rhode Island experiencing COVID-19 risk factors, including seniors 65 and older, 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.

## Did you know?

If you were born in June, then you're one of two star signs. If you were born on or before June 20, then you're a Gemini. Geminis are said to be passionate, adaptable and smart. If you're born on or after the 21st of June, though, then you have the Cancer star sign. Those born under the Cancer sign are said to be loyal friends with great emotional depth. (Source: June Fun Facts)

*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.*



**PIZZA PARTY:** Joe Fanning passes out slices of pizza. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

# Seniors party together again, with pizza and Del's

By RORY SCHULER

The Johnston Senior Center hosted a pizza party luncheon Monday to welcome back its members.

For the first time in more than a year, vaccinated seniors from across the community gathered without masks to sip on Del's and munch on pizza and pasta salad.

"It feels great to see this room full again," said Madeline Ravenelle, Social Services worker at the center. "It's nice to be back."

More than 120 seniors and town officials attended the event, which was catered by donations from the community.

Denise Bell, Johnston Senior Center Coordinator, rattled off a long list of people she wanted to thank for making donations.

"We want to thank them for their continued support," she said.

Lorraine DiLorenzo from



**FOND MEMORIES:** Lena Comelli, Rosemarie Messore and Marie Violo sat together at a table reminiscing about pre-pandemic bingo games and casino bus trips.

Cherry Hill Nursing and Rehab Center provided the pasta salad. Denise Maio Touchette from Anchor Bay at Pocasset provided pastries.

Josh Gorton pulled his truck up to the front door, and provided frozen watermelon and Lemonade from his 1501 Hartford Ave. shop.

Cullen McKain from "The Bridge at Cherry Hill" brought chocolate chip and sugar cookies. "We also want to recognize The Original Italian Bakery on

Atwood Avenue in Johnston for the delicious pizza," Bell said, adding one more to the list. "A special thank you to Ed Morris Entertainment for the music."

Bell asked Morris to sing over the phone in an impromptu audition for the role. His velvety tones added a touch of ambiance to the party.

Senior Center members Lena Comelli, Rosemarie Messore and Marie Violo sat together at a table reminiscing about pre-pandemic bingo games and casino bus trips.

"There's a lot of people here we haven't seen in years," Violo said, taking a taste of frozen lemonade. "It's been too long since we donated our money to the casino."

Although the center is now open, for meals, Zumba and line-dancing classes, bocce ball and more, a date has not yet been set for the return of Bingo games and bus trips.

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# How AG Neronha played hardball over health care

The fight over control of Rhode Island's third-largest hospital group got relatively little local attention for a long time.

The lawyer for Prospect Medical Holdings, the California-based parent of Roger Williams Medical Center and Our Lady of Fatima Hospital, downplayed the significance of a proposed ownership change.

In April, Rhode Island's advisory Health Services Council, part of the state Health Department, recommended approving the deal, even after a leading accounting firm cited how Prospect had more than \$1 billion more in liabilities than in assets in 2020.

But critics of Prospect had long sounded an alarm – and Attorney General Peter Neronha played hardball after completing a length review of the proposed transaction.

"We feel validated," said Chris Callaci, general counsel for United Nurses and Allied Professionals, which represents hundreds of workers at Fatima. That was after Neronha announced his approval last week for a change in Prospect Medical's ownership structure, based on such conditions as the establishment of an \$80 million escrow account and a five-year hold on the possible sale or lease of the real estate for Prospect's Rhode Island hospitals.

Prospect did not directly comment on Neronha's critical findings. The company said it will continue "to deliver high-quality health care and enhanced patient and provider experiences."

Neronha's review ultimately backed up critics' view that Prospect faced financial uncertainty, due to debt and how \$457 million in dividends was paid to top company executives and other investors. As the AG's office put it in a PowerPoint presentation, the situation was due to "the transacting parties putting shareholder profits before financial security and their healthcare mission."

While the conditions on Prospect are in place for five years – a time length determined by the state's Hospital Conversions Act – the resolution to this case shows how elected officials can influence the state's health care landscape.

### Providence's pension quagmire

Without action, the annual cost of the Providence pension fund for the city and its taxpayers will more than double, to more than \$200 million, by 2040. But Mayor Jorge Elorza's latest proposed fix – using more than \$700 million in pension obligation bonds to shore up the pension system – faces a lot of questions.

As I reported in an overview last week, pension obligation bonds are very risky. And in a move that leaves some observers scratching their heads, Providence is using on the proposal the

## TALKING POLITICS



by  
**IAN DONNIS**

financial adviser that was sued by the state over 38 Studios.

### Down the stretch

June is typically the last month of the General Assembly session, and this year is expected to follow that trend, with a budget emerging in House Finance as soon as toward the end of this week.

Meanwhile, with a lot of differences still to be resolved among competing proposals for recreational marijuana, don't be surprised if lawmakers return to consider that during a session later this year.

### Gorbea in campaign mode

In her first long-form interview with The Public's Radio since becoming an announced gubernatorial candidate, Nellie Gorbea was a bit vague on some issues.

Asked how she would address the state's housing crisis, Gorbea, the former director of HousingWorks RI, called it an issue of supply and demand.

"We absolutely need to make sure that we work on this," Gorbea said. "Part of the problem has been, yes, local zoning restrictions and the Balkanization of costs and permits and all that. And we need to figure out a statewide solution that helps unblock that. We need to from a thousand building permits to five thousand building permits a year..."

Pressed for more specifics on how to achieve this, Gorbea said: "It is exactly in working with the cities and towns and providing resources from the state level to unblock some of the barriers at the local level. Each community has different issues. If you go to Charlestown, they're going to raise certain issues that the people in Providence are going to raise different ones. So you have to take a very careful approach, but one that addresses the barriers to building housing in this state."

Roundtable topics included Gorbea's pitch for being governor, charter schools, Providence schools, taxes, voting issues, and more.

### Another Providence mayoral candidate

Michael Solomon, the former Providence City Council president who went to work as a senior adviser in the Elorza administration, tells me he plans to formally announce his latest mayoral campaign in August.

Fellow Democrats Gonzalo Cuervo, Nirva LaFortune and Brett Smiley are already off and running.

Back in 2014, Smiley teamed up with Elorza while describing Solomon as the wrong choice for Providence voters – and Solomon returned fire.

This time around, Solomon said he believes his experience as an elected official who has served in the administration gives him a unique perspective on how to move Rhode Island's capital city forward.

### Raimondo on apprenticeships

Politico dubs U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo "the Democrat business leaders are learning to love." The same article includes Raimondo's view that going to a four-year college has been over-emphasized in America, and that her top priority is boosting apprenticeships and other forms of practical training: "Providing more chances for people to 'earn while they learn' is 'critical to American wage growth and frankly to equity,' according to Raimondo. 'We need digital, cybersecurity, accounting, quality assurance apprenticeships: all of the jobs in the digital backbone,' she said."

### MIA workers (cont'd)

My colleague Antonia Ayres-Brown reports on how the soft labor market is affecting Newport businesses like O'Brien's Pub, where GM Kerrie Philbin was filling in for one of her cooks on a recent weekday: "O'Brien's Pub would usually have 50 or 60 employees by the beginning of June. Right now, Philbin said, the staff's at about 35 people. In past summers, she said she used to receive stacks of job applications. This year, they've just trickled in – so Philbin has had to get creative with staffing, like solving a jigsaw puzzle with missing pieces. During some weekends in April, Philbin had her bartenders step in as servers. On this particular morning, she was also missing a dishwasher – another hole she said she'd find a way to fill, even if it meant doing it herself. As of May, there were about 1,000 open positions in the hospitality and tourism industries on Aquidneck Island, according to Erin Donovan-Boyle, the executive director of the Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce. 'That's really troubling. Particularly because we're such a seasonal economy,' she said. 'It's very important during June, July, August, September and October that we are at full capacity, because so many businesses rely on that four to six months of peak operation to carry them through for the full year.'"

Ian Donniss can be reached at [idonnis@ripri.org](mailto:idonnis@ripri.org). You can follow him on Twitter @IanDon. For a longer version of this column, visit [thepublicsradio.org](http://thepublicsradio.org).



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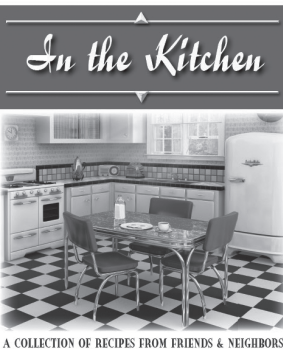
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# PonyBoy walks the line between classic, modern at Askew

By ROB DUGUAY

When a group of music scene stalwarts get together, most of the time something rad results from it.

Enter Providence rock act PonyBoy, which was started by vocalist and pianist Dave Laros and guitarist Vic Foley.

The two are familiar with each other through their involvement in the post-apocalyptic band Blackletter, which hails from the same city, but this time around they have a different rhythm section.

Bassist Eric Hanson has gotten to hit the road and do sound for guitar gods such as Warren Haynes from The Allman Brothers Band and Gov't Mule. Drummer Bob Giusti is a local legend who was taught his craft by Vanilla Fudge drummer Carmine Appice, and he's also played in the bands Rash Of Stabbings, Sasquatch & The Sick-A-Billies and, more recently, Eric & The Nothing.

On June 11 at 5 p.m., PonyBoy will be performing at Askew, located at 150 Chestnut St. in Providence, with fellow rockers Hope Anchor opening things up.

I recently had a talk with Laros, a Cranston resident, about how the band came together, writing a bunch of material, and being ex-



PonyBoy

cited to play shows again.

**ROB DUGUAY:** Whose idea was it to start PonyBoy? Was this something you and Vic had in mind for a while, or did either Eric or Bob approach you guys about it?

**DAVE LAROS:** What happened was, Vic and I had a song called "Stoop Drinkin'," which has become one of the first in the PonyBoy catalog. We were thinking about how to record it and we didn't think it sounded like Blackletter at all. Vic ran into Eric at Nolan's Corner Pub in Providence, he told him about this song and that we'd love to record it. After listening to a few recordings of the song, Vic told me how it sounded like a completely different band. Then Vic texted a couple people, he got Bob on

board.

When we all got together it was that moment in a band where four personalities really worked well together nicely. That's how it happened.

