

Johnston buys another new ladder truck



NEW TRUCK, OLD TRUCK: The Johnston Fire Department's ladder truck will be put on reserve status once the town receives its new truck. The old truck has only been in service for less than eight years. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

Only 7 years since town's last aerial apparatus purchase, fire chief confident new \$1.1M model will survive longer

By RORY SCHULER

In 2015, firefighters stood by and watched a massive claw lift and scrap the department's lone ladder truck.

That year, Johnston bought the fire department a new truck, heralded as "a state-of-the-art 2014 Rosenbauer." The new truck replaced the ladder truck the department had purchased in 1991.

The new truck, however, was plagued with mechanical issues. "They usually last longer than that," explained Johnston Fire Chief Peter J. Lamb. "This truck has been problematic. We've spent a lot on maintenance. Our ladder truck has been out of service a great deal of the time."

Difficulties with the depart-

ment's ladder truck had the potential of meddling with public safety.

"We went to a lot of fires without our aerial truck," Lamb said.

When a ladder truck was in need, other municipalities often had to help cover.

Lamb took over as chief long after the Rosenbauer truck was purchased.

"Well, that funeral is over," then-Johnston Fire Chief Timothy McLaughlin said in October 2015, standing at Sims Metals Recycling Center off Shun Pike, while watching the 1991 truck join the scrap heap. "It's out with the old, in with the new."

McLaughlin and Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena led a delegation of about two-dozen Johnston firefighters to watch

three huge machines crush the department's 1991 ladder truck.

"That old truck more than served its function for us," McLaughlin said, according to a 2015 Johnston Sun Rise story.

"In its place, we now have a state-of-the-art 2014 Rosenbauer ladder truck that is equipped with everything from a remote control unit that can be operated from as far as 500 feet away, to a special 1,000-gallon holding tank."

The celebration didn't last long, however. Problem after problem led to numerous maintenance trips and the truck often sits idle inside the Johnston Fire Department Headquarters on Atwood Avenue.

■ LADDER - PAGE 9

Too little, too late?

Town Council considers solar field moratorium

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston Town Council is considering a moratorium on solar development in town.

However, legal opinions differ over whether the moratorium would cover pending plans for five new solar fields in Johnston, proposed recently by Cranston-based Green Development.

Last month, District 5 Town Councilman Robert Civetti asked solicitor William J. Conley Jr. to look into examples of similar moratoriums in other municipalities.

Conley handed Town Council a memorandum summarizing his findings.

"I'd like to just reiterate the request I had the last meeting," Civetti said at last week's meeting. "I thank Mr. Conley for providing us with some infor-

mation regarding the moratorium on solar farms ... I think that that's a very sensitive issue, a time-sensitive issue at this point."

The Johnston Planning Board previously granted approval to Green Development's master plans for five new solar fields. The firm now faces special-use permit approval from the Johnston Zoning Board (the matter was delayed a month at the zoning board's last meeting but is expected to be decided at their next monthly meeting scheduled for April 28).

Civetti, who represents the district that includes the mostly wooded area proposed for solar development, requested Conley draft the moratorium and schedule a meeting to occur before the zoning board votes.

■ SOLAR - PAGE 10



For the full story, turn to the sports section, starting on Page 15.

Doctors: RI youth mental health 'State of Emergency'

By RORY SCHULER

It's tough being a kid. In 2022, experts warn, it seems to be getting tougher.

As the COVID-19 pandemic wanes, and we approach the pandemic stage, mental health professionals are starting to examine the effects of lockdowns, school shutdowns and peak anxiety levels in our children.

Parents are experiencing record waiting times to secure mental health services for kids,

and doctors are declaring a "Child and Adolescent Mental Health State of Emergency" in Rhode Island.

"The American Academy of Pediatrics, Rhode Island Chapter (RIAAP) the Rhode Island Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (RICCAP), Hasbro Children's Hospital, and Bradley Hospital issued a declaration of emergency regarding the state of child and adolescent mental health in Rhode Island," according to a press release distributed by local hospitals Tues-

day.

"This has been an exceptionally troubling time for our children and adolescents — one that continues to be exacerbated by the pandemic and one that shines a light on the inequities that continue to exist in health care," said Phyllis A. Dennery, MD, FAAP, pediatrician-in-chief and medical director, Hasbro Children's Hospital. "Drawing attention to these discrepancies and this youth mental health crisis of epic proportions is a start, but we all must come

together to provide the critical support these kids and families so sorely need."

Resources can be scarce for families seeking mental health counseling and treatment.

"Amidst the stress and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are experiencing an unprecedented emergency in child and adolescent mental health here in Rhode Island," said Henry Sachs, President of Bradley Hospital. "Prior to the pandemic, we were already experi-

encing troubling trends including increased youth suicides. The pandemic has pushed this situation into a full-blown emergency, with dramatic increases in emergency room visits for all child mental health crises. We are issuing this emergency declaration as a call to action to invest in our state's child and adolescent mental health care system, and to implement innovative new strategies to address this crisis."

■ KIDS - PAGE 8

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Johnston Sun Rise



GRAND GREETING: The Easter bunny made sure Frank Garcia and Morgan Health Center staffer Ferreira enjoyed last week's special Bunny Walk in Johnston. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

Memorial Park hosts bunny hop ... walk

By PETE FONTAINE

"In your Easter bonnet, with all the thrills upon it," so starts Irving Berlin's legendary song, "you'll be the grandest lady in the Easter Parade." Those words were also appropriate for what transpired under last Thursday morning's sparkling sunshine inside Johnston War Memorial Park.

There were, in fact, lots of grand gals and guys — who are residents at Morgan Health Center and Anchor Bay at Pocasset — and were decked out in colorful clothing as well as holiday hats and headwear for what ladies like District One Town Councilwoman Linda Folcarelli suggested "may have been the most unique Easter party in Johnston."

Likewise, as Robert Sechio — who is the new Executive Director at Morgan Health Center — observed: "Everyone absolutely loves the Easter Bunny."

That theory was upheld time and again for inside of two hours as children like Julian Moscarelli, 3, his father Joseph and resident Frank Garcia had their pictures taken with a



BUNNY'S BUDDIES: Joseph Moscarelli and his son Julian, 3, and Johnston Parks and Recreation Director Chris Correia enjoy lighter moment with the Easter Bunny during last week's special Bunny Walk inside War Memorial Park

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A Birthday Gift Delaney Gouveia Rogers High School	Free at Last Emma Reyes West Warwick High School
Her Doubt Was Her Downfall Angalie Junga West Warwick High School	A Glass Full of Emotion Abigail Sweetland West Warwick High School
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Big kid egg hunt raises money for Student Council

By PETE FONTAINE

There was a unique and unusual pre-holiday happening last Thursday inside Mayor Joseph Polisena Stadium in Johnston.

First, dozens of Johnston High School students paid \$1 — a big buck as someone suggested — to sit in the bleachers to watch another pack of Panthers who paid \$2 to race all over the artificial surface to collect eggs.

Once assembled, Student Council President Rebecca Clements blew a whistle and the hunt was on.

Hunt?

It was all part of the JHS Personalization Period designed for students to make up missed work, catch up on material from their classes, work on their vision of a graduate portfolio, or as in the day's case, participate in a social event called the inaugural 2022 Easter Egg Hunt.

"This was another great event for students," offered Bob Deming, popular JHS custodian/stadium groundskeeper who watched the entire event. "The students are always looking for fun ways to establish new traditions."

On the night prior to the Easter Egg Hunt, Clements, SC Vice President Charlie Curci and Faculty Advisor Greg Russo — with valuable assistance from custodian Anthony Fellela — placed colored plastic eggs all over the field surface and in total darkness for the fun-filled Easter Egg Hunt.

Thus, after Clements signaled for the start, students who paid two bucks to collect as many eggs as possible scooted all over the field in hopes of collecting as many eggs as possible, simply because each of the 200 eggs contained cash prizes ranging from \$1 to \$20 while others had small paper notes for a variety of gift cards that ranged in value from \$5 to \$25 for everything from chocolate bunnies to what Russo called "certificates to restaurants and a number of local stores were among the day's donors."

Makayla Scuncio was all smiles when she



GREG'S GANG: Among those JHS students that participated in last week's Easter Egg Hunt organized by Student Council Advisor Greg Russo are: Josh Ramos, Patrick Waldron, Cameron Mattson, Anthony Gawlick, Charlie Curci, Ryan Schino and Phil Costantino. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

opened one of her eggs and learned she won \$2 in cash and a \$10 gift card to Panera Bread.

Meanwhile, Isabella Mejia, a JHS sophomore, won a \$5 gift card to Starbucks, Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Bunnies along with a bag of famed Ghirardelli chocolates.

It was yet another excellent example of the local business community showing its on-going support for JHS student programs and projects.

Likewise, while Russo again helped organize the unique Easter Egg Hunt, Vice Principal Brian Bordieri — who joined the JHS administration earlier this year — served as a starter for the two groups of students who raced onto the field armed with all sorts of bags and in some cases even used their clothing to store their egg collection.

All proceeds from the hunt will help fund further Student Council events.



WATCHING THE HUNT: Isabella Ribezzo, Glorianna Crichlow, Jennell Fernandez, Gezzelie Fernandez and Xavier Thomas were among the JHS students who paid \$1 to sit in the bleachers to watch last week's Easter Hunt. For more photos from the event, turn to Page 12.

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RI Young Marines win two prestigious awards

Wayne Hamilton, of Johnston, is being recognized as a top volunteer during National Volunteer Month (April) and National Volunteer Week (April 17-23).

Hamilton is a volunteer with the Rhode Island Young Marines from Cranston and has been named Division 1 Adult Volunteer of the Year for the nationwide nonprofit organization, Young Marines.

In addition to this honor, the Rhode Island Young Marines has been named Division 1 Unit of the Year.

The Young Marines, a national youth organization, has named the Rhode Island Young Marines the Division 1 Unit of the Year, and Wayne Hamilton of Johnston, Rhode Island, was named Division 1 Adult Volunteer of the Year. The unit meets in Cranston and the unit commander is John H. Fabiano.

The Young Marines is a youth education and service program for boys and girls, age eight through high school graduation. The Young Marines promotes the mental, moral, and physical development of its members. The program focuses on character building, leadership, and it promotes a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

The Rhode Island Young Marines is the top unit in Division 1 which includes nine states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The unit is comprised of 26 youth members and nine adult volunteers. It meets at the Armed Forces Reserve Center, 1 Narragansett Street, Cranston, Rhode Island.