**RD:** That's awesome. In a musical sense, what in your opinion makes PonyBoy different from Blackletter? I know Blackletter has this post-apocalyptic aesthetic that mixes with anthemic rock, so where does PonyBoy fit in?

**DL:** Vic had the idea for the name PonyBoy. It's one of those things where I had the idea for Blackletter, and when you heard the name it was kind of like, "That's the name?" But it also encapsulates what the band is. PonyBoy is American rock 'n' roll, but it's got a little glam edge to it. Songs like "Closet Queen" and "Dying Day" have a bit of

a Bowie glam thing going that's also reminiscent of Blackletter.

**RD:** Fantastic.  
**DL:** Yeah, we even tried "Dying Day" in the other band, but sometimes the songs don't work in that context. Sure enough, we started playing it in PonyBoy and it did make sense.

**RD:** Outside of both bands you're in, you've been back doing dueling pianos. How has it been returning to that environment with the COVID-19 regulations being eased up? Have you noticed any changes in the audience?

**DL:** The thing about the dueling pianos is that I've done it for a while and it's always a great way to make income. I get a lot of enjoyment out of people hearing what they want to hear and I did a couple shows during the pandemic where they wanted me to sing through a mask. I was like, "I can't do that, that's ridiculous," but now it seems on the other side of things that it's like "The Roaring '20s" all over again. During the first couple shows in Newport at the Top Of Pelham, it was just packed and people wanted to jump on stage. There's no plexiglass separating people from one another and everybody is just ready to get out and enjoy live music once again.

As a performer and an entertainer in that room, I've done it for four years now and it just feels amazing after being stifled for a while and finding other mediums. I did a live stream series called "Laros Live" which was fun with my wife, Erica, and the dog. It's a whole different thing being on the other side of the pandemic. People realized how much they loved going out and listening to their favorite bands and musicians. I think it'll eventually be a whole game changer for the music industry.

**RD:** I think so too, I really do. People are really itching to get out, have a night out and enjoy themselves. They haven't been able to do it for the past 15 months, so it's really great.

**DL:** Absolutely.  
**RD:** You also teach music, so did you have to do any virtual sessions with your students during the pandemic?

**DL:** I've been making the drive to Boston and teaching a couple families for around five years. During the pandemic I started using Skype, but it's one of those mediums that you really need to get down because you can't really show somebody how to play music in that way. What you've got to do is that you have to figure out

how to do it, figure out the angles where you put your hands, but it's more about how you explain it. One of the families that I teach one student out of, the parents asked me to teach all three of their kids and it became a part-time job.

I'm very blessed and thankful that through that time I had families who appreciated my teaching so much that they made me continue it during the entire pandemic. It was such a big help for my family and I.

**RD:** I'm glad that it worked out for you like that, especially during a period of so much uncertainty. After the show at Askew, what's next for PonyBoy? Can we expect a debut record of some sort later this year?

**DL:** The great thing about PonyBoy is that while we were writing with masks last year at Eric's studio, 230 Oak, we ended up creating two albums worth of music. Once we got on that train, we just kept writing and compiling material. It's amazing and the guys are so good at creating their input, which makes the band so special. We are definitely going to go in and record the first record. We've also been planning and lining up shows, we're really excited to get out there and do what we do.

Joyce and I have reviewed an average of 3½ movies a week since the late '70s.

At its peak, there were five Showcase Cinemas to choose from. Garden City, Cranston, Cinerama and a handful of local cinemas offered first- and second-run movies at reasonable prices. The Avon had the best in foreign and independent movies.

And for a few special years, we were able to watch nature and travel films on a giant screen at Providence Place Mall.

Times are changing. You can blame it on the pandemic, television, the product, the economy, lifestyle changes, or Hollywood.

The fact is that fewer people are going to the movies today.

Warwick Showcase opened two new movies this weekend – the third of the "Conjuring" series, which we wouldn't waste our time sitting through, and a cartoon feature that is equivalent to a Saturday morning TV cartoon. The other screens are filled with holdovers.

Even the Avon is having trouble getting good films, relying

recently on second-run movies.

Is it any wonder that movie lovers are turning to Netflix, Disney+, HBO Max and other streaming services for their entertainment?

A month of Netflix is less expensive than a single movie ticket, and you can watch it in the comfort of your own home.

While we still enjoy watching a movie, like the upcoming "In The Heights," on the big screen, we will be making fewer trips to the few remaining movie houses.

### On Netflix

#### SWEET TOOTH

\*\*\*\*

(Fantasy drama)

It has been 10 years since The Great Crumble has wiped out much of humanity.

Mysterious young hybrids are appearing everywhere.

Are they responsible for the deaths of the humans?

Bands of armed men comb the earth capturing and killing these creatures, which are part human with animal features.

If I had read this far in a review, I would have skipped this

See it at the **Movies** with Joyce & Don Fowler

fascinating Netflix series, but I got hooked by the two main characters and watched all eight episodes.

Christian Convery, a charming young actor, plays Gus, a 10-year-old hybrid with deer antlers and ears who lives in the woods of abandoned Yellowstone Park with his loving father.

When tragedy strikes, he is saved by Big Man (Nonso Anozie), a rugged, huge former football player – and a man with a dark past – who reluctantly helps him try to find his mother in Colorado.

They have many adventures and narrow escapes from bad men who are out to capture and kill them.

There are a couple of connecting subplots, including a doc-

tor who is searching for a cure to the virus and a woman who runs a preserve in an old zoo for young hybrids.

Even though the plot sounds a bit far-reaching, I got hooked on the characters and the moral behind the fantasy.

"Sweet Tooth" raises the question, what is a family? It also examines prejudice, blame, freedom, fear and caring, and makes for a good family film that can be used as a teaching moment.

The series ends without resolution and calls for Series 2 to begin as soon as possible so we can find out what happens to Gus, Big Man, and humanity.

#### DOGS OF BERLIN

\*\*\*

(Violent crime drama)

This violent crime drama comes from Germany and involves neo-Nazis, crooked cops and politicians, soccer players, and Turkish gangs.

The Germans hate the Turks and the Turks hate the Germans.

The German police have formed a team that is led by a gay Turk and a German cop who breaks every rule in the book.

The German has big gambling debts and woman problems and gets in way over his head.

The Turks run a big gambling operation and coerce Turkish soccer players who play for Germany to throw the game. Both sides do not like the idea of a Turk playing for a German team.

There is murder and mayhem galore, neo-Nazis who fight the Turks and their fellow countrymen, sibling rivalry, adultery, riots, and a bloody final battle between the police and the Turkish compound.

It is all a bit overwhelming, raising many issues, including the universal one about the ends justifying the means.

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# The story of 'River Pirate,' from sure-thing to swindle

By KELLY SULLIVAN

Waldemer Barth was arrested in Johnston on Feb. 13, 1903, after authorities were alerted he was in the area. This was good news for the wealthy Perry Belmont of Newport, who Barth had swindled out of about \$1,500.

Thirty-three-year-old Barth was a native of Prussia who was the husband of Alice (McClelland) and the father of three children: Edith, age 8; Harold, age 4; and Marian, age 2. He and his family lived in Newport for the last three years while he worked as head gardener on the Belmont family's impressive estate.

Fifty-two-year-old Perry Belmont was the son of a

financier, a graduate of Harvard and a successful attorney. He and his wife Jessie (Robbins) were members of high society in both New York and Rhode Island.

In 1902, Belmont purchased a \$20,000 racehorse known as "River Pirate." He touted the horse as a sure winner and his excitement about owning the animal spilled over to every occupant of the estate, including the maids, cooks and maintenance workers.

Just before the horse's first race as a Belmont commodity, the staff was busily collecting money from friends and family so that they could place bets. The idea of going from a life of servitude to a life of wealth was beyond anything they had ever dreamed of. And now came an opportunity which they had been assured was fail-proof.

Barth didn't ask anyone to borrow money. Belmont had just given him a check for \$246 to purchase some items for the estate. Barth decided he would use the money to place his bet, winning back the \$246 and then some.

The excitement of the entire staff descended quickly when Belmont's sure-thing came in ninth. However, there were probably none so worried over the loss than Barth. Luckily, "River Pirate" was soon racing again and Belmont gave Barth a sum of money with which he was to pay the gardeners working under him.

Barth felt he had no choice but to use the cash to bet on the horse again. The belief in the animal hadn't been diminished in the minds of his owner or trainer and, this time, he was sure to



Perry Belmont

win. However, out of the 16 horses in the race, "River Pirate" came in 14th.

It didn't take long before Belmont realized the money he had given Barth had disappeared and the head gardener was gone. He alerted authorities and, after it was learned Barth had gone to Johnston, he was arrested on a charge of grand larceny.

Barth had a long career as a talented gardener and florist. Until this unfortunate incident, he was regarded as a trustworthy man with a great character. The hype

about "River Pirate" had caused his downfall and that would be his defense when he requested clemency.

Regardless of how the court viewed the crime, Belmont was completely understanding of the temptation he had caused. He contacted Barth's wife and offered to financially take care of her and the children until Barth was released from jail.

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

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55			56										
58													

**CLUES ACROSS**

- Most courageous
- Insurance giant
- Small trace left behind
- In a way, signals
- The same letter or sound at the beginning
- The Great Lakes State
- Engage in a contest
- Drinks served to celebrate a birth (Spanish)
- Manpower
- Undivided
- Strong, magnetic metal
- People of Tanzania
- Sorts
- Cop car accessory
- Trade
- Sullen and ill-tempered
- Distinctive practices
- Motor vehicles
- Electrodes
- Polish river
- Human feet
- Make very hot
- Toppin and Kenobi are two

**CLUES DOWN**

- Expressions of approval
- Replace the interior of
- Not awake
- Roman numeral 7
- Sun up in New York
- Institute legal proceedings against
- Bugs homeowners don't want
- Maltese-Italian composer
- Very long period of time
- Touchdown
- Agents of downfall
- Complacently or inane foolish

**CLUES ACROSS**

- Argentina capital Buenos \_\_\_
- County in New Mexico
- An electrically charged atom
- New Zealand conifer
- Type of brandy
- Comments to the audience
- Tears down
- Gifts for the poor
- More painful
- Good friend
- Lying in the same plane
- Line in a polygon
- Clouds of gas and dust
- Norse god
- Health care pro
- Close tightly
- One's holdings
- Became less intense
- Wilco frontman
- Woman (French)
- Expresses delight
- TV channel (abbr.)
- Beverage
- Unit of work or energy
- Cleaning accessory
- Dorm worker

## The Gamm announces 2021-22 season, launches fellowship for emerging artists

The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre (The Gamm) has announced its plans to reopen for Season 37 (2021-22) with a five-play lineup beginning at the end of September 2021.

The season includes an Obie award-winner, a premiere of a late 19th-century classic reinvented for our pandemic year, the regional premiere of a contemporary critically acclaimed look at working class America, and the first Shakespeare production in The Gamm's Warwick home.

"We've got four distinctly American stories that do a deep dive into our history and bring us right up to the present day, along with a return to Shakespeare with his most beloved and buoyant comedy, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' as we wake up from this revolutionary pandemic year," says Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella.

He continues: "We open Season 37 with 'A Lie Agreed Upon,' a brand-new version of Ibsen's classic 'An

Enemy of the People.' It was started last summer and has been through several revisions as life continued to imitate art throughout these past 12 months. We're offering a sneak-peek on June 11 with a digital, staged reading as we ready the script for our big re-opening. It's at once a political thriller, an environmental exposé and a meditation on the nature and purpose of representative democracy. Sound familiar? And we'll follow that up with an equally powerful look at American civic life with a return to Bedford Falls and the imperishable 'It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play.'"

Estrella is also delighted to get Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's "An Octoroon" in front of audiences in the new year.

"An Octoroon has been a couple of years in the offing with us, so we are very excited to finally get it on stage where it belongs. It's a powder keg of a play and a contemporary American masterpiece by one of our finest young writers. It ex-

amines the darkest chapters of our country's past and present and asks fundamental questions about storytelling itself," Estrella said.

The company will follow "An Octoroon" with Martyna Majok's incisive, timely drama "Ironbound" about working-class immigrant life in contemporary America.

Season 37 will also mark the company's first production of Shakespeare in its new Warwick space.

In the coming weeks, more details about The Gamm Fellowship Program and the inaugural class of Gamm Fellows will be announced.

Plays and dates are subject to change.

If you have already purchased a subscription for Season 36, your subscription will automatically be honored for this year's five-play series. New subscriptions are on sale now and single tickets will be ready for purchase beginning Aug. 30. Information and sales at (401) 723-4266 or gammtheatre.org.

**CHERRY HILL SCRAMBLE**

**WORD OF THE WEEK:**

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**BEST NURSING HOME**  
US NEWS & WORLD REPORT  
2020-2021

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# spotlight ON BUSINESS

## Self Serenity Wellness Spa Introducing its new location this fall



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By JENNIFER COATES

When life throws you a curve ball, you can either duck to avoid it or you can thrust your bat back and swing for the rafters. And swing for the rafters is exactly what Jessica Accetturo did when life threw her a “pandemic curve ball” in March of 2020. Jess took this challenging time to reassess, regroup and renew by leaving a spa where she had worked as a massage therapist for seven years and opening her own wellness spa in a converted space in her home.

This newfound business, Self Serenity Wellness Spa, soon flourished and, in the process of this huge life change, Jess discovered something that she could never have learned at any other juncture in her life ~ that true success and fulfillment can only be achieved through grit, determination, drive, and innovation. Thus was the evolution of Self Se-

renity Wellness Spa – born of ingenuity and perseverance, and a vision of what could be.

It is that same vision and passion that now bring Jess Accetturo to yet another juncture in her life, a new business that will be officially opening in September of this year. As an experienced and sought-after massage therapist, Jess has taken the big leap into small business ownership to a whole new level. As this article goes to press, Jess is already busy assembling her team of aestheticians and fellow massage therapists. Her standards are high because she knows that the success of her business depends on professionals who share her ambition, her passion, and her commitment to excellence.

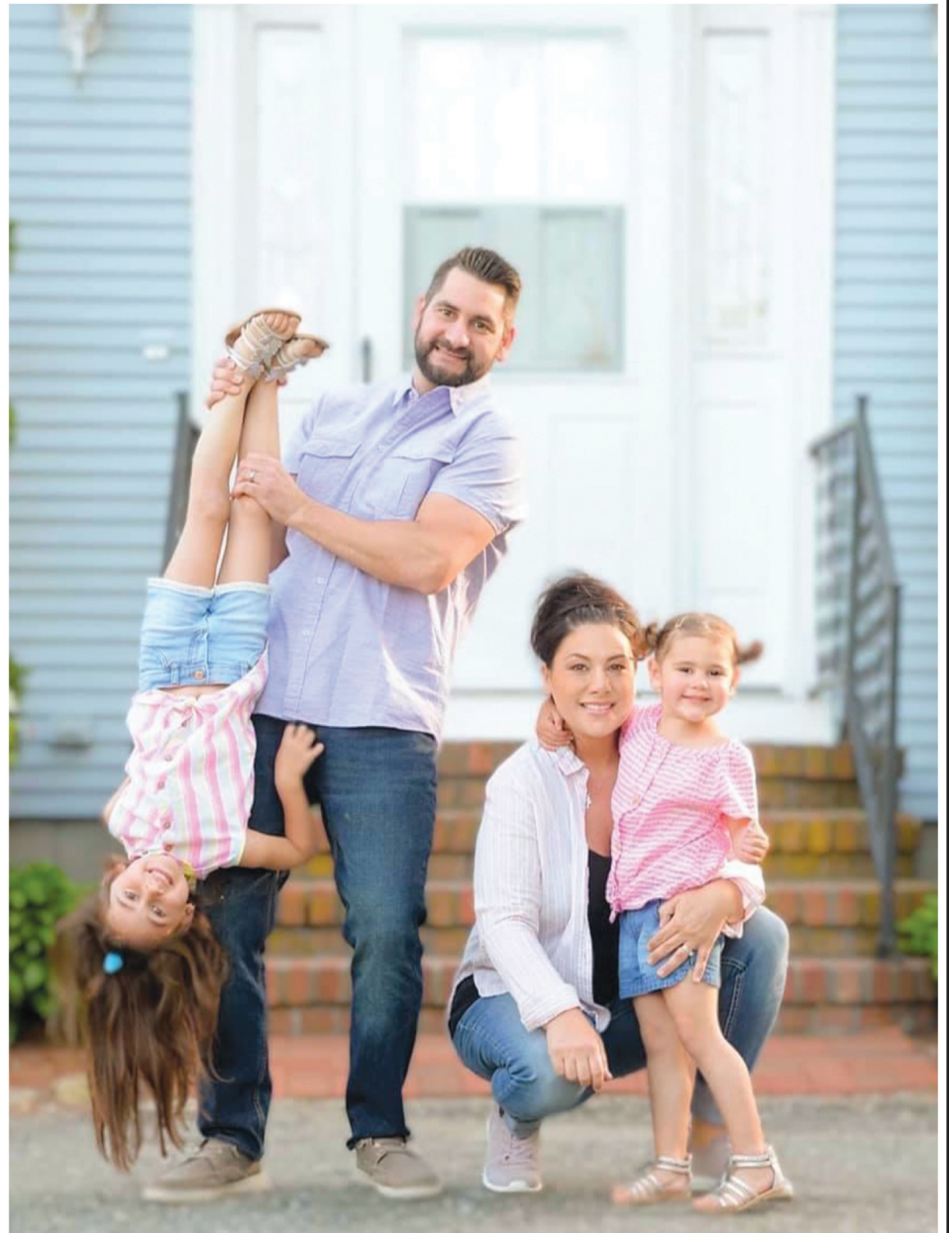
Self Serenity Wellness Spa is moving into its new and improved location on Mineral Springs Avenue. The spa will be “full-service”, offering everything from Jess’s longstanding menu of unique

and customized massages to all kinds of skin care. Facials, makeup, spray tanning, eyelash extensions and waxing. You name it, if it will revitalize your skin and make it glow, you will find it here. This will be a sanctuary where clients can go to feel restored, pampered and strengthened against all the curve balls they are facing. This will be a place of serenity and self-care.

As Jessica is putting the many finishing touches on her new spa, she is putting equally as much work into finding just the perfect team to work with her. In times when demand is high and supply is low, she is looking for skilled aestheticians and massage therapists who bring an important variety of experience and freshness – new graduates and longtime therapists who want to see where this exciting destination can take them. Jess is a devoted and caring leader whose own experiences in the field will uplift any co-worker.

Self Serenity Wellness Spa is growing! Come be a part of the process.

To learn more, follow Self Serenity Wellness Spa on Facebook and Instagram, or at its website, <http://selfserenitywellnessspa.amtamembers.com>. To make an appointment for your own massage, you can reach Jessica at 401-465-6800.



Jessica Accetturo, the owner of Self Serenity Wellness Spa, is busy opening her new spa on Mineral Springs Avenue – with the support of her biggest fans, husband Brad and daughters Giavanna and Arianna.

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## Space

(Continued from page 1)

Like most space explorers, Maguire wanted to go deeper.

"I jumped into the world of Astrophotography head first and over time built up a deep sky imaging telescope," Maguire said. "I use this telescope to image the wonders of the cosmos from my backyard in Johnston."

The 29-year-old wants to share his unearthly images with the world.

His amazing images will appear in the pages of the Johnston Sun Rise on a semi-regular basis.

"I'd love to get my images out there," Maguire said.

The Sun Rise plans to help him showcase the art he captures from his backyard.

"Thanks and clear skies," he said, signing off after sending us his first submis-

sion, an image of the Rosette Nebula (NGC 2244).

"The Rosette Nebula is a Hydrogen gas region located near the Monoceros region of the Milky Way Galaxy," Maguire said. "It spans 65 light-years across and is roughly 5,219 light-years from our Earth."

Capturing deep space beauty can be far more complicated than just pointing and shooting.

"I imaged this target in my backyard, and stacked 45 individual images that were exposed for 300 seconds, making a total Integration time of 3 hours and 45 minutes," Maguire explained.

"I used a software called Pixinsight to bring out all of the nebulosity and detail of the target."

Maguire's photography can also be found at his Instagram account @oceanstateastro and his Twitter feed @OceanStateAstro.