Wayne Hamilton became an adult volunteer in 2016. Originally, he learned about the organization from his nephew who is a Young Marine. Hamilton said that being able to teach Young Marines life skills, leadership skills, teamwork, integrity, honesty, and basic human decency in a time when these things are so often overlooked is knowing that his precious free time has been put to good use.

"I believe our unit won the award through challenging work and dedication to our community and to our fellow Young Marines," Hamilton said. "Our unit is special because



Wayne Hamilton, of Johnston

of its diversity. We have Young Marines from many ethnic and economic backgrounds as well as a diverse group of adult volunteers. By respecting and learning from each other, a cohesive bond forms that allows everyone to work and support each other no matter the challenge."

Community service activities performed by the Rhode Island Young Marines include Toys for Tots toy distribution, Red Ribbon Week children's youth fair in conjunction with the Cranston City Council, Marine Corps League color guard, four historic military cemetery fall clean ups with the Smithfield Historical Preservation Society and helping landscape a Habitat for Humanity house in Newport.

"There is a sense of accomplishment when you see a Young Marine actively use a skill that you've taught them," Hamilton said. "Sometimes it is something as simple as reading aloud in public. Knowing that we play a part in helping Young Marines learn teamwork, leadership, and discipline is important, but what truly makes this program special is watching them learn self-reliance and gain a sense of self-worth, confidence, and self-respect."

Hamilton said that volunteering is not about instant gratification. He said that sometimes it can take a long time to see results, but when it happens it makes it all worthwhile.

"We had an eight-year-old boy join the program who couldn't read or write," Hamil-

ton said. "His parents were immigrants and struggling themselves with learning English. Along with several other Young Marines we tutored him until he became proficient enough to read and understand things like the Young Marines guidebook. This resulted in the Young Marine going from special needs classes to regular classes in school. Then he became a straight A honor roll student."

The Rhode Island Young Marines holds an open house on the second Wednesday of the month at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Cranston. For more information, call Wayne Hamilton at 401-719-6386.

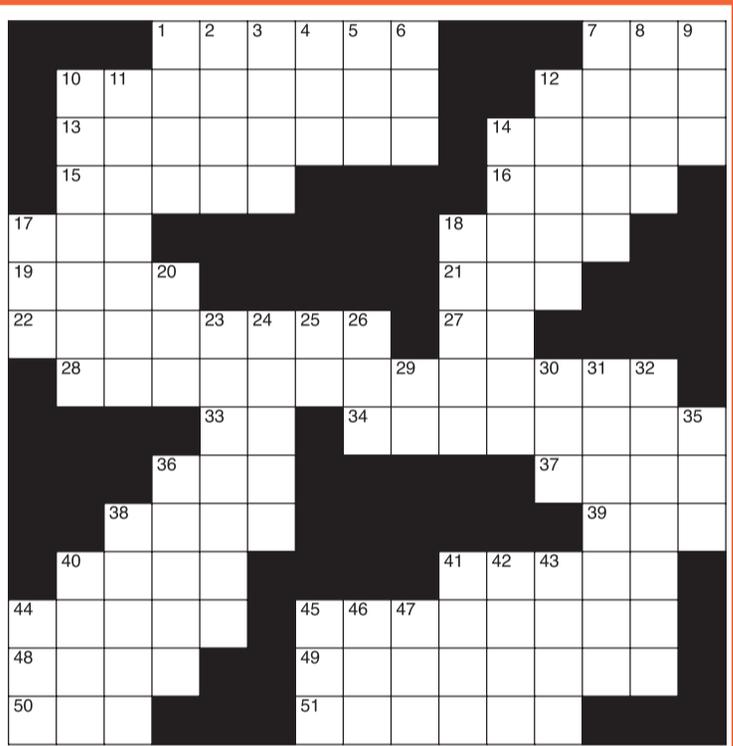
The Young Marines is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) youth education and service program for boys and girls, age eight through high school graduation. The Young Marines promotes the mental, moral, and physical development of its members. The program focuses on teaching the values of leadership, teamwork, and self-discipline, so its members can live and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

Since the Young Marines' humble beginnings in 1959 with one unit and a handful of boys, the organization has grown to more than 235 units with 5,700 youth and 2,100 adult volunteers in 40 states, the District of Columbia, Japan, and affiliates in a host of other countries.

For more information, visit the official website at: www.youngmarines.org.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. A woman of refinement
- 7. Body part
- 10. One who imitates
- 12. Tropical Asian starlings
- 13. A type of delivery
- 14. W. Australian capital
- 15. Many wombs
- 16. Wings
- 17. Expression of amusement
- 18. Brews
- 19. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- 21. Mild expression
- 22. Solitary
- 27. Distance to top
- 28. The rebirth of a soul in a new body
- 33. Police who investigate police (abbr.)
- 34. Begrudged
- 36. Popular sports league
- 37. Autonomous republic of Russia
- 38. Double-headed drum

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Inspiration
- 2. Resembling wings
- 3. Form of Persian
- 4. Consumed
- 5. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand
- 6. Sea eagle
- 7. Jaguarundis
- 8. Poker stake
- 9. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 10. South American nation
- 11. A colorless, odorless gas
- 12. Disturbance

- 14. Artist's tool
- 17. Polish peninsula
- 18. Ottoman military leaders
- 20. Bird-like dinosaur
- 23. Drinking glass
- 24. Central Florida city
- 25. One's mother
- 26. To do it is human
- 29. Atomic #10
- 30. Used to write
- 31. The branch of medicine concerned with the ear
- 32. Adversaries
- 35. Have already done
- 36. One of conspicuous wealth
- 38. It flies over sporting events
- 40. Geological times
- 41. Net
- 42. Musical phrase
- 43. Chadic dialect
- 44. Private Internet Access (abbr.)
- 45. Lizard genus
- 46. Woman of the church
- 47. Having ten

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SUN RISE SCOOPS

By Meri R. Kennedy

Youth Fishing Derby

On April 23, Johnston Department of Parks & Recreation will hold their Youth Fishing Derby in Johnston Memorial Park. For children ages 4-12, please arrive between 9 to 11 a.m. There is no fee to enter. Awards will be distributed for individual achievement. For more information, contact 272-3460 or johnstonrec.com.Youth.

Change at Memorial Park

It must be Spring! The public restrooms are now open at Johnston Memorial Park (at the center of the park at the Vet's Pavilion). Restrooms will be open Monday-Friday, 7:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Saturday 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., and Sunday 7:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Reminder from Parks & Rec

Just a reminder of some of the rules and regulations at Johnston Memorial Park. There are no dogs allowed in the park or walking tracks. Dogs are allowed in the nature trail across the street from the parking lot. No smoking or tobacco use. No bikes, scooters, skateboard, etc. are allowed on the walking track that surrounds the pond. They may be used on the center path of the park, Please do not feed the ducks, birds, or any wildlife.

Please keep the park clean by using the available trash barrels. Absolutely no alcoholic beverages on town property. No vehicles allowed in the park. No swimming or boating in the pond; No open flames or charcoal grills. Gas grills are permitted. Fireplace use is prohibited. For your safety, please do not climb trees or fences. The park closes at 10 p.m. No overnight park-

ing. No foul language or loud music. Field use is by permit only.

Also, please be mindful of parking. Please display a handicap placard if you park in a handicap space. The area behind the office is reserved for employees. If you have any questions, please call 401-272-3460.

Pre-K Lottery

The RI State Pre-K lottery is now open. This lottery will run until July 6 so you know a child who would be 4 before Spt. 1 may qualify. To apply, visit www3.ride.gov/PKL.

Johnston Senior Center back in full force

At the Johnston Senior Center, all exercise classes have resumed, and new classes have been added too. Call the center for information.

They are offering a Photography starting on April 12 at 1:30 p.m. Please call center for information at 944-3343. The class features on-location shoots and three classroom sessions. The charge is \$10 per session.

There are still seats available for the Pennsylvania Dutch trip on May 23-25; double occupancy \$499 and \$599 single occupant.

The Newport Playhouse is back. The first performance is Tuesday July 12, with "Murder at Howard Johnsons," which features a lobster dinner with the play for \$95 per person.

NAMI-RI: Free Virtual

Family-To-Family course begins April 13

The Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness is now accepting registration for our Spring 2022 virtual Family-to-Family course which begins on Wednesday, April 13, 2022. This is a free, 8-ses-

sion educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program, which means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

NAMI-Rhode Island's Family-to-Family course is taught by trained family members who have lived experience with a loved one, and includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises.

For more information on the Family-to-Family curriculum and registration requirements, visit namirhodeisland.org or call 401-331-3060 or email beth@namirhodeisland.org.

Arts Scholarships for youth now open to register

Do you know a student aged 11 - 14 who loves to create and to perform? Encourage them to apply to our ARTS Scholarships 2022 program! Applications and guidelines are now available at ppacri.org/artsscholarships.

The ARTS Scholarships 2022 program, sponsored by the Textron Charitable Trust and the PPAC Annual Fund with support from WPRI 12 and Ocean State Charities Trust, offers young artists an opportunity to participate in local summer arts education program that will broaden their experience in their chosen area of study.

Qualified students must be aged 11 - 14 by June 1 of this year and reside in and attend school in Rhode Island.

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May 4, 2022 | cjcalzri.com

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Watch Your MOUTH

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

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SUN RISE SCOOPS

Scoops

(Continued from page 5)

Rhode Island Senior Softball League

The Rhode Island Senior Softball League, who has over 350 players on 20 teams, is currently seeking players ages 50 and over for the upcoming season.

The season will run from the beginning of May until the end of September, including playoffs, and no games will be scheduled on July 4. Games are played on Sunday, double headers.

Masks and/or pitcher's screen will be mandatory, and the league will use the same 11 fields as it did last season. Fields are located in East Providence, Cranston, Johnston, Woonsocket, North Kingston, Barrington and Western Cranston.

Visit www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=riseniorsoftball for more information. Please fill out player inquiry form, the commissioner will contact you.

Consider donating blood

The Rhode Island Blood Center is in need of blood donations. Individuals wishing to donate must book an appointment at the donation center; walk-ins are only accepted if safe distancing allows at the person's time of arrival.