# Obituary

Irene H. Boehm

Irene H. (Beaudoin) Boehm, 84, passed peacefully Sunday, 06/06/21, at Roger Williams Hospital. Born in Providence, she was the daughter of the late Henri and Marie (Normandine) Beaudoin. She was the beloved wife of the late Kenneth G. Boehm for 53 years.



Formerly of Providence, she had lived in Johnston for the past 18 years. She was the vice president of RKB Industries for 15 years before retiring in 2002. She was Co-founder of the RI Chapter Leukemia Society, a member of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Order of Mary (Boston), Hemophilia Foundation and a member of the Red Hatters. Irene was well loved and known for her spirited discussions. She loved spending her time with her grand and great-grandchildren and working in her garden, which was admired by many.

Irene was the mother of Ronald K. Boehm and his wife, Lorrie-Ann, of West Warwick, Russell K. Boehm and his wife, Tracey, of Johnston, Raymond K. Boehm of Smithfield, Sgt. Robert K. Boehm, PPD and his wife Siobhan, of Cranston and B/C Richard K. Boehm, JFD, and his wife, Rhonda, of Cranston, sister to Henry J. of Florida, William E. of Cumberland and Robert G. Beaudoin of North Providence. Nine grandchildren, Amanda Lodge, Ryan K., Ross K., Randell K. Boehm, Samantha E. Durning, Rachelle K., Reid K., Reis K. Boehm and Jacob B. (Boehm) Sarkady, and four great-grandchildren, Ava V. and, Vanessa L. Lodge, Saylor G. Durning and Addison O. Boehm. She was the mother of the late Deborah J. Boehm and sister of the late Joseph N. Beaudoin.

Her life will be celebrated with calling hours Friday from 4-8 p.m. at the Stapleton Family Funeral Home, 684 Park Avenue, Cranston. Funeral will be Saturday, 8:30 a.m. with a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Charles Borromeo Church, 178 Dexter Street, Providence at 10:00 a.m. Burial will be in St Ann Cemetery, Cranston.

In lieu of flowers the family suggest donations be made to the Salvation Army, 386 Broad Street, Providence, RI 02907.



**OUT AND ABOUT:** The donkey was spotted on the loose in the vicinity of Pine Hill Road. Police ask residents to be on the lookout, and call them if the donkey is spotted. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

## Donkey

(Continued from page 1)

from a vehicle at a residence in Scituate, near the west side of town, when it escaped.

"On Sunday, we had a call for a sighting around 7:30 on Hartford Avenue, on the far west end, near the Johnston/Scituate line," Razza said. "It went up a side street, but the person who called it in lost sight of it."

An hour later, another call came in from Pine Hill Road, which also stretches from Johnston into Scituate.

"Officers arrived, but the donkey was not there," Razza said.

Drivers spotted the animal running down Route 6.

"He was moving along pretty good," Polisena said. "He's not going to be easy to catch."

Several passing drivers took photos and posted them on social media.

"It's still on the loose," Polisena said Tuesday. "We have our animal control officer looking for it, and we're advising people to stay away from it. We don't want anyone to get hurt."

Town officials have grappled with various animal issues over the past few years.

"Cows, turkeys ... it is what it is," Razza said. "We're just waiting for the next animal to crop up. I consider these to be isolated incidents. It seems to be an oddity in the town of Johnston that we have these things happen now and then."

A cow escaped from a slaughterhouse early this year, and roamed Johnston for months before it was located and sent to live on a Connecticut farm.

Turkeys have also taunted the mayor and town motorists in the past.

Finding a donkey in Johnston, however, is a little bit like finding a needle in a haystack.

The town is spread out over 26 square miles, and contains 175 miles of roadway.

"The donkey put us on the map again," Polisena said.

The patchwork of Johnston contains large squares of rural farmland mixed with bustling urban corridors.

"We got certain parts of the community that are rural where animals can roam free and stay safe," Polisena said. "We're concerned about the animal, but most concerned about people."

The donkey is a female, and medium-sized, according to police.

"The cow we had missing a while back was gone for 6-8 weeks," Raz-

za said. "But it seems like he stayed in town."

The donkey, however, seems intent to travel.

"We have no idea where he could be right now," Razza said.

The mayor and police are concerned the animal could be struck by a vehicle, so they'd like drivers to be especially alert.

"Route 6 is a very busy street," Polisena said.

"It's one of the most dangerous roads in the state. It's bad enough if someone hits a deer. We need the people to be our eyes and ears. We just don't want anyone to get too close."

Public safety is the mayor's priority; the donkey's successful capture a close second.

"We want to be sure no human being gets hurt, and of course the animal doesn't get hurt," Polisena said. "If people spot it, don't try to corral it. Call the police. He's an animal who's afraid, and he could do anything."

The donkey was last reported seen along Trim Town Road in Scituate around 8 a.m. Monday morning.

"That's a considerable amount of distance away," Razza said. "We don't think that he's in the area any more, but I can't confirm or deny that."

# LEGAL NOTICES

**JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
Thursday, June 24th, 2021  
at 6:30 PM  
VIA In Person & Video Conference

**Via Computer:**  
<https://zoom.us/j/92680323802?pwd=RG5ScEM4dWVFNjJObGV4dGZKN2RZUT09>

**Via Telephone:** +19292056099

**Meeting ID:** 926 8032 3802

**Passcode:** 557268

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

The Johnston Zoning Board of Review will hold its regular monthly meeting on June 24th, 2021 at 6:30 pm, **IN PERSON** and by **ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**. Persons interested in the following petitions are encouraged to join the Video Conference. If you require accommoda-

tions call the Zoning Office 48 hours in advance of the meeting at (401) 231-4000 ext. 4117. Persons utilizing TDD equipment may contact the Town through "Relay Rhode Island" at 1-800-745-6675. The agenda for the evening will be as follows, subject to change:

**Case to be heard at 6:35 PM**  
**File 2021-9 – Petition of Mohamad Yaser & Rhonda Sasa, Owner/Applicant** for 1056 Atwood Avenue, AP 24 Lots 9, zoned R-15. The petitioner is seeking a Dimensional variance to create 2 lots that do not conform to lot requirements and a Use Variance to Construct a Two-Family Dwelling on one of the newly created Lots.

**Case to be heard at 6:45 PM**  
**File 2021-11 – Petition of Ravi Patel/Shankar Two, LLC Applicant** for 1601 Hartford Avenue, AP 53 Lot 22, zoned B-2. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit for a Convenience Store and Gas Station.

**Case to be heard at 6:55 PM**  
**File 2021-12 – Petition of Vincent Russo, Owner/Applicant** for 15 Alvina Drive, AP 29 Lots 103, zoned

R-40. The petitioner is seeking a dimensional variance from Section 340 Article III, Section 340-25© Accessory Structures for a proposed Pool Cabana with Covered Porch.

**Case to be heard at 7:05 PM**  
**File 2021-13 – Petition of Peter St. Lawrence, Applicant** for 8 Deluca Street, AP 5 Lots 273, zoned R-20. The petitioner is seeking a Use Variance from Section 340 for a proposed Two-Family Dwelling.

**Case to be heard at 7:15 PM**  
**File 2021-14 – Petition of Helen Deugarte, Owner/Applicant** for 12 Susan Circle, AP 9 Lots 501, zoned R-15. The petitioner is seeking a Use Variance from Section 340, Article III D-1 Use regulations 13.3 Accessory Family Dwelling for a proposed In-Law Apartment.

**Case to be heard at 7:25 PM**  
**File 2021-15 – Petition of Paul Giarusso, Owner/Applicant** for 41 Tagaglia Street, AP 27 Lots 60, zoned R-20. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit 340-75, Dimensional Variance 340-74 and 340-63 for proposed restoration of second lot.

**Prior to adjournment the board shall convene as the Board of Appeals and hear the following matter:**

File 2021-15 National Development Group, Inc, Owner/Applicant; 1357 Hartford Avenue; AP 20 Lot 25; B-2 Zone; Appellants petition to the Building Officials violation notice.

**NOTE:** If a Case has not been called for a hearing by 10:30 p.m., the Board, at its discretion, may continue the Case to a subsequent or a special meeting.

The Zoning Board Agenda and Minutes are available for review at ClerkBase on the Town's web page or Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Building Office, 100 Irons Avenue, Johnston.

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

6/11, 6/18/21

## Obituaries

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

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



# Opinion

EDITORIAL

## A 'Legals' attack

Legislation before the Rhode Island General Assembly would take a swipe at both newspapers and transparency in government – two things that are intrinsically linked. House Bill 6375 and Senate Bill 916 seek to override any state laws that require municipal governments to post notices in print newspapers.

An informal review by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) revealed nearly 200 Rhode Island statutes currently requiring published legal notices.

Thus, in nearly 200 instances, state lawmakers deemed the information so important that they required government agencies to actively distribute printed notice to Rhode Island's citizens, and this practice has continued for many decades.

Now legislation would wipe out the entire practice and override nearly 200 state statutes. Replacing the thousands of notices currently posted in the state's newspapers would be a digital clearinghouse on the Rhode Island Secretary of State's website.

The argument in favor of this shift is simple enough: Why pay to distribute something in print when you can do it for free online? The newspaper industry is painfully familiar with this logic, as it's been used repeatedly to hammer the business model and either diminish or shut down print publishers everywhere.

Yet despite ugly perceptions, Rhode Island newspapers are alive and well. Collectively, they are mailed, dropped or brought home to more than 265,000 households – exceptional reach in a state of a million people.

Aside from dealing another setback to an industry that, like so many others, absorbed major losses during the pandemic, this legislation also dims the light shining on government and its activities. These legal notices run the gamut, bringing the public critical information about agendas, budgets, tax rates, bid notices, board vacancies, tax sales, public hearings, liquor license applications, zoning amendments and so much more.

Despite the appeal of dumping all this information into a searchable database maintained by the state, there is a significant difference between posting something where someone might find it, and actually delivering it to their home. That's what newspapers do. They take critical information about a community, and they bring it home to some of its most invested and engaged citizens.

If the legal notices all went away, public information might be easy to find, but less likely to be found. Making something "public" and seeing it published are two very different things.



## Providence's pension obligation bomb

Mayor Jorge Elorza is urging the General Assembly to allow Providence to borrow, without voter approval, at least \$750 million for a 25-year pension obligation bond (POB).

Providence plans to invest the POB proceeds and reduce its \$1.2 billion unfunded pension liability. Essentially, with a POB, you take on another debt to pay off an existing debt, and bet that you will earn more by investing the borrowed money in the stock market than you will pay in interest costs.

POBs should be avoided. They are high-risk, highly dependent on timing, and can fail miserably.

In general, for a POB to save taxpayers money, two conditions should be met. First, the difference between a POB's interest rate and the expected return on investing the POB's proceeds must be large. If the difference is small, it leaves little margin for error. A low-interest rate to borrow the POB is necessary.

Also, the estimated return for investing the POB proceeds needs not only to be high, but also realistic over the long-term. In recent years, the estimated returns for pension funds have come down from over 8 percent to close to 7 percent. These estimated returns will likely need to come down further. In the long-run, stock market performance is linked to real GDP growth, and real GDP growth in the United States has declined over the last two decades.

Second, because the POB proceeds are being invested all at once, the investment into the stock market must be made when stock prices are low such as right after a crash. If the POB proceeds are invested towards the end of a stock market boom, the consequences will be disastrous. Timing is everything. As noted by the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, "even over 15 to 20 years, the duration of most POB debt, interest costs can exceed asset returns."

### Return to First Principles



by STEVE FRIAS

If either of these two conditions are not met, a POB can turn into a fiscal fiasco. For example, in 2002, the General Assembly authorized Woonsocket to issue a \$90 million POB. The interest rate for Woonsocket's POB was about 6.25 percent. Although the interest rate was high, Woonsocket believed that it could cover the borrowing costs because its assumed investment return was 8.25 percent. To assist them in achieving this return, Woonsocket hired Wilshire Associates, a nationally recognized investment advisor.

At first, it seemed to go well. From 2003 to 2007, Woonsocket's pension fund averaged a return of 8.58 percent. Although this was below what other pension funds were achieving, it was higher than its estimated return of 8.25 percent.

Then the stock market began to crash. For fiscal year 2008, the return was about negative 9 percent. Woonsocket switched investment advisors and investment strategies. Woonsocket adopted a more conservative approach, which protected its pension fund assets but also lowered its investment return.

Then state aid was cut. The school department ran deficits. Woonsocket failed to contribute millions to the pension fund. Woonsocket's pension plan went from over 100 percent funded to less than 60 percent funded.

It was a fiscal meltdown. A state-appointed budget commission took over the city's finances. Taxes went up by nearly 23 percent in one year. The cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for retirees were periodically suspended. In 2015, Richard Lepine, the chairman of the Woonsocket Pension Investment Commission, lamented, "that bond was a problem ... We are the poster children of what not to do." Today, Woonsocket's pension plan is about 30 percent funded.

Furthermore, the last time Providence toyed with a POB, it nearly led to disaster. In 2006, under Mayor David Cicilline, the Providence Pension Study Committee recommended the city issue a POB at a 6 percent interest rate on the assumption that its investment return would be 8.50 percent. In June 2007, legislation was proposed to allow Providence to issue a POB of up \$700 million. Fortunately, the legislation died because, within a year, the stock market began crashing. Years later, in 2018, the Providence Pension Working Group stated: "Fortunately, the City did not follow this recommendation [to issue a POB], which would have increased the City's investment losses during the 2008-09 stock market reversals."

Providence's POB would be risky. First, the margin between borrowing costs and a realistic investment return may be too small. Even if the interest rate on the POB is close to 4 percent, according to a recent actuarial experience study, Providence's investment return is expected to be 6.40 percent over the next 20 years. The difference between the borrowing cost and the expected investment return is between 2 to 3 percent. The difference between Woonsocket's POB interest rate and its estimated return was around 2 percent, and that margin proved to be insufficient.

Second, and most concerning, while interest rates are low, stock prices appear high. The S&P 500's P/E 10 ratio, which measures the

value of stocks by comparing current stock prices to corporate earnings over a 10-year period, is currently at its highest level since the dot-com stock market bubble 20 years ago. With a POB, Providence would invest hundreds of millions into the stock market all at once. The amount being invested would be about double what Providence now has invested in the market. Making such a large investment when stock prices appear high could prove to be disastrous if the market significantly declines in the next few years.

Because so much can go wrong with POBs, they should be avoided. Not surprisingly, the Government Finance Officers Association does not recommend the use of POBs. However, for politicians, it is easier to gamble in the stock market with borrowed cash than to reduce pension benefits for government employees.

Instead, Providence should bring its employee pension benefits into line with the private sector. First, close the pension system to new hires. Second, require new hires to enter 401k type plans, which occurred in Cranston for clerical employees in 2010 and manual laborers in 2013. Third, reduce the pension benefits of current employees, which occurred with state employees in 2011, through a hybrid pension plan and by raising the minimum retirement age. Fourth, for retirees, partially suspend pension COLAs for a specific time period consistent with recent R.I. Supreme Court decisions.

Providence's unfunded pension plan is a ticking time bomb. To diffuse it, pension benefits must be reduced. A POB won't diffuse the bomb; instead, it may set it off.

Steven Frias is Rhode Island's Republican National Committeeman, a historian, recipient of The Coolidge Prize for Journalism, and former Chairman of the Cranston Charter Review Commission.

## JOHNSTON Sun Rise

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# Sports



ON THE MOUND: Johnston pitcher Ryan Allen deals against Barrington. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

## Panthers set for playoffs

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston baseball team has had a solid spring season and sat at 6-4 heading into this week. The Panthers played their final two games on Wednesday and Thursday and are set to host a playoff game in the opening round of next week's tournament.

Considering the loss of last season to the pandemic,

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AT THE PLATE: Johnston's Jeremy Urena makes contact on a pitch against Barrington last week.

## Mazzie tourney a big success

By PETE FONTAINE

In a word, the best way to sum up Saturday's 11<sup>th</sup> annual Gary V. Mazzie/Johnston High School Athletic Hall of Fame Memorial Golf tournament is par excellence.

There was also another during the 120-player event that teed off at well-maintained Cranston Country club, that reinforced the theory of "Once a Panther, always a Panther!"

Proud Panthers from the legendary Edward

"Ed" DiSimone, for home the JHS is named, as well as a Johnston native and former public-school teacher-coach and Johnston native who is now the highly-popular Mayor of Cranston, played in the 18-hole event.

"This is like a huge Johnston family reunion," offered Dave Taborelli, a member of the prestigious Hall of Fame committee and one-time inductee, let it be known. "It's obvious

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FAMED FORCE: Chairman John Graham (left) is joined by Lois Hopkins, Jan Zucchi and Dave Taborelli enjoy a lighter moment while showing off the permanent trophy for the annual Gary V. Mazzie Memorial/JHS Athletic Hall of Fame Golf Tournament that Sunday featured a near-record 120 players. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

## Things to watch in upcoming playoffs

It's hard to believe it, but we are already nearing the end of the 2021 spring season.

Golf wrapped up last week and most sports are finishing their regular seasons this week with the playoffs accounting for the two weeks following that.

It's going to be a busy few weeks, in fact, the busiest two weeks that the high school sports scene has seen in quite some time. Considering the additional sports being played that were missed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are about to see numerous playoff races and championships crammed into a two-week window.

I'm not thrilled about the layout to be honest ... seems like the league could have done a little better job of spacing things out. We're talking three or four different sports competing for championships on the same day for two weeks in a row. Couldn't it have either done a third week or some weekday championships?

I'm not going to whine any further, I have already seen some of my fellow media members speak out. I agree with their sentiments, but also respect the fact that the league has had an unprecedented set of circumstances. I'll leave it there and let my contemporaries do my dirty work.

On a more positive note, though, let's get into some stories.

Here are a few items that I have in mind as we take one step closer to the upcoming playoffs:

### My pitch



by  
ALEX  
SPONSELLER  
SPORTS EDITOR

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First off, our softball teams have been every bit as good as advertised.

Pilgrim has been a steady Division I power for the better part of a decade and Cranston West fields about half a dozen girls that are signed on to play college ball.

Now, Pilgrim is 8-1 and is looking like the favorite to take it all. The Lady Pats just lost their first game to St. Ray's, but it went to extras and was split between two days thanks to inclimate weather. However you chop it up, they've been impressive.

West is 9-4 with losses to La Salle, Pilgrim and St. Ray's. The Falcons have also lived up to the hype and are right in the thick of this race.

Division I softball is always a dog fight. The top three or four teams always seem to be virtually even, and this year appears to be no different between the aforementioned teams.

That is why the softball tournaments are always so much fun to watch. Most years, especially as of late, it really does come down to who plays the

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# Division Champs

The St. Rocco School eighth grade volleyball team had a historic season, earning a playoff spot and winning the Catholic Athletic League Division. St. Rocco later went on to finish as league runner up. Pictured is the team after completing the season. Members of the team included: Gabriell Leon, David Hanson III, Billy Stockton III, Nicholas D'Aquila, Camryn Phillips, Eriana Blanco, Sophia Confident and Ava Iacobo. Coaches were Mrs. Hanson, Mrs. Iacobo and Mrs. Zuena. (Submitted photos)



# Family and adult programs to get you outdoors

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's (DEM) Division of Fish and Wildlife will host a variety of programs this summer from fishing days, quahogging and archery lessons to hunter education and virtual wildlife conservation programs.

DEM's Fish and Wildlife outreach team has crafted a menu of summer programs for both aspiring and avid outdoor enthusiasts and their families. Most of the programs offered this summer are free of charge and family friendly.

"Summer is the perfect time to get outside and try out a new outdoor activity," said Emily George, supervising biologist and member of the Division of Fish and Wildlife's outreach and education staff. "However, sometimes starting a new activity can be hard. Diving into activities like archery, clamming, or fishing can be a big step and like myself, not everyone grew up engaged in these activities."

For a complete list of up to date programs, visit [dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife](http://dem.ri.gov/programs/fish-wildlife).

### Strategies to hook a bass this week

Striped bass fishing will continue to be hot this week as anglers are catching fish of all sizes. Many anglers are using Atlantic menhaden (poggies) as bait.

One sure sign that the poggies are plentiful are the Atlantic menhaden commercial bait boats fishing in the Bay. They are highly regulated and if they are in the Bay fishing you know the poggies are here in abundance.