Nearby areas to donate include The Shops at Greenwood, which is located at 615 Greenwich Ave., in Warwick. Sign up by visiting www.ribc.org.

Walk and Talk at Rocky Point

Come join the "Rocky Point Pacers" for a walk around Rocky Point every Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 9 a.m., weather permitting. They meet at the gate on Rocky Point Avenue. Get some sunshine and burn off some holiday pounds.

Prepare RI High School Internships Program

Calling all RI public high school juniors: The 2022 PrepareRI High school Internship Program is accepting applications to participate in on-site/in-person, PAID summer experiential learning internships with local employers across the state.

This program will help you earn, learn, and connect with employers across Rhode Island. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Visit <https://skillsforri.com/prepareri> for more information.

Apple Fest Scheduled

The 34th Annual Apple Festival has been scheduled for: Saturday, Sept. 10 and Sunday, Sept. 11 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., both days.

The event will be held at the Johnston Memorial Park - 1583 Hartford Ave. in Johnston. Register: members.nrichamber.com/.../the-34th-annual-apple

Johnston Senior Center offers services

If you need any help with heating, housing, etc., during this cold winter or humidity or any other time, contact the Johnston Senior Center Social Services Department by calling 944-3343. Madeline or Amy will be happy to help you.

Tour the Johnston Historical Society

Just a reminder that Tuesdays, 6 to 8 p.m. are open hours at the Johnston Historical Society. Tour the museum! Tour the Elijah Angell House! Ask all the questions you ever wanted to ask about Johnston history! All are welcome!

Contact the Johnston Historical Society at 231-3380 or at johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com, www.johnstonhistorical.org or www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical.

Friends of the Mohr Public Library

Friends of the Mohr Public Library is a 501(c)3 non-profit 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 support either through donations, membership dues, or through volunteering their time.

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

Mohr Library events

Fridays at 5 p.m., we have a craft and discussion program for adults who love young adult books, books which often feature young protagonists finding their place in the world. The first book to be discussed is "Vassa in the Night," which reimagines a slavik folktale in modern-day Brooklyn.

The Rhode Island Tree Council is offering their Tree Stewardship classes at our library Thursday nights from 6-8 during May, plus Saturday June 4 from 10 to noon to plant a tree on our lawn. There is a charge of \$50 for members and library cardholders. Register with the Rhode Island Tree Council at 401-764-5885 or at www.ritree.org.

For teens, there is a Dungeons & Dragons group meeting each week. Call or email to leave your contact information for Emilie.

For middle-school and high-school-age kids, there are things to do almost every day after school.

Kids can drop in any time between 1 and 5pm April 22, Friday, for crafts and activities based on "The Bad Guys" series of books by Aaron Blabey. A major motion picture based on these books will be released on that day.

Storytime for ages 2 to 5 is scheduled to begin May 4 at 10:30 am. Call to register.

During all hours, the Children's Library has scavenger hunts, I Spy games and craft kits to do in the library or take home.

Every day, we offer help with computers and technology, either on the spot, by offering to schedule one-on-one sessions, or by trying to find the right class for you.

Through June, Providence Public Library will send one of their specialists to Mohr Library for one-on-one "Digital Navigation" help, by appointment Fridays between 10 am and 1 pm. Speak with one of our librarians.

Mohr Library offers public wifi and computer use, printing and copying at a small charge, faxing at \$1 per page, free scanning, and free notary when available. Contact us to print from your device or from home.

Our book drop is available to return books from any Rhode Island public library or to donate like-new books. Our Friends' Book Sale is ongoing whenever we are open.

Email info@mohrlibrary.org or call 231-4980.

Did you know?

Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970. Keep your day and celebrate and quite often the day (or around that day) there are cleanups (Source: Earth Dy Facts).

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

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Opinion

EDITORIAL

Covid fatigue is real, but we can't become complacent

It's difficult to fathom that we first entered Covid-19 lockdowns over two years ago. How can so much time go by so quickly — particularly when those two years have been filled with so many days of trepidation and concern regarding an illness that has killed nearly one million Americans and 6.2 million people worldwide?

The stage we currently find ourselves in regarding the pandemic is one of almost apathetic indifference to the disease that has turned our world upside down and upended weddings, small businesses and leisure travel plans for so many of us for so long. We know it's out there, but at this point, nobody aside from those who are at very high risk from the virus is living their lives

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

much differently than they did two years ago, before the world changed.

To Rhode Islanders' credit,

we've reached that point of indifference through doing the right thing — getting vaccinated. Although we wished that by this point, vaccine skepticism would be completely eradicated — considering the hundreds of millions of doses given thus far hasn't resulted in a massive government-sponsored extinction event — many still hold onto that fear-driven belief for whatever reason suits them. Their selfishness aside, enough people have done the right thing to allow us to get back to a place of normalcy, where the vast majority of people are no longer at risk of terrible consequences from catching the virus.

That layer of protection offered by the vaccine, combined with the fatigue we are all experiencing in responding to the threat of Covid as though it is the harbinger of our demise, is resulting in even our vaccine-favorable state to become vulnerable to another wave of the virus.

The BA.2 variants of Covid are becoming more and more prevalent across the world and, again, in the United States. The majority of these cases, to be clear, are not requiring hospitalizations, but they do unfortunately thrust talk of gathering restrictions and mandatory masking back into the conversation once again — a conversation that fewer and fewer people seem to want to have.

It is an understandable stance, considering the relative risk of the average person actually being seriously sickened or killed by this strain of Covid. However, we cannot forget the role we play in protecting our most vulnerable citizens — the immunocompromised, the elderly, the healthcare professionals with elderly or immunocompromised loved ones whom they cannot safely see. Our decisions are not merely our decisions when responding to this virus — a lesson we should clearly understand by now.

Although we may never be able to squash this virus and its presence from our lives, we cannot let ourselves get to a place of total complacency, and work hard to prevent as many unnecessary outbreaks, and resulting deaths, as possible.



GUEST OPINION

DECLARATION: RI youth mental health in 'State of Emergency'

Editor's Note: *The Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Rhode Island Council for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Hasbro Children's Hospital and Bradley Hospital have issued the following "Declaration of a Rhode Island State of Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health":*

As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents in Rhode Island, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic. Children and families across our state have experienced enormous adversity and disruption. The inequities that result from structural racism have contributed to disproportionate impacts on children from communities of color at the same time as racial and ethnic diversity has increased in Rhode Island and is projected to rise in the future."

This worsening crisis in child and adolescent mental health is inextricably tied to the stress brought on by COVID-19 and the ongoing struggle for racial justice and represents an acceleration of trends observed prior to 2020. Rates of childhood mental health concerns and suicide rose steadily between 2010 and 2020 and by 2018 suicide was the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24. According to the 2019 Rhode Island Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 15% of Rhode Island high school students reported attempting suicide one or more times in the 12 months before the survey was administered. The pandemic has intensified this crisis: we have witnessed dramatic increases in Emergency Department visits for all mental health emergencies including suspected suicide attempts. The pandemic has struck at the

safety and stability of families. More than 140,000 children in the United States lost a primary and/or secondary caregiver, with youth of color disproportionately impacted. We are caring for young people with skyrocketing rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families, and their communities. We must identify strategies to meet these challenges through innovation and action, focusing on state and local interventions designed to improve equitable access to care including mental health promotion, prevention, and treatment. Taking into account Rhode Island's specific existing resources and our state's unique strengths, we urge a particular focus and investment in community-based and community-responsive outpatient care designed to identify and treat youth earlier in their course of illness. This would reduce the burden on individual children and their families as well as the impact on our higher levels of care and schools by decreasing escalation to full-blown mental health crises.

The Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (RIAAP), the Rhode Island Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (RICCAP), Hasbro Children's Hospital, and Bradley Hospital are joining together to declare a Rhode Island State of Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health. The challenges facing children and adolescents are so widespread that we call on policymakers at all levels of state government, advocates for children and adolescents, and community stakeholders to join us in this declaration and advocate for the following:

Increase state funding, including Medicaid rates, dedicated to ensuring that all families and children, from infancy through adolescence, can access evidence-based mental

health screening, diagnosis, and treatment to appropriately address their mental health needs, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of under-resourced populations.

Fully fund and prioritize comprehensive, community-based systems of care that connect families in need of outpatient behavioral health services and supports for their children with evidence-based interventions in their home, community or school as well as follow-up with families to overcome any barriers to engagement in care.

Accelerate strategies to address longstanding workforce challenges in child mental health, including innovative training programs developed collaboratively by Rhode Island's existing healthcare professional programs, loan repayment and reduced/free tuition consistent with RI Promise grants, and intensified efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented populations into mental health professions as well as attention to the impact that the public health crisis has had on the well-being of health professionals.

Increase implementation and sustainable funding of effective models of school-based mental health care with clinical strategies, including a mental health "warmline" for school staff to access care comparable with the existing PediPRN model for pediatricians, and models for payment.

Accelerate and incentivize adoption of effective and financially sustainable models of integrated mental health care in primary care pediatrics, including clinical strategies and models for payment.

Address the ongoing challenges of the acute care needs of children and adolescents, including shortage of beds and emergency room boarding, by expanding access to short-stay stabilization units and community-based response teams.

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Kids

(Continued from page 1)

Doctors are warning that they have been observing an unprecedented in childhood mental health crises.

"In my 21 years as a pediatrician, I have never seen so many children experiencing mental health challenges or lack access to community resources to meet their mental health treatment needs," said RIAAP President Allison Brindle, MD. "The disruptions to usual routines and general stress that COVID has caused — on top of the usual stressors that kids and teens face— has taken a toll on children and families. They are having difficulty accessing resources needed to meet their child's social and emotional needs, support their optimal development, and we are seeing the results in developmental delays and in a sharp increase in child and adolescent emergency room visits due to mental health issues. As a state, we need to come together to find ways to invest in our mental health system to better support our children through this emergency and to implement strategies that will promote positive mental health and prevent an emergency like this from occurring again in the future."

Competition among different health sectors has tapped much-

needed experience from the Ocean State's mental health treatment network.

"As child and adolescent psychiatrist working with teens, it is clear that the stress and disruptions caused by COVID have pushed many of the patients I see to the point of experiencing mental health crises," said RIC-CAP President Michael Wolfe, MD. "Unfortunately, at the very time this is occurring many of our state's outpatient community providers are underfunded and are losing staff to higher paying jobs in other sectors. This means our youth are not receiving the community-based care they need, leading to more mental health emergencies."