If the bio-Mass of Atlantic menhaden falls below the threshold of 1.5 million pounds (assessed by aerial surveillance) the Bay is closed to commercial fishing, when it is above the threshold the Bay is open. All commercial fishing poggy boats are restricted from fishing north of Conimicut light in the East Passage, and in Greenwich Bay. Vessels must also report when and where they are fishing.

At press time the State of RI closed the Bay as the Atlantic menhaden biomass fell below the threshold. It will open again when it goes above the threshold.

Additionally, worm hatchers are occurring in our coves and estuaries which creates a feeding frenzy for this striped bass delicacy.

Here are some popular fishing strategies anglers will employ this week to

catch striped bass:

**Trolling with tube and worm.** Anglers have great success in the Bay using lead-core line weighted with two or three ounces between the line and an eight foot monofilament leader. I find that bubblegum or red colored tubes work best (the tube hook is tipped with clam worm). The idea of added weight is to get the line down to where the fish are.

**Casting soft plastics, swimming lures and surface lures.** Many anglers have had success with lures this week, even in the Providence River where striped bass are feeding on Atlantic menhaden, often times they are feeding close to the surface so lures are working. There is nothing like seeing and feeling a striped bass of size hit your lure. My favorite swimming casting lure is a grey Yo-Zuri Crystal Minnow.

**Live lining or fresh chunked Atlantic menhaden.** Snag the live bait with a weighted treble hook, hook the bait through the bridge of the nose (circle hooks required by regulations), find a school of fish and put the live menhaden into the school of bait and let it swim. You can anchor (and chum); drift fish or fish the moving bait schools with chunks (cut-up Atlantic menhaden) too. Some anglers use a weight slide to get the bait down to the striped bass.

### Where's the bite?

**Striped bass/bluefish.** Tom Giddings of the Tackle Box, Warwick, said, "We have some very large bass in the 30-pound range being caught in the upper reaches of the Providence River, actually all the way up to the Pawtucket, School Street area. Along with the bass bite we have some large bluefish being caught too. Most are using poggies, live lining them or using chucks however SP Minnows in bone color are working well and soft plastics lures in the same bone color." Matt Conti of Snug Harbor Marina, South Kingstown, said, "Shore anglers fishing from the breachways are catching keeper slot fish (28 to less than 35 inches) and fish larger with a good number of school bass mixed in. At Block Island anglers are starting to catch big fish covered in lice on the Southwest side. So things are getting good." Sam Toland of Sam's Bait & Tackle, Middletown, said, "All the action with large bass is in the upper Bay now, no large fish are being taken off Newport yet."

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## ■ Mazzie

(Cont. from page 18)

lots and lots of work went into the planning for today's tourney!"

After which Jim Hopkins, the long-serving JHS Athletic Hall of Fame Committee Chairman, heaped words of praise upon Chairman John Graham and Samantha Mazzie, daughter of the late and legendary JHS teach, coach and athletic director.

"First and foremost, a huge debt of thanks to Chairman John (Graham) and his co-chair Samantha (Mazzie) for their extraordinary effort in making this year's tournament a huge success. Again, on behalf of the Hall of Fame Committee, the 120-player field and everyone that helped: "Thank you John and Sam!"

Jim Hopkins also issued a heartfelt thank you to Barbara Beal, who works in the Johnston Superintendent of Schools office, who "was and has been every so helpful to the tournament and Hall of Fame Committee."

Likewise, the foursome of John Duffy, Ray Castigliello, Jim Hunter and Jimmy Warwick will have their names engraved on the huge Mazzie Memorial Trophy that's always on display inside as the newly-crowned 2021 champions.

Rob Autiello, Mark Capaldi, Brian Crum and Ron Freaielli finished as the runners-up while Robyn Sisti, Kathye Rigrinda, Alex Marattta and Gary Marcotte took home the Co-Ed Vision crown.

Perhaps the most important result of Sunday's tourney, which also featured SwingJuice Apparel providing free shirts and hats to countless golfers, was that the annual JHS Hall of Fame Induction and dinner will be held again this year after being wiped out because of COVID-19).

"We're not sure about the date," Jim Hopkins related, "but WE WILL have the Class of 2021 and that's always exciting, for sure."

Yet another plus from Sunday's golf co-round was proceeds are used to sustain the prestigious Hall of Fame that as Jim Hopkins said: "Once all the accounting is complete - and donations from some 30 sponsors have been collected - we will begin planning to honor more prolific Panthers who shined in a number of JHS through the years!"



**NATIVE NICHE:** Johnston native Ken Hopkins, who is now the mayor of Cranston, was among the playing field in Sunday's 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Gary V. Mazzie/JHS Athletic Hall of Fame Golf Tournament that his brother Jim Hopkins co-founded more than 10 years ago.



**COMMITTEE CORNER:** Rebecca Mazzie Ansaldo (left) and her sister Samantha Mazzie, who served as co-chairman, along with Lee Mazzie (back) and Robin Brown played a huge role in the success of the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Gary V. Mazzie/Johnston High School Athletic Hall of Fame Golf Tournament.



**LINKED LEGENDS:** Former JHS coach Jim Hopkins (left) joins the legendary and retired Panthers Athletic Director Ed DiSimone - for whom the school gymnasium is named, during Sunday's 11<sup>th</sup> annual Hall of Fame Golf Tournament played at Cranston Country Club.

## ■ Pitch

(Continued from page 18)

best each day of the postseason. No team is truly better than the rest ... it's just the one that can catch fire and perform at the right time.

Another team to look out for is Toll Gate. The Titans dropped their first three games this spring but have since turned around and won five in a row. They are all of a sudden turning into possible dark horses in their division.

For lacrosse, the Pilgrim boys team has been pretty interesting to follow. After winning its first five games, most of them handily, they dropped their first to Westerly and have a pretty tough draw to close out the regular season. Pilgrim has proven that it is capable of being a championship contender, but I think we will get an even better temperature on the team this last week.

Pilgrim and Toll Gate have also been rolling this spring on the girls lacrosse side. As of this writing, the two teams are in first (Toll Gate, 8-1) and second (Pilgrim, 6-3) in the Division III group. Could we be seeing a two-team race between Warwick's two schools? Lacrosse is also an unpredictable sport, but I am always excited to see possible games and races like this.

We also have a few of our boys volleyball teams that are ready to make a run.

Cranston West is currently 9-1 while Hendricken is 7-1 and Johnston is 5-1.

The defending champion Falcons look like the team to beat in Division II. East used to boast the superior boys program in the city for a while, but over the course of the past two seasons that have been played, the pendulum has swung in the other direction.

Hendricken lost in the finals against Coventry back in 2019 ... I was at that game and it seems like a lifetime ago. The Hawks are looking like they will give themselves a chance to reach that point again and possibly win it. The Panthers are looking poised to reach the playoffs for the first time in their three-year history as a program. Let's see if they can make a statement.

Things can change of course, but as of now, it looks like the one baseball team of ours that has established itself as a contender is Hendricken. That comes as no surprise.

From there, West, Pilgrim and Johnston are all playoff factors. It is just a matter of whether or not they can take that next step forward, pull off an upset or two and climb their way toward the top.

The last race that intrigues me is in outdoor track and field.

As always, it looks like a two-team race between Hendricken and La Salle. I know that people must despise me when I say this because I do all the time ... but I can't get sick of the Hawks-Rams rivalry.

Do I see why the state is sick of it? Absolutely, for track especially, it really has come down to these two teams every season for the past decade-plus. But, that's what I find so interesting. Not only that, but they're always so even, it's really hard to call leading up to the big day.

So, there you have it. I hope I did not bore you, but I for one, had a blast and got myself excited looking through the standings and game logs while writing this. As I said at the beginning of this column, the next few weeks are going to make your head spin.

But hey, there are worse things in the world than having sports championships shoved down your throat.



**THE THROW TO FIRST:** Johnston's Derek Salvatore makes a throw to first base against Barrington.



**INSIDE PITCH:** Joey Acciardo evades an inside pitch against Barrington.

## ■ Panthers

(Continued from page 18)

the Panthers had a few question marks throughout their roster. Johnston coach Joe Acciardo has been pleased with the team's performance and development throughout the season to this point.

"We didn't know what to expect coming into this year with everything going on, so we really did take it one game at a time. Our goal has just been to get better each game," said Acciardo.

Through their first 10 contests, the Panthers allowed just 25 runs and earned three shut-out victories.

Consistent pitching and sharp defense have been key to the team staying in the playoff picture, according to Acciardo.

"Our pitchers have done really well and we have been making the plays that we're supposed to make. In baseball, a mistake here and there can extend an inning, cost you a few runs and cost you a game. We haven't been doing that. It

has helped in those close, low-scoring games. Every run counts," said Acciardo.

Although the Panthers hope to play host in the opening round of the tournament, they also are prepared to potentially travel to the higher seeds later on.

"It's always nice to play at home. Baseball fields aren't always the same; it's easier for the student body to get to the games. It's an advantage to not have to travel, no doubt, but we know if we win we'll have to travel to play the No. 1 seed so we can't let that effect us. We have to be ready to play either way," Acciardo said.

The Panthers have also come together as a unit and have learned how to play for one another.

"The best part about this team is how they gel together. They've become close; they do a lot together after the game. They're having fun playing together and they're enjoying themselves which is the most important thing," said Acciardo. "Some teams are athletic, some teams are close knit, and we're lucky to have both."

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## Preparing for a Financial Emergency

### 5 tips for building (or rebuilding) your emergency savings

#### FAMILY FEATURES

The new year provides an opportunity to re-evaluate different aspects of your life, and that includes your budget and savings habits. Planning for emergencies by building – or rebuilding if the COVID-19 pandemic required making a withdrawal – a savings account to withstand the unforeseen can increase confidence in your overall financial health and reduce worry that a significant life event will negatively impact your finances.

“Our research shows having emergency savings is the foundation for long-term financial health,” said Chandni Ohri, program lead in savings and financial health with BlackRock’s Emergency Savings Initiative. “The start of a new year is a good time to make a savings plan, which can consist of putting a little bit of money away regularly.”

Even before the pandemic began, 4 out of 10 Americans had a hard time finding even \$400 to cover an emergency, according to a report from the United States Federal Reserve. However, if you don’t think you have money to save, consider the majority of people who were able to save for an emergency for the first time in 2020 earned less than \$60,000, according to research from BlackRock’s Emergency Savings Initiative, a group of nonprofit experts, corporate partners, and providers. Changes in spending due to the pandemic plus government stimulus packages helped many individuals create much-needed cash buffers.

Consider these tips to build your emergency savings account and create a buffer of cash for when emergency strikes.

#### Start a Savings Habit

While it’s less important to have a specific dollar amount in mind, getting into the habit of putting some money in savings with each paycheck can help protect you should an emergency arise. While one good rule of thumb is to set aside enough to cover roughly six weeks of living expenses – housing, food, transportation – take a look at what it would cost to cover unexpected issues with your car, a trip to the hospital, a leak in your home or the replacement of a major appliance and start there.

Even a small amount, such as \$50 in your savings account when it’s the day before payday and you’re running on fumes, can save you from an overdraft fee, having to resort to using a credit card, borrowing from a loved one or taking out a loan. However, research from the AARP Public Policy Institute found having a cash buffer of approximately \$2,500 can help prevent financial hardship over the longer term. If you lose



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

your job, for example, your emergency account could help pay for necessities while you find a new position, or the funds could supplement any unemployment benefits you may receive.

#### Automate Your Savings

Because an emergency can strike at any time, it’s important to have easy access to your funds. However, the account should also be separate from your checking account so you’re not tempted to dip into your reserves. Pick a free savings account with no minimum balance requirements and link it to your everyday account to quickly move money over if you need it.

Look for ways you can automatically save such as enabling roundups from your checking account to be transferred to your savings with each purchase or having your employer split your paycheck and automatically deposit a portion into savings each payday.

If you’re planning to stash funds away for months or years that can serve as both an emergency fund and long-term savings, consider a high-yield savings account.

#### Look for Ways to Cut Back

While you may have already made changes to your spending habits amid the pandemic, periodically shopping for competitive rates of recurring bills, such as cable and internet, cell phones insurance policies and other utilities, can be a simple way to save some money each month. Start by asking your current providers about any special rates and promotions that may be available to loyal customers then check with alternative

providers to see if they can provide the same or better offerings at a reduced cost. Sometimes returning to your current provider with a more competitive rate from elsewhere can be extra incentive to work out a deal to keep a longtime customer.

Also look at any subscription services you use, or potentially don’t but still pay for, and see if they offer a cheaper plan that still meets your needs or if you’re able to cancel subscriptions you no longer use frequently. Other expenses such as dining out or buying new clothing and accessories could also be scaled back if you find you’re splurging too much. Avoid completely cutting spending for leisure activities from your budget but look for reasonable tweaks that can allow you to set more money aside for unforeseen expenses.

#### Take Advantage of One-Time Opportunities to Save

Assuming you expect to receive a tax refund, this provides an easy way to boost your emergency fund if circumstances allow you to save all or a portion of the return. If you’re able, consider having your refund directly deposited in your emergency account. The same strategies can be applied to any government aid checks you may receive, such as a second round of stimulus money that could be distributed to eligible citizens in 2021 to help reinvigorate the economy amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

There may also be other times throughout the year when you receive one or more cash gifts, like your birthday or holidays, that can help provide a nice cushion to your emergency fund if you can avoid the temptation to spend it.

#### Replenish What You Use

Remember to review and adjust your savings plan as needed, whether you’re able to contribute over a longer period of time without dipping into the account or if an expensive life event pops up that requires using all or a portion of the funds.

Should you need to dip into the savings, do your best to make replenishing the account to a level you’re comfortable with a primary goal in case any additional unexpected expenses arise. Alternatively, if your saving is going well, consider increasing the amount you’re saving each paycheck so you’re better protected against any major life changes or able to finance a large-scale purchase down the road.

Find more information and tips for building your savings at [savingsproject.org](https://savingsproject.org).

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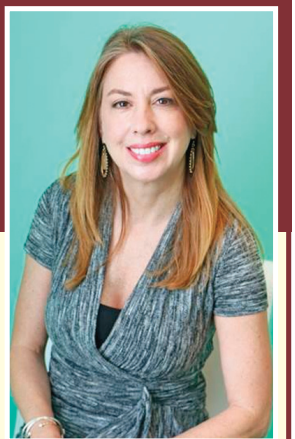
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Photo courtesy of MEIRO

# Massey's TOP 10 Things To Consider When Preparing for Retirement



**Jeffrey H. Massey**  
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## Get An Early Start.

Ideally, you should start planning for your retirement income as soon you get your first job and reap the full benefits of compounding growth. Unfortunately, this is rarely the reality. If you've reached your 50's and haven't actively started planning for your retirement yet, don't be deterred. Take action now and start making up for lost time. Everyone can save up to \$19,500 into their 401k (or other retirement plan) at work. Those age 50 or better can use the "catch-up" contributions of \$6,500 per year going into their retirement plan at work. To clarify, as long as your 50th birthday is December 31st or earlier, you can start contributing the extra \$6,500 per year beginning in your first paycheck for January of the year you will have your 50th birthday. You do not have to wait until your 50th birthday to start the "catch-up" contributions. If you don't have a retirement plan at work, you can contribute up to \$6,000 of earnings into either a traditional IRA or a Roth IRA. Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRAs) also offer a "catch-up" amount of \$1,000 for those that become age 50 during the calendar year.

## Define Your Cash Flow.

If you haven't already developed a budget for yourself, do it now. Determining your cash flow is your first step. Understanding your spending patterns will help you know how much income you'll need once you're in retirement.

## Spend Less Than You Earn.

For some, this is a tough one, but still very necessary. The bottom line is you cannot expect to have money left over for retirement if you are currently spending more than you take in. Create a budget and stick to it.

## Understand All Of Your Options.

Research, research, research. There are many different ways to save for retirement, and you'll want to understand the pros and cons of the various strategies, insurance products and investment vehicles before deciding which to implement. Every choice has pro and con issues, determine what might be best for you.

## Calculate The Risks.

It's not a bad thing to invest in the stock market. However, you may not want to put all your eggs in that basket. Know the risks associated with investing and understand what your timeframe may be to recoup any losses before you commit to anything. The fact is, as you near retirement, you have a much shorter timeframe to recover from potential market downturns. Taking too much risk may not be right for you.

## Create An Income Strategy.

A retirement strategy has two phases – the accumulation phase, in which you build assets to help fund your retirement, and the distribution phase, in which you use those assets to generate income in retirement. Don't ignore Phase Two!

## Have A Tax-Efficient Strategy.

You'll want to make sure you're taking advantage of all your legal options to help you lower your taxes as much as possible, both while saving for retirement and once you start taking retirement distributions. Working with both a financial professional and tax advisor can help you understand your options.

## Acknowledge Inflation.

A retirement income plan that does not account for inflation could cause you to adjust your lifestyle in retirement. Make sure your retirement income plan addresses the impact of inflation on your retirement assets. Items will cost more in the future, so, take that into account within your plan.

## Plan For A Long Life.

Given advances in medical care and a trend toward healthier lifestyles, it's not uncommon for people to live another 20, 30 or even 40 years once they've retired. That's great, but it also means your money needs to last longer, too.

## Last But Not Least – Recognize You Might Want Help With All Of The Above.

Our business is understanding the important things to consider when planning for retirement, as well as the products and strategies that can help you pursue your goals. We want to help you live the life you dream of, and it all starts with having a strategy. We encourage you to seek out experienced, retirement focused, Certified Financial Planner™ professionals to build your strategy for a successful retirement!

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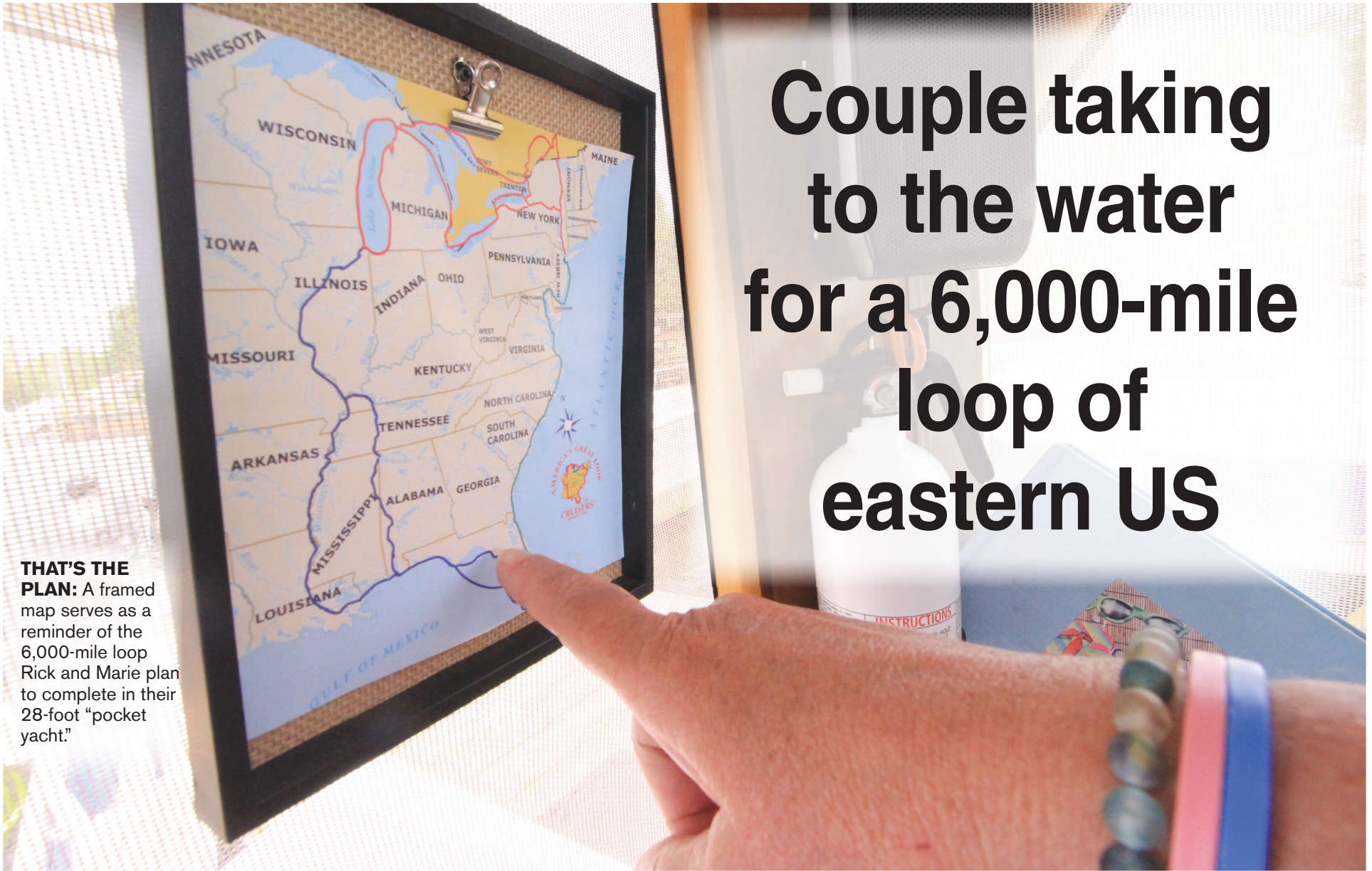
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## They're 'loopy' for certain



### Couple taking to the water for a 6,000-mile loop of eastern US

**THAT'S THE PLAN:** A framed map serves as a reminder of the 6,000-mile loop Rick and Marie plan to complete in their 28-foot "pocket yacht."