The pandemic has led to record levels of burn out among health professionals, and required the shift of resources from mental health to other realms of treatment.

"This emergency declaration is a call to action to better invest in Rhode Island's network of community and school-based mental health providers," Wolfe said. "We look forward to working with state government and health care leaders to implement recommendations that will address this child and adolescent mental health emergency and leave our system in a stronger position post pandemic."

The Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Rhode Island Council for

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Hasbro Children's Hospital and Bradley Hospital have issued the "Declaration of a Rhode Island State of Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health."

"As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents in Rhode Island, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic," states the declaration. "Children and families across our state have experienced enormous adversity and disruption. The inequities that result from structural racism have contributed to disproportionate impacts on children from communities of color at the same time as racial and ethnic diversity has increased in Rhode Island and is projected to rise in the future."

The declaration calls for increased state funding, community-based systems of care, accelerated strategies to address longstanding workforce challenges in child mental health and bolstered implementation and sustainable funding of effective models of school-based mental health care, among other demands.

Editor's Note: For the full Declaration, turn to Page 7.

FROM THE JOHNSTON LIBRARY

Readers blossom via spring events

By JON ANDERSON
Special to the Sun Rise

Blooms are coming out on the library's trees, our garden is starting to grow, and library programs are returning too.

For school-age children during the week of April 18 through the 22nd there will be a new drop-in program each day, Tuesday and Thursday from 10 to 1, and Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Details at mohrlibrary.org and at the library.

During all hours, the Children's Library has scavenger hunts, I Spy games and craft kits to do in the library or take home.

For people 18 and up there will be a discussion of "Vassa in the Night", a book that reimagines a slavic folktale in modern-day Brooklyn. Discussion will take place May 6 at 5 pm, so ask for a copy of the book soon.

This will be part a regular series for adults who love young adult books. Meetings are every Friday from 5 to 6 pm, starting April 22nd with book-themed crafts.

The Rhode Island Tree Council is offering their Tree Stewardship classes at our library Thursday nights from 6-8 during May, plus Saturday June 4 from 10 to noon to plant a tree on our lawn. There is a charge of \$50 for members and library cardholders. Register with the Rhode Island Tree Council at 401-764-5885 or at www.ritree.org.

Every day, we offer help with computers and technology, either on the spot, or by offering to schedule one-on-one sessions, or by helping to find classes.

Through June, Providence Public Library will send one of their specialists to Mohr Library for one-on-one "Digital Navigation" help, by appointment Fridays between 10 am and 1 pm. Speak with one of our librarians.

Our printers are back to normal, and a new service lets you print from your own devices or from home.

Our book drop is also repaired, and you can use it to return books from any Rhode Island public library or to donate like-new books.

Books that we don't add to our collection are used by our Friends group to raise money that supports extra programming, and a book sale is ongoing every day.

In May we look forward to a new storytime series, and big events are in planning stages for the summer. More news to come, so check mohrlibrary.org and sign up for our mailing list.

Editor's Note: Jon Anderson serves as the Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library Director. Watch for his column weekly in the Johnston Sun Rise.

LEGAL NOTICES

Public Auction Legal Notice

Form of notice under RI General Laws 39-12.1 to 12.1-5

TO: COMMERCE INSURANCE PO BOX 32 NORTH BILLERICA, MA 01862. A public auction will be held at 100 South St, Johnston, RI on APRIL 29, 2022 at 9:00 AM. The Vehicle a 2011 KIA VIN # KNAGM477B5129751 belonging to the above. The auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

4/21/22

Public Auction Legal Notice

Form of notice under RI General Laws 39-12.1 to 12.1-5

TO: JEREMY STRATTON 34 AR-

ROWHEAD AVE NORTHBRIDGE, MA 01534. A public auction will be held at 100 South St, Johnston, RI on April 29, 2022 at 9:00 AM. The Vehicle a 2011 KIA VIN # KNAGM477B5129751 belonging to the above. The auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

4/21/22

JOHNSTON ZONING BOARD MEETING AGENDA Thursday, April 28th, 2022 at 6:30 PM Johnston Senior Center 1291 Hartford Avenue

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Review will hold its monthly meeting on April 28, 2022 at 6:30 pm, at Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Avenue. All persons interested in the following proposals are requested to be present at

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

New Business

File 2022-10 – Petition of Linda Zaino, Applicant for 3 Rotary Drive, AP 24 Lot 36, zoned R-15. The petitioner is seeking a Dimensional Variance Section 340 for a proposed Addition with Two-Car Garage.

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

Use variance Section 340 for a proposed Single Family Dwelling.

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

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

File 2022-5 – Petition of Johnston

Winsor III, LLC/The Steere Family Trust, Applicant/Owner for 112 Winsor Avenue, AP 59 Lot 15, zoned R-40. The petitioner is seeking a Special Use Permit -subsection 5 – Public Utility Uses #2- electric Power Generating Facility in an R-40 Zone, for a proposed ground-mounted Solar Array and associated improvements.

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

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

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

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

4/14, 4/21, 4/28/22

**PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Tuesday May 3rd, 2022; 6:00 P.M.**
Johnston Senior Center
1291 Hartford Ave.
Johnston, RI 02919

AGENDA

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

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

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

PB 22-18 – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the request for a Zone Change from R-40 to Planned District located at 198 Shun Pike – AP 33 Lot 63

PB 22-22 – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council on the request for a Zone Change from R-20 to B-1 located between 278 & 300 Morgan Avenue – AP 6 Lot 44 & a small portion of AP 6 Lot 154

PB 22-21 – Balletto Condominiums – Public Hearing on a Preliminary Plan for a proposed 13 residential unit Major Land Development. Located at 280-282 Simmonsville Avenue AP 25 Lot 5 - Zoned R-20. Applicant: Gary Balletto

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT & SPECIAL ITEMS

V. ADJOURNMENT

4/14, 4/21, 4/28/22



Request for Proposals Town of Johnston

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM INSTALLATION RAINONE GYM

Town of Johnston is requesting bids for Fire Alarm System Installation- Rainone Gym. Bid specifications are available at the Johnston Town Clerk's Office located at 1385 Hartford Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919 beginning April 21st, 2022 weekdays between the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Specs are also available on the Town's website at www.townofjohnstonri.com. A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for **April 27, 2022 at 9:00 am** at the Rainone Gym located at 45 Mill Street, Johnston RI 02919. Sealed bids will be accepted until **10:00 am, May 4th, 2022** at the Johnston Town Clerk's Office at the above address and will be opened publicly at that time. The Town of Johnston reserves the right to reject any or all responses or parts thereof, to waive any informality in them, or accept any bid deemed in the best interest of the Town. The Town of Johnston will offer interpreters for the hearing impaired provided the request is at least three (3) days prior to scheduled bid opening by calling (401)553-8830.

Joseph Chiodo, CPA
Finance Director



Legal Notice Town of Johnston Adopted Ordinances

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

Ordinance 2022-4: An Ordinance creating Article VI in Chapter 31 of the Town of Johnston Code of Ordinances entitled "Establishment of the Compensated Absence Retirement Escrow Fund. Said fund shall be utilized for the payment of absences upon their separation of service from the Town of Johnston"

Ordinance 2022-5: An Ordinance Establishing the Creation of the Town of Johnston Capital Projects Fund. Said Ordinance creates a fund to be used for road improvements, maintenance projects, property, facilities and equipment.

Ordinance 2022-6: An Ordinance for street abandonment. Said abandonment abandons a portion of Buck Hill Road on Assessor's Plat 30

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

Johnston Town Council
Robert V. Russo,
President

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

4/21/22



Legal Notice Town of Johnston Notice of Abandonment

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 24-6-1 that Buck Hill Road as described in Johnston Town Ordinance 2022-6 has ceased to be useful to the public and is hereby abandoned. Ordinance 2022-6 an Ordinance in abandonment of Buck Hill Road was adopted at a public hearing at the April 11th, 2022 meeting of the Johnston Town Council and is available for review in the office of the Town Clerk.

Johnston Town Council
Robert V. Russo
President

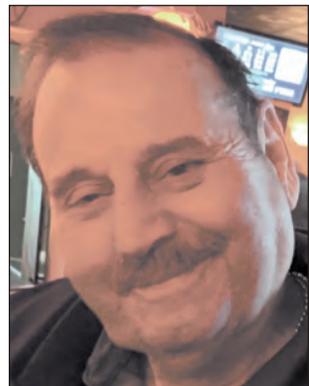
Attest:
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.
Town Clerk

4/21, 4/28, 5/5/22

Obituaries

Donald "Don" Alexander Sepe Sr.

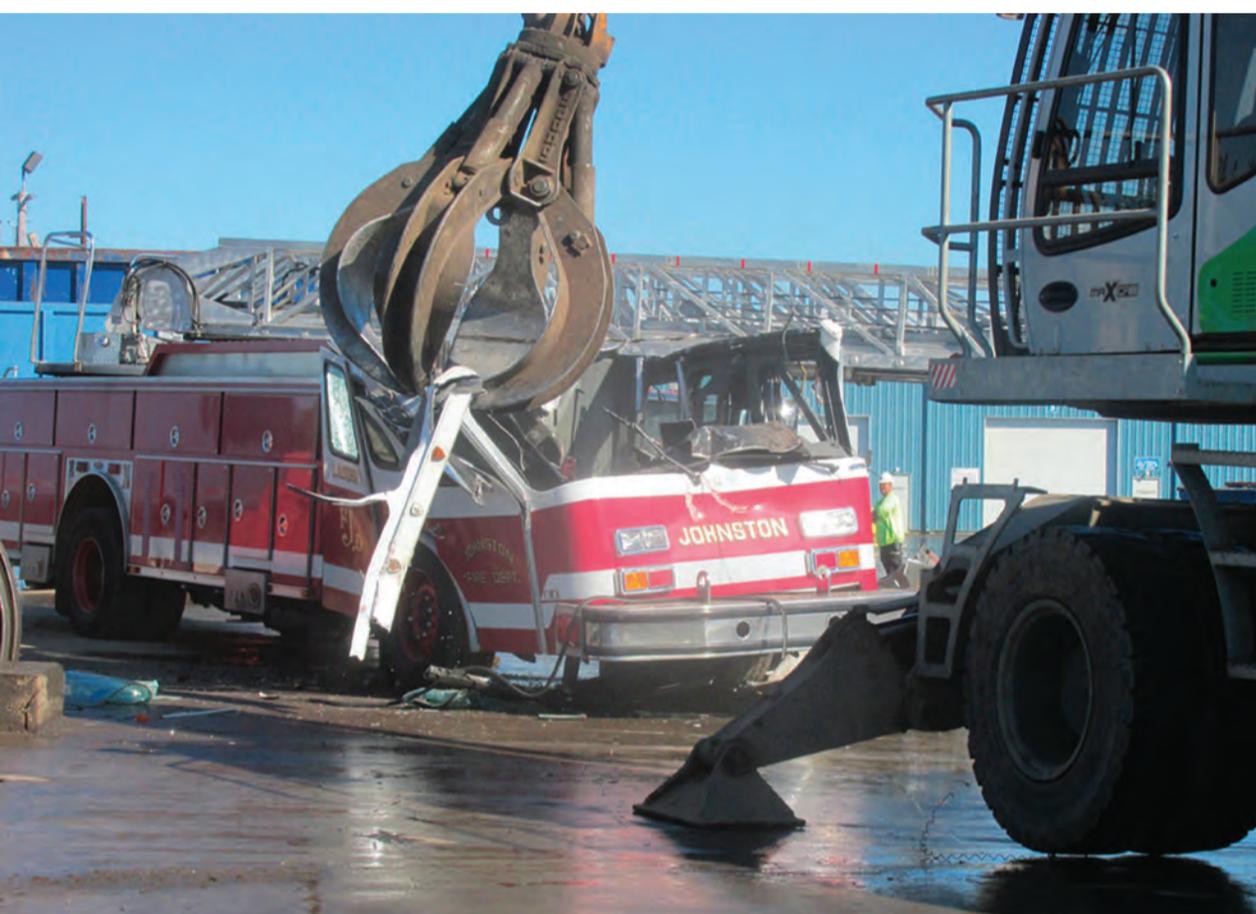
Donald "Don" Alexander Sepe Sr. 76 of Johnston, formerly of Providence died peacefully and unexpectedly at his home on Friday April 15, 2022. Born in Providence on May 5, 1945 he was the son of the late Antoinette (Portanova) and Carmine Sepe Sr. He was the beloved husband of Susan E. (McMahon) Sepe and the proud father of Donald A. Sepe Jr. and wife Denise,



Karen M. McMahon and husband Kenneth, Patricia A. Baird, and companion John Cortellessa, and her late husband Robert Baird Jr., Jason A. McMahon and wife Christina and his youngest child who was born on his birthday, Taressa E. McMahon and husband Nelson Salgado. Donald was blessed with many grandchildren and was known and loved by the older grandchildren as "Papa" and he was "Papa" to Antonio and Vincenza Sepe, Christopher Yattaw, Alicia Girard and husband Andrew, Erica Kohler and husband Anthony and Alison Baird. His younger grandchildren knew and loved him as "GaGa" and he was "GaGa" to Jose III and Janetsy Montes, Nevaeh, Nelson, Nayrah and Nina Salgado. As his family continued to grow, Don took on the additional role of great grandfather to Viktoria, Arianna, Colin and Aubree. In addition, Donald is survived by his brother Michael Sepe and sisters Cheryl Duke and Deborah Sepe. He was preceded in death by his brothers Carmine Jr. and Robert Sepe, and sister Antoinette Andruchuk. Having six siblings, Don took on yet another role as uncle to his many nieces and nephews. Don resided most of his life in Providence moving to Johnston in 1998. He was the owner operator of D & D Tree Experts retiring in 2007 after 40+ years as a licensed arborist. He acquired contracts from large companies including his main account, the City of Providence. Don took great pride in his work and both of his sons began their training in what would become the family business. His work included removing and grinding stumps, planting trees, bucket truck and tree care services. He loved the outdoors and took great pride in his work and business. One customer summed it up nicely "Mr. Sepe is a very personable gentlemen". Even in retirement it wouldn't be unreasonable to see Don arrive at the job sites to supervise. Don was a true family man. While retired, he would sit for hours outside watching his grandchildren at his home. He was able to combine his passions for both the outdoors and his family. His love for his children and grandchildren was immeasurable. Warm weather would find Don playing in the pool with his grandchildren and he was always ready to listen to his children about their travels and adventures. He also enjoyed hosting holiday celebrations and other festivities for family and friends. Don was always smiling. His smile would light up the room and now in passing his light will forever shine on those he loved. He will be greatly missed. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated in St. Robert Bellarmine Church 1804 Atwood Avenue Johnston on Friday April 22nd at 10:00am. Burial will follow in Highland Memorial Park Cemetery Johnston. Visitation is scheduled for Thursday from 5:00-8:00Ppm in The Butterfield Chapel 500 Pontiac Avenue Cranston. Online condolences may be shared at www.THEBUTTERFIELDHOME.com



FOND FAREWELL: Above and below, in 2015, the town's 1991 ladder truck was crushed at the Sims Metals Recycling Center. (Sun Rise FILE photos by Pete Fontaine)



Ladder

(Continued from page 1)

"It's in service now, but we went almost four and a half months without it," Firefighter Scott Thacker said Tuesday as he climbed inside the young ladder truck's cab. "The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) says a ladder truck should last 20 years. When it works, it's a great truck."

Unfortunately, the truck rarely works as expected, according to Johnston fire officials.

In 2015, former-Chief McLaughlin said the soon-to-be replaced ladder truck measures 109 feet long and came "equipped with the latest instruments in fire fighting."

"Our guys are ecstatic to have the new ladder truck in our fleet," McLaughlin said at the time. "It's good for the citizens of town and has been a big morale booster since it was delivered a month ago."

That year, Johnston also purchased a 2014 Spartan ERV factory-built custom pumper. The town's new ladder truck, approved for purchase last week by Johnston Town Council, will cost about \$1.1 million, and will also be built by Spartan Fire and Emergency Apparatus.

The old ladder truck was valued at \$750,000, and will be placed on reserve once the new truck is built and driven from Nebraska to Rhode Island.

As for the scrapped 1991 ladder truck, in 2015 Polisen said: "It was bittersweet watching it crushed as if it were a piece of cardboard. After all, I rode that truck during my days as a firefighter."

The new truck will take about a year to build and ship.

"They drive it here," Lamb said of the new truck. "We want them to put the first 1,500-2,000 miles on it."

The town will use funds set aside in a re-

serve account specially created to purchase fire apparatus, Lamb explained.

Lamb gave Town

Council his word that he will do everything possible to cap the new truck's cost at \$1.1 million.



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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local  Adoptable  Loveable



Photo credit: Jessica Pohl

PETER

Peter recently celebrated his eight birthday and his wish is to find a loving forever home! He's a perfect gentleman with a flair for adventure! This handsome mixed breed boy loves attention and he would prefer to have all the attention to himself, so a home with no other pets would be his dream home. If you have a fenced in yard that would be the icing on his cake because he loves to run free and play! If you think you are the one to make Peter's birthday wish come true then please call the Potter League at 401-846-8276 or visit their website at www.potterleague.org for more information. Peter hopes to have a real birthday party once he get's adopted!

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Solar

(Continued from page 1)

"Through the chair, I would like to request that the town counsel have a special meeting scheduled for either April 25, 26 or 27," Civetti said last Monday night. "Because as you know, April 28 we have a zoning board that's looking to make a decision that could impact this town for years to come."

As of press-time Wednesday, the meeting date and time had not yet been set or advertised.

"I'd like to see us get together as a council for a special meeting to not only discuss the moratorium, whether we approve or reject, but let's talk about it," Civetti urged his fellow town councilors. "And obviously council votes as they feel necessary. But also I'd like to attend that (part-time Town Planner) Tom Deller attend that meeting, where we could get an update on the Comprehensive Plan. I think that you all know that our Comprehensive Plan is outdated."

Last updated in 2014, Johnston's town-wide Comprehensive Plan does not directly tackle the construction of modern solar panels in residential neighborhoods.

"So currently we have a couple boards that are operating, and trying to perform their fiduciary responsibility to the benefit of the town, but I don't think they have the tools in place to perform that duty. So I think we need to coordinate it all," Civetti said. "In regards to Mr. Conley's information, I think the moratorium could be suitable or applied."

Civetti said he's like to see the council vote to "extend the moratorium until such time as we have a Comprehensive Plan that's ... approved by council, through all the proper channels."

"So I would like to run that through you Mr. President," Civetti said to Town Council President Robert Russo. "Again, to schedule a meeting for April 25, 26, or 27 so that we could have some decision made before the zoning board has to (vote at its meeting) on (April) 28."

"So the purpose of that meeting, you want a moratorium drafted?" Russo asked Civetti.

"I would like to get a moratorium drafted, so that the council could discuss it, residents could be heard as far as, you know, why they feel it's necessary and we can take the appropriate action," Civetti answered.

Conley asked permission to address the council.

"At the direction of the council, I did provide an initial or preliminary memorandum to you, based on the council's directive at your last meeting to provide information on a moratorium," the town's lawyer explained.

He tried to present an "understanding or an expectation what can be done between now and the next meeting, if you're contemplating considering moratorium."

"As I understood the charge to be from the council at our last meeting, I saw it as trying to preliminarily answer two questions: Can the Town Council enact a moratorium stopping consideration of new solar projects?" Conley said. "And secondly, would such a moratorium affect the applications or the applicants that were specifically discussed and referenced: Green Energy, that appeared before the Planning Board?"

Conley told Town Council that they could enact a moratorium, but legal precedent indicates the move could be toppled in court if the town did not meet certain standards while drafting the ordinance.

"I advised the council that the council is within its rights to consider enacting a moratorium ordinance on new solar projects, but

there are certain factors, certain standards that must be met to do that," Conley explained.

Conley examined another Rhode Island town's struggle with solar development.

"The Town of Exeter enacted a moratorium back in December of 2018," Conley told the council. "And that moratorium was affirmed, subject to a legal challenge by the Superior Court, but that decision was ... really helpful to us in giving us the standards and factors that we must consider and meet in enacting that moratorium. By way of context, I'm looking at the Exeter experience. Exeter was facing a sudden and a really significant rise, a spike in applications for solar fields, from many applicants. And without a moratorium, the town planner had represented that it would be impossible to respond to the applications within the time period required by law because there were so many of them in the pipeline."

And so, the town passed a moratorium ordinance that it characterized as an emergency ordinance to meet those circumstances. And the moratorium ordinance that was passed, reviewed and approved by the board had a 60-day time limit on it. And the idea was that was going to buy additional time for those applications in the pipeline to be processed."

The Exeter ordinance was unsuccessfully challenged in court by none other than Green Development, the same firm applying for special-use permits to raze forestland and construct solar fields in Johnston.

"Green in fact, the party applying here in Johnston, was the party that challenged that ordinance with an injunction and the Superior Court actually upheld the moratorium but said some interesting things in doing that," Conley explained. "It found that that specific moratorium did not violate Green's due process rights, number one because it did not apply to applications of Green's that were already in the system. In other words, it couldn't apply to applications that had already been made. And so, because it didn't apply to any of Green's applications that had already been filed, the moratorium didn't violate Green's due process rights in that regard."

Conley also discussed a second moratorium example from Cranston that had nothing to do with solar development. When Johnson & Whales wanted to expand dormitories in Cranston, the City Council enacted an ordinance that was ultimately rejected by the court, because it was determined the moratorium "would target a specific project."

"What we kind of learned ... A moratorium which is temporary, with a fixed length and an end-date, is something we probably want to consider," Conley told Johnston Town Council. "We also need to be able to identify the moratorium to a specific reason, not just that we don't like that project. It has to be because there are some other land use considerations that need to be addressed for the time period of the moratorium, and it can't interfere with vested rights."

"Vested rights" are key to determining whether the current proposal by Green Development in Johnston would be covered by the moratorium, according to Conley's analysis.

"For instance, in the Exeter case, it was critical to the court's analysis that the moratorium didn't attempt to impede or interfere with the application that had already been processed," Conley said. "For our purposes ... the moratorium for the meeting coming up, it's going to be important that we gather information from our zoning and planning departments on the specific reasons why a moratorium is necessary for the Town Council."

Conley said he could reach out to those departments the next day.

"And get some guidance on a time period that would be reasonable to address those health and safety matters," Conley continued. "And the council in the passing of a ... time-limited and scope-limited moratorium ordinance would need to rely on those findings ... for us to feel confident that we would survive a legal challenge."

The question of "vested rights" can be complicated, Conley told the Town Council.

"When does an application become vested?" Conley asked. "That's also a little bit interesting because when you look at state law the statute regarding these issues essentially says that zoning ordinances become vested when their application is 'substantially complete' in the process. But it doesn't give us a lot of guidance on what it means to be 'substantially complete.'"

The Town of Johnston, however, has a somewhat expedited view of "vested rights," according to Conley.

"Our ordinance says, that in the context of this project, that it's vested when they receive that approval that they got from the planning board," Conley told Civetti and the rest of Town Council. "The reason behind that ... is that when you look at our ordinances ... essentially says that a major subdivision land development project vests when it receives master plan approval ... Even though they identify vesting at different places in the process, what's probably going to be most critical to that analysis or is most critical to that analysis, there's substantial authority that as soon as its complete ... it's vested."

Conley told Town Council that the Johnston Planning Board's approval of master plans for Green Development's five new solar farms gives the firm "vested rights" and the moratorium would not affect the project.

"You can't change the rules of the game after you start," Conley said. "The applicant has a vested property right in seeing the municipality process that under the rules that were in place at the moment its application was completed. Now our ordinance is a little bit later in that process, but it's not to say that our ordinance as written if challenged on that basis ... might not be subject to some vulnerability in that regard. But regardless, it's probably not an issue here since that approval has been received by the Planning Board."

Time is running out with only a week remaining until the Zoning Board's April 28 meeting. An ordinance needs to be written, publicly advertised, vetted, debated and approved before it takes affect.

"I am a little bit concerned about the timetable we're setting," Conley told Town Council "I understand why there's that sense of urgency. If council chooses to move forward to that I'll reach out to planning tomorrow and ask them for their help."

Conley also took some time to stand up for the members of the town's Planning Board, whom he said have come under recent attack following their decision to approve the solar project master plans.

"Unfortunately there has been some castigation aimed at the Planning Board, actually accusing them of engaging in deceitful practices in the process of this application," Conley said last week. "That's very concerning because obviously if there's a legal challenge we can't be in a position where we have public officials engaging (in) any kind of deceitful conduct. That's very concerning; a very serious allegation. I want to inform the council that I've looked at that record. I've read the transcript. I've followed the process



CONCERNED CITIZENS: On Saturday, March 26, concerned residents and abutters gathered along Rollingwood Drive to fire questions at representatives of Cranston-based Green Development. The firm hopes to construct five new solar fields in western Johnston. The Johnston Zoning Board plans to discuss the issue, and potentially vote on Special Use Permits, Thursday night, April 28. (*Sun Rise FILE photo by Rory Schuler*)

■ Solar
(Continued from page 10)

that we used in processing that. I've conferred with legal counsel for the Planning Board. And I'm prepared to stand before you tonight and say that your Planning Board acted with the utmost integrity."

Conley assured Town Council that his review of the proceedings revealed no wrongdoing.

"Your Planning Board followed the procedures they were supposed to follow," Conley explained. "They held hearings in accordance with those procedures. They made findings of fact based on the record that was before them. And they did nothing to impugn that process or their own reputations either. They acted ... according to process and with the utmost integrity. And I just think that given those accusations are out there and are used as a basis for attacking this process, that it's important to make clear on the record that there is no reason to believe that those public servants, those volunteers who perform those public duties, engaged in any dishonest or deceitful conduct."

That said, Conley indicated he planned to move forward with drafting the moratorium ordinance.

"So, with your permission, I'll reach out to planning tomorrow," Conley said. "Tell them, based on the council's directions, you wish to proceed with that date, within that time period, hopefully bring it back to you for consideration of moratorium ordinance."

Further complications arose when Town Council was informed, by Conley after he consulted with the Town Charter, that an ordinance cannot be approved at a meeting other than the Town Council's regular monthly meeting.

"Every ordinance, other than an emergency ordinance," Conley said. "So if we had findings of fact that could establish as an 'emergency

ordinance' you could do it at other than a regular meeting. But otherwise it needs to be referred to a regular meeting."

Whether the ordinance could possibly be approved and enacted prior to the April 28 Zoning Board meeting remains unclear.

Following the April 11 Town Council meeting, Conley clarified his legal opinion whether a moratorium — even if it's approved by the next Zoning Board meeting — would affect Green Development's pending applications. Again, he affirmed, in his opinion, the moratorium would not stop the project.

"They have a vested right," Conley repeated. "They're vested. Yes, they're vested."

Civetti, asked after the meeting about the hypothetical legal futility of enacting an ordinance that would not cover the project concerning so many of his constituents, he answered: "Subject to opinion I guess."

"I'm not an attorney, but I know there's attorneys that looked at it and said that's not the case," Civetti said. Civetti argues the Johnston case will be different because it involves a "land use issue" and "not a major subdivision."

"Should we put a moratorium in place or not?" Civetti asked. "(I'll) leave that up to legal to decide if it applies or doesn't apply ... But for us to sit back and not do anything and expect a Planning Board and Zoning Board to comply with a Comprehensive Plan that essentially ... is outdated by — it expired in 2014 — so eight years outdated plan that doesn't talk anything about renewable energy, how can we really expect the planning board members and zoning board members to make an educated decision or fulfill their fiduciary responsibility?"

Civetti also praised the Planning Board and their dedication.

"I'm not knocking them," Civetti insisted. "I think they do a great job. I appreciate their service. But we're

asking them to judge something when there's no guidelines to go by ... that's all I'm trying to do. Let's put a moratorium in place that will deal with how this should go through."

According to Green Development, the five solar fields will be constructed on land totaling 324.86 acres. Of those 324.86 acres, approximately 133.15 acres will be surrounded by fencing, with solar panels occupying around 41 percent of the acreage. A substantial area will be cleared of trees, and some topography altered, across the five parcels in Johnston's west-end.

Many residents living along Rollingwood Drive can see pink ribbons tied around tree trunks framing their backyards. The pink ribbons mark the future fence line that the developer plans to build around the solar fields.

A small group of abutters have hired attorney Matthew J. Landry, of the Providence law firm Blish & Cavanagh LLP, to help fight the solar field construction.

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

Solar development is a special use for residential zones and permitted under Johnston's zoning laws. If the Zoning Board votes to approve the special-use permits, the plans move back to the Planning Board for a final set of conditions and approvals.

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BRIAN'S BUNCH: Vice Principal Brian Bordieri stands at the gate with student egg collectors at the start of the first ever JHS Easter Egg Hunt. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

GRAND GOODIES:

Charlene Hohlmaier, Janet Clements and Rebecca Clements show off the plastic colored Easter Eggs that contained a variety of valuable prizes they won during last week's event.



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Bunny

(Continued from page 2)

classy and costumed bunny named Kelsey Moscarelli who serves as a social worker at Morgan Health Center.

"I'm really happy to be part of such a great event," Folcarelli, who along with her sister Donna served coffee, donuts and muffins to the morning's the grand guests who were residents at Morgan Health Center or Anchor Bay at Pocasset. "Even the walk was fun!"

The pre-Easter event borrowed a page from the JPD's famed Walk with Cops, as staffers like Debbie Ferreira and Erin Campbell of Morgan and Laurie Spicuzza made sure those special seniors who wanted to take a trek around the picturesque park did so by either a wheelchair or under their own power.

Meanwhile, Easter came early for the day's attendees, as super staffers from Morgan and Pocasset Bay presented each attendee with decorative holiday pails that were filled with gifts like yellow T-shirts with blue lettering, water bottles, lots of bunnies and a variety of Easter candy.

There were also special moments courtesy of "Hulk" — a special service dog that Greg Ciosek brought as an added attraction — who received almost as much attention and love as did Kelsey "The Easter Bunny" Moscarelli.



HERO HULK: "The Hulk" — a special service dog handled by Greg Ciosek — joins the many residents from Morgan Health Center and Anchor Bay at Pocasset who enjoyed last week's "Bunny Walk" inside War Memorial Park. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

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By JENNIFER COATES

It shouldn't be surprising to anyone that individuals with disabilities want the same things that everyone else wants to lead a fulfilling life. These include independence, meaningful employment, enduring relationships, secure housing, and the ability to live a life of choice and opportunity. Those in the disabled community and their families often need more targeted support as they seek to achieve these things and navigate their way around the resources and services available to them. Education, support, advocacy, and guidance build the bridge between those searching for help and those needing help in this process.

Enter Iraida Williams of the Johnston-based organization, LAZO. Iraida Williams, the Executive Director of LAZO, founded the organization in June of 2021 after a lifetime spanning twenty-plus years of work as an advocate for those with disabilities. Williams is as passionate today about her work, which is both professional and personal, as she ever has been.

Williams and her close-knit, multi-lingual team of employees, work tirelessly to fulfill the mission of LAZO which can be summed up in this statement: "Today, and every day, we use our collective knowledge, experience and love to help individuals access the services they want and need to live their best lives."

LAZO offers this to its clients: "LAZO has over 25 years of experience developing and managing individual's services and workers in a person-centered, culturally sensitive manner. LAZO's brokers will provide you with user-friendly information, guidance, and technical assistance to organize, access and use opportunities, services, resources in their community to help them live a self-determined life."

What exactly are the "brokerage services" LAZO provides? A support broker is someone who helps to arrange services for an adult with intellectual or developmental disabilities (beginning as young as



Meet Iraida Williams, the founder of LAZO, an advocacy organization based in Johnston. LAZO provides personalized brokerage services for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Their services extend SEVEN days a week. Find them at www.lazori.org to learn more.

18 years old and still within the public school system) as have been outlined in their Individual Service Plan (ISP). This can often be an overwhelming process complicated by language/cultural barriers, diminished family resources, availability, and lack of knowledge and/or support through more conventional routes. LAZO can help.

The brokerage services provided at LAZO are "non-clinical services" designed to assist individuals in managing their "Self-Directed services" funding. This is pivotal to establishing a system of support that is responsive to both the needs of the individual and their desires for help. The work of LAZO is to assist those receiving financial support to direct those funds in a way that allows them

more choice and control, giving them more freedom and self-direction.

The purposes of LAZO are, first and foremost, personal and person-centered. The combined knowledge, talents, dedication, and efforts of this team of advocates are completely devoted to this philosophy.

Referrals to LAZO can be made through a school or transition team, a state-assigned social worker, a family member, or more importantly, YOU. Call LAZO today at 401-233-0314 to get started or visit their informative website at www.lazori.org. Their welcoming office is located at 5 George Waterman Road in Johnston.

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Sports

The best month of the year

Monday afternoon was a beautiful spring day in New England, and it was another reminder for myself that April is the best month on the sports calendar, at least in my opinion.

For those of you who know me, this may seem blasphemous considering football is my favorite sport and we are still months away from kickoff. But hear me out.

In terms of football, there is still plenty of excitement to be had considering the biggest non-Super Bowl football day of the year is in April. I am, of course, referring to the NFL Draft which is being held next weekend.

Some may disagree, but I don't think that it is a stretch to say that the draft is the second biggest NFL day considering this is the day that new stars are introduced to the league. Major professional leagues are only as good as the players that suit up in them, and the draft is where it all begins. Remember the excitement and the buzz that Rhode Island enjoyed last year when Kwity Paye heard his name called? It's moments like those around the country that make the draft great.

Then there is baseball. The big leagues are underway, local Little Leagues have either started or are closing in on their opening ceremonies. High school and college baseball is back. The association, for me personally, between baseball and nice weather is automatic. When-

My pitch



by ALEX SPENSSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR
ALEXS@RHODYBEAT.COM

ever I think of baseball, I think of spring and summer. It's just a fun time of year and I am excited to welcome it back.

Another one of my favorite annual sporting events is the Boston Marathon, which took place on Monday. It was the first time since 2019 that it was run on its usual April date, which was nice to see. It was great to not only get back to welcoming the spring with the race, but to also see us take one step closer to normalcy. The fact that I have had to use that phrase less and less over the past few months is encouraging.

There is also the Masters, which happened earlier in the month. I am not an avid golf enthusiast but there is something special about the Masters. Seeing those green jackets just always puts me in a good mood. Again, I associate it with springtime and nice weather.

April is also the start of the NBA and NHL playoffs. I love both of those tournaments and the fact that they are played simultaneously is thrilling. For two months, you know there will be some-

PITCH - PAGE 18



EXCITING EXPOS: This is one of the six teams that will make up the JLL's Major Division for the 2022 season.

JLL Opening Day: Many memorable moments

By PETE FONTAINE

People of all ages will readily attest that there's nothing quite like a super special and ageless Rite of Spring known as Opening Day for a city or town's Little League Baseball program.

Perhaps Police Chief Joseph P. Razza best summed up Saturday's 60th season opening of the storied pre-teen baseball league that was officially chartered in 1963 with Little League Baseball International that's based in Williamsport, Pa.



FAITHFUL FAN: Cory Ogden, who caught the ceremonial first pitch, signs the ball caught for Mayor Joseph Polisenia. (Submitted photos)

JLL - PAGE 16

Panthers fall to Chargers

By RYAN D. MURRAY

The Johnston Panthers split their home-and-home Division II baseball series against the Chariho Chargers last week.

On Tuesday, catcher Dylan Martins used a grand slam to lift the Panthers to a 7-2 victory over the Chargers in Johnston.

On Friday, however, the Chargers got even and clobbered Johnston 17-8 in Chariho. It was the team's second game after seeing its first week of action postponed.

"They hit the ball well," Panthers head coach Joe Acciardo said. "There was nothing we could do about it. We were struggling a little early on. We left some balls high in the strike zone and they took advantage of it."

"But it's our second game," Acciardo added. "You get out there, the pitchers haven't really thrown that much live, and you're not in mid-season form, so I'm not go-



ON THE HILL: Johnston starting pitcher Derek Salvatore winds up to deliver a pitch against Chariho last week on the road. The Chargers rolled to the win to hand the Panthers their second loss of the spring. Johnston looks to turn things around as they get back to work this week. (Photos by Ryan D. Murray)

PANTHERS - PAGE 17

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SUPER SUPPORTERS: As an example of the value town officials have for youth sports programs, a number of elected officials and police personnel took part in Saturday's Little League Opening Day.



■ **JLL**
 (Continued from page 15)

"There were many, many memorable moments here this morning," Razza, who once played in the league and helped lead the annual Opening Day Parade that stepped off from Johnston High School at 9 o'clock Saturday morning, emphasized. "This is always a special time for children and adults alike."

The famed JLL, which was founded by the late Johnston Parks and Recreation Director and one-time ASA (Amateur Softball Commissioner) Director Daniel Mazzulla and once had a player list of over 400 players, will consist of four groups during the 2022 season.

Mark Pietros, the JLL's new president who was unable to attend the classic ceremony because he is recovering from recent surgery, previously announced that the 2022 roster will consist of six Major Division teams featuring players ages 9 to 12.

The JLL will encompass three Farm Farm Major Division teams as many Farm Minor Division squads.

Likewise, the JLL will again have a Junior/Senior Division featuring three

teams made up of teenagers who will compete again this year with three squads from the neighboring North Providence Little League.

But like Razza said – as did Mayor Joseph Polisenia, Town Council members Linda Folcarelli, Lauren Garzone, Joseph Polisenia Jr. and Robert Civetti (who is one of the JLL's longest volunteers with upwards of over 40 years of service) – Opening Day had many memorable moments.

One in particular was when Mayor Polisenia, who enjoyed the distinction of throwing the ceremonial first pitch, announced that Recreation Director Chris Correia and the town recently submitted an application for a \$500,000 Federal Grant to improve the baseball field in Johnston War Memorial Park.

Needless to say, that was met with the approval of everyone on the field, as it did when Correia told some people at last Thursday's Bunny Walk about the grant application.

Even if the grant – which would be the town's second such grant like the plan to improve the soccer fields via a grant – is not awarded, Polisenia said the town is committed to improve the drainage issues at the park as well as parking lot issues.



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IN RELIEF: Johnston relief pitcher Cam Salois delivers a pitch against Chariho last week on the road.

■ Panthers

(Continued from page 15)

ing to blame it on anybody. I'll give them (Chariho) the credit that they were smashing the ball, and when they did, I think it was just hitting gaps all over the place. Whether they hit it hard or didn't hit it hard, it fell in all the right places, and their pitchers did a pretty good job keeping us off balance when they had to."

Ben Fargo started on the hill for Chariho and struck out six batters over four innings.

Derek Salvatore took the ball for Johnston and tossed 2 1/3 innings while striking out two.

The Chariho offense was topped by Ryan Cormier, who had two singles, two doubles, and five RBI.

Johnston was led by Jeremy Urena, who hit an RBI triple, plus two singles, and two walks, and Martins, who contributed a 3-run triple.

With one out in the top of the first inning of Friday's contest, Cam Salois rocketed a double to deep left field.

Next, Urena hit his RBI triple and it drove in Salois, which gave the Panthers an early 1-0 lead.

Then, Dante Ricci drove in Urena with a single to right-center and that extended the Johnston margin to 2-0.

Ricci stole second base after that, and then Joe Silvia hit a single to left field, which put runners at the corners.

Then, with two outs, Ricci scored during a wild pitch and put the Panthers on top 3-0.

Chariho, however, responded with seven runs in the bottom of the first.

Brendan McGovern got the Chargers on the scoreboard when he came home from third following a wild pitch.

Next, Cormier blasted a 2-run single to left and evened the score at 3-3.

Then, Adam Carpenter hit an RBI single to left and scored Cormier and that put the Chargers on top 4-3.

Kyle McGovern drove in another run after that when he smashed a



A STEP AHEAD: Dante Ricci takes a lead off first base.

single to left and made it 5-3.

Then, Brendan McGovern blasted a 2-run triple to deep center and upped the Chargers cushion to 7-3.

In the second inning, Cormier added to the Chariho cushion when he hit an RBI double to right field and put the Chargers up 8-3.

Next, Carpenter hit an RBI single and that increased the Chariho margin to 9-3. Lastly, Caden Babcock crushed an RBI triple and upped the Chargers cushion to 10-3.

In the top of the third, Silvia hit an RBI double and pulled the Panthers within 10-4.

Next, Davion Nunez hit what should have been a routine pop out to the second baseman, Carpenter, but instead Carpenter misjudged the ball, which allowed Silvia to score and got Johnston within 10-5.

In the bottom of the third, Liam Flynn hit a two-run triple and extended the Chargers buffer to 12-5. Then, Cormier blasted an RBI single to center and upped the Chariho lead to 13-5.

Next, Babcock hit a two-run single to right-center and increased the Chargers margin to 15-5.

With two outs in the top of the fourth, Silvia smashed a bases-loaded, base-clearing double, and that pulled the Panthers within 15-8.

In the bottom of the inning, with runners at first and second, Fargo batted the ball at the first baseman, Silvia, who went to second to catch the lead runner, however, the return throw went for an error, and allowed the man on second, (Brendan McGovern) to score, which upped the Chargers lead to 16-8.

Next, Cormier belted an RBI single between the shortstop and the third baseman, and that drove in another run, which gave the Chargers the 17-8 advantage. Johnston loaded the bases with two outs in the fifth, but they were unable to push any runs through.

With the defeat, the Panthers fall to 1-1 overall on the season while Chariho improves to 3-1 in the league and 4-2 overall.

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FIRST PLACE: This striped bass release photo by Capt. Abbie Schuster, Marth's Vineyard, took a first place prize in the Baird Symposium photo contest.

Contest highlights climate impacts on fish, habitat

By **CAPT. DAVE MONTI**

"The bait profiles we are seeing around Block Island are different, they are perhaps being impacted by warming water. For example we have an abundance of mackerel in and around the harbor which we have not seen for some years," said Capt. Chris Willi of Block Island Fish Works.

Meredith Moore, Director, Fish Conservation Program, Ocean Conservancy, said, "We need to adapt fisheries management so it can react to climate impacts faster throughout the management process." The aim is to be more climate nimble including more frequent research and stock assessments, in corporate climate impacts into fisheries management plans as well as more citizen science and electronic reporting to facilitate the analysis of fishing activity and catch.

Moore and Willi were two of nine panelist at Session II of the 2022 Baird Symposium this week sponsored by the Sea Grant program at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography, Ørsted (owner of the Block Island Wind Farm and developer of wind farms off Massachusetts and Rhode Island) and the Ocean Conservancy.

The Symposium also held a photo contest. Participants entered photos

that depicted climate impacts on fish, habitat or resource users.

The two first place winners included a striped bass photo submitted by Capt. Abbie Schuster of Kismet Outfitters, Marth's Vineyard. The bass was being released from a boat in the wash or foaming water near structure. The other first place photo was taken by James Turek. The photo depicted severe beach erosion at the Weekapaug Fire District Beach in Westerly, RI.

Judges said they selected the striped bass photo as they are the most sort after recreational species on the East Coast. More fishing trips are made to catch striped bass than any other species. They are widely studied, however, not much is known how climate is impacting the range of these fish and if warming water is impacting where and the productivity of their spawn.

There were two honorable mention photos one from Brian Crawford of his granddaughter showing off a legal sized quahog she caught the Great Salt Pond, Block Island and a photo of taken by Phil Duckett of angler Greg Vespe of Tiverton with a cobia, an exotic warm water fish he caught in Narragansett Bay just north of the Newport Bridge.

A Symposium report and a video that relates key

learnings of the Baird Symposium is scheduled to be released at the end of June.

Hats off to URI and RI Sea Grant for dedicating the 2022 Baird Symposium to climate impacts on recreational fishing and boating.

Tautog tips, rigs and jigs

Tautog rigs should have as little hardware as possible to avoid bottom tie-ups. I make single hook rigs with about seven or eight feet of monofilament line and attach it to the main braid line directly with a dropper loop for a pre-snellled "Lazar Sharp" brand hook (you need sharp hooks to get through tough tautog lips). The loop is about five inches above the sinker.

To reduce bottom tie ups by 50 percent I use an egg sinker rig when in heavy structure. The egg sinker slides on a small piece of monofilament adorned with red and white beads which has a two-way swivel on each end, a pre-snellled lazar sharp hook is attached to the end of the swivel and hangs down about eight inches.

Anglers are also more commonly using tautog jigs tipped with crab with good success. The jigs are made in a variety of colors mimicking Asian crabs, green crabs whole or cut in half (the preferred baits for tautog). Jigs are also made to look like baby lobsters.

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■ Pitch

(Continued from page 15)

thing on TV every night of the week for the most part, it's always compelling, even if it's not your team in the mix.

Speaking of which, did you see the Celtics game on Easter Sunday? What a game.

I have fallen out of touch with the Celtics the past year or two. I think the team has a few too many egotistical kids running the show, and that is why they have failed to live up to their talent in that span.

Sunday was Game 1 of the Eastern Conference Quarterfinals against the Brooklyn Nets, so I decided to tune in for the first time in months.

Between the fan interactions with Kyrie Irving, the young Celtics playing unselfish basketball - which for them is uncharacteristic also, the thrilling buzzer-beating finish, it was great theater. The Celtics have sucked me back in and now I am excited to follow them throughout the postseason.

The Bruins have been stumbling a bit lately, but they will be dropping the puck on their playoffs as well. I can't wait.

Think about how much I just covered, that is also not mentioning the remainder of the high school sports like lacrosse, softball, track.

April really is the most exciting time of year of the sports calendar. Every single night there is something going on. Whether it be a big playoff game professionally, a rivalry matchup locally, and traditional events like the marathon, there is just so much buzz in this month. It also signals the beginning of the nicest part of the year and the end to the worst. It is always so much fun being a sports fan for these 30 days.

Now, the second part of my column is going to be about the aforementioned

Kyrie Irving and his antics in Sunday's game.

Most of you know the story by now, but for those of you who do not, I'll give you the quick rundown.

Kyrie Irving, one of the NBA's biggest stars, was a member of the Celtics for two seasons. Midway through his second year in Boston, he announced at a public team function that his intent was to re-sign with the team long term. Fast forward to the end of the season, he decided to move on to Brooklyn and essentially told the fans in Boston that he owed them nothing.

Now, two seasons later, he is public enemy No. 1 whenever he steps foot on the parquet floor and in the few games that he has been back, it has gotten ugly. Between profanity-laden banter, to fans throwing trash at him, to him stomping on the Celtics logo at center court, the relationship is about as bad as I have seen between a player and Boston fans in recent years.

On Sunday, the madness resumed. Fans booed, talked smack, and at two different occasions Kyrie flipped the middle finger to the crowd.

I'm probably going to get disowned as a Celtics fan, but I actually had no problem with Irving flipping the bird. At the end of the day, this rivalry has reached its boiling point, and if the worst thing he does is flip his middle finger, then I'd say that's pretty mild.

Do I like Irving? Nope, I think he was selfish every second he was in Boston and lied to the fans and acted like a dope on the way out. But, at the end of the day, I'm a sucker for entertainment, and although I don't agree with his gestures, I can't say I blame him.

At the end of the day, pro sports are about entertainment, and those interactions and back and forths are what will make Game 2 must-watch television. I'll have my popcorn ready.

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REPORTER & AUTHOR

As a reporter
Miller focused on
mental health
issues,
as an author
his imagination
was his
only control

By ALEX MALM

During his 40-year career as a journalist, G. Wayne Miller has written countless stories for the Providence Journal.

But his writing doesn't stop at the newspaper. Twenty of his books, some fiction and some non-fiction have been published with "Traces of Mary" just having been released.

"Despite carrying the scars of childhood trauma, Mary McAllister has enjoyed a successful career and become the mother of two wonderful children," the summary of the book reads.

"Then their deadbeat father leaves, her young daughter dies, and she is hospitalized in a psychiatric center as she seeks to recover from this devastating loss. But she is not the same when she is released—and during escalating periods of crisis, she claims to be possessed by Z-DA, an evil creature from a distant galaxy that has come to earth in a war almost as old as the universe itself with Ordo, leader of a good species."

"Traces of Mary" has a mental health theme. The book's summary asks "Is this real, or only extreme psychosis? Is Mary's young son, Billy, really Theus, the First Lieutenant for Ordo, as she increasingly believes? Is Billy's dead sister, Jessica, really reaching out to her brother for help in freeing her from the dark and distant place where she is trapped?"

Mental health is a topic Miller has reported about many times throughout his career. Early in his career the Providence Journal had a far larger editorial staff and Miller and other reporters had the opportunity to do investigative pieces and take a large chunk of time working on stories.

One of the assignments that Miller got to do was to spend a week at Ladd Center during its final days as the state's locked mental institution.

"People were treated barbarically there," said Miller.

It was the 1980s, a couple decades after the Journal first began investigating the center in the 1950s. Miller said conditions had improved when the state approved his request to stay at the center but it was still a powerful experience.

"That was pretty dramatic and powerful," said Miller.

Miller said he also spent a week at the Institute of Mental Health which is now part of Slater Hospital.

As a reporter especially early in his career Miller took advantage of the fact that he was allowed to write books based on the series he did with the Journal. He said that the only stipulation was that the Journal got rights to the series first. Miller said he wrote four non-fiction books thus far.

One of the non-fiction books that Miller wrote was called "Human Hands." He said he got to spend over a year at Boston's Children's Hospital observing the work of the chief of surgery, even getting to spend many hours in the operating room, when families signed off on it.

But all the way back in grammar school Miller said he always liked to write.

"I always liked to write fiction," said Miller.

COLLECTIBLES

Patriot's Day



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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Arriving in town, the crews were out early setting up the reviewing stand and closing down roads. Groups are arriving and heading to the staging area for the start of the parade. The town becomes alive with people all there for the same purpose, commemorating the British expedition to Concord to destroy military supplies and the fight that started our long struggle for independence from England.

A short walk from the center of town up Monument Street brings you to the Old Manse, in April 1775 the home of Reverend William Emerson, grandfather of author

Ralph Waldo. In the field in front of his house are the two cannons of the Concord Independent Battery preparing to fire salutes as the parade goes by. Just past the Manse is the causeway that leads to the north bridge, lined with folks waiting to see the parade and ceremony. As former chair of the Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee in Concord, I organized this parade for a few years, and it feels good to not have that stress as I stand and wait for the ceremony to commence. Soon the sounds of fifes and drums can be heard coming closer. That sound always stirs emotions inside of me. Then the parade arrives and passes by with militia companies and marching bands as the cannons bang away.

If you haven't read anything about April 19, 1775, grab a book and read up. It's a fascinating time in our country's history. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote "The thunderbolt falls on an inch of ground; but the light of it fills the horizon."

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Trinity's 'Sueno' is a dreamlike experience

Theatre Review by DON FOWLER

Never short on innovation, Trinity Rep has turned