**CLOSE QUARTERS:** Every square inch of the boat has a purpose. There's even a place for Marie's spreadsheets and charts that have been carefully highlighted with stickers to remind the two of them places and people they want to see on their trip.

By JOHN HOWELL

Marie Ahlert and her husband, Rick, both love the water and boating. But she had no idea what he was talking about when he said he wanted to do the loop.

Rick gave the simple explanation: "The loop is a circumnavigation of the eastern United States."

Marie didn't say yes immediately. She's not impetuous. She does her research. Ten minutes later she said, "count me in."

That exchange was more than two years ago. Doing the loop takes a lot of preparation.

Now they are on a voyage that started in March in South Carolina and brought them to Pawtuxet, which actually is a bit of a detour. By the end of the month they'll retrace their steps to New York City to meet the Hudson River. North of Albany they'll connect with the Erie Canal and follow that west to the Oswego Canal, which will drop to Lake Ontario and on to Chicago.

On a map, it all looks simple enough – a straight line running up the East Coast, a turn left for the Hudson, and then another left to the canal.

In reality it's anything but an easy run.

Once in Chicago, after a diversion to visit Mackinaw Island in Lake Michigan and through a series of canals and rivers, they will connect with the Mississippi. At that point, they'll be halfway through their 6,000-mile loop with a lot to look forward to. The plan is to make it to the Florida Keys in their single-engine, diesel-powered 2014 Cutwater by February. There, they'll spend the winter.

#### Avoiding the winter

As Rick puts it, the expectation is "to start the trip in shorts and to end the trip in shorts."

Starting off in March made that somewhat of a challenge. It wasn't warm to start with. They found many of the planned stops along the way hadn't opened. Marinas hadn't turned on water and they had to pay close attention to their water and fuel supply. The water tank holds 40 gallons. Showers were brief, if at all. They didn't bring winter clothes, either. Space in the 28-foot "pocket yacht" is at a premium. The clothes they brought fill a couple of plastic bins that look like they would fit in the overhead bin of an airliner. Marie expects to be in a bathing suit most of the time. Everything has its place. The cabin is tight and so is the V-berth. Being tall, they sleep at angles.



# COLLECTIBLES



Travis with a 1991 Isuzu Impulse RS he flew to Minnesota to find, 1 of only 638 cars produced.

# The Rise of the 4 Cylinder



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

Collecting cars, being a gearhead, and the overall appreciation of automobiles and automobilia has been a thing since the inception of the motorized vehicle. People love their cars! Whether it is your grandfather with his 1963 Chevrolet Corvette or your niece proud of her 2018 Dodge Challenger people take pride in their car. Most people anyway, it is a known thing. But outside of taking pride in your daily vehicle, the world of collectible cars is an ever-growing hobby not just in our country but across the world. New collectors enter the market every day, and with new collectors entering the market interest and values change. For 2021, one of the largest growing markets is in small, obscure 1970's through 1990's four-cylinder cars. I'm talking about the cars that your dad jokes with his buddies at a car show "remember those! I thought they all got crushed and turned into beer cans." Well because they all rotted away and turned into beer cans, very few remain. In fact, they are actually rarer than most muscle cars. For example, it is a far harder quest to find a beautiful 1978 Honda Civic or 1982 Toyota Celica when comparing them to a 1968 Chevrolet Chevelle or 1973 Plymouth Cuda. Let alone the cars trying finding the parts for them! It can be a

brutally frustrating task to restore an early import, whereas if you really wanted a 1969 Camaro you can buy a brand-new body, frame, and engine out of a magazine.

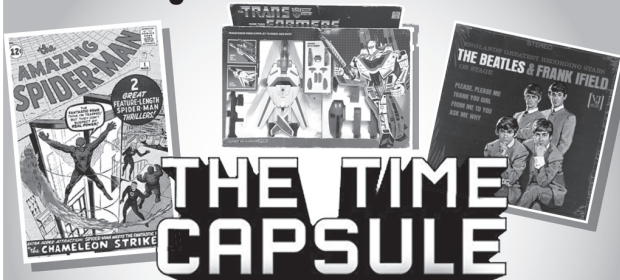
So, let us throw some numbers out there. First off, while they may be "rarer" than earlier vehicles the market is still young. Prices are relatively affordable when compared to American Muscle and European collector cars, but current market trends show exponential growth when compared to the past 3 years. I refer to a 1978 Honda Civic as I just finished restoring one myself. Luckily, I found an original two-owner car with only 16,xxx original miles, so it was a complete vehicle but in need of body work and a new paint job. I originally purchased the car in 2019 for \$2,000.00 as a project. At the time very few preserved examples had sold, and only in the \$4,000 to \$7,500 range. Fast forward to 2021, and nice examples are commonly bringing \$12,000 to \$18,000 with the highest I have seen at \$22,000. If that is not exponential growth, I do not know what is! So the point is pay attention to gas crisis and retro economy vehicles, they're no longer just cars worth turning into tin cans.



Travis' 1978 Honda Civic CVCC the day it left the body shop.

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**Loop (Continued from page 24)**

Marie grew up in Warwick She worked on Scott Avedisian's campaign and served as city clerk during his administration. She's good at scheduling and has a passion for spreadsheets. It serves them well aboard the RAMA (Rick Ahlert and Marie Ahlert).

They pretty much have named every boat they owned RAMA, including the pontoon boat they bought for the excursion boat business they ran from Pawleys Island where "we have a dirt house," Marie says.

Marie has spreadsheets on fuel and water consumption as well as on boat maintenance. She's identified the towns and villages along the route, reading up on their history and points of interest.

Rick is especially excited about exploring towns along the Erie canal, where he said they will need to pass through 30 locks before joining the Oswego Canal, which will drop to Lake Ontario and on to Chicago.

One stop for certain on the Erie Canal is Brockport, New York, which is where Rick went to college. Marie has marked charts with colored stickers naming plac-

es they want to visit or where they plan to connect with friends.

There's no pinning them down to a schedule, however.

With one of the Erie locks undergoing repairs, there's a backup of vessels waiting to make passage. Rick used the delay to help a captain, who needed crew to deliver a 42-foot boat from Palm Beach, Florida, to East Greenwich. Marie is happy to be here with her daughter's family ... for the moment.

**Weather will set the pace**

The weather has the ultimate say on when they arrive. While the boat is equipped with radar, GPS and AIS – the latter, an Automatic Identification System, enables them to know the locations of commercial vessels and, just as importantly, when navigating river bends lets commercial vessels know where they are – they won't be doing any night motoring. If the forecast is nasty or the weather bad, they won't cast off. They'll wait it out.

They know how quickly conditions can change. Ironically, the most "scary" of episodes occurred in waters off Point Judith as they were headed for Newport. It hadn't been in the forecast, yet abruptly



**THERE'S EVEN PLACE FOR AN INFLATABLE:** The stern of the RAMA has been customized so as to accommodate an inflatable should they need to get ashore while at anchor.



**HOME ON THE WATER:** Marie and Rick beside the RAMA – there's a paddleboard and solar panels on the roof – aboard which they will motor 6,000 miles to do "the loop."

ly the wind turned 180 degrees. Now, the wind was fighting the tide. The sea built to short, choppy 4-foot waves. They were rolling, waves breaking onto the boat.

Marie and Rick won't be alone, although as of yet they have to meet their fellow travelers. Through social media they have been in touch with other "loopers," and with GPS positioning can locate the other boaters. They fly a common AGLCA (America's Great Loop Cruiser's Association) flag. It's an elite club, there being 150 boaters doing the loop this year. They look forward to meeting fellow travelers as they navigate locks or stop for the night. They anticipate grilling off the transom as they enjoy drinks, share stories and trade information on the passage ahead.

Not all boats can handle the loop. There's a 15.5-foot height restriction set by bridge clearance. Sailboats do the loop, but they must lower their mast or take them down in order to complete sections of the trip.

If this all seems too adventuresome, consider that Marie and Rick followed their wanderlust in 2015 by taking a 14-week trip across the United States. They

and their 6-by-9 pop-up camper visited just about every national park they could find. And what was their favorite place?

"Hawaii," Marie says without hesitation. They left the camper for that part of the trip.

Already they have left the RAMA for part of the loop. The Warwick stop is all about visiting Marie's daughter, Kathleen Bohl, and her husband, Brandon, who welcomed their first child, Linnea, on April 5.

It also provided the occasion to connect with friends in person. Former mayor, governor and U.S. senator Lincoln Chafee stopped down to check out "the pocket yacht," and wherever they are, Marie and Rick are running into friends.

The plan is to shove off this Saturday after watching the Gaspee Days Parade.

With social media and the internet, they plan on bringing everyone who wants to join the adventure to check out their blog at rickandmarie.com or via the Facebook page "Rick and Marie – the great loop." Already, 620 people have signed up to follow their blog.

Don't fret – they'll have lots of company for the loop.

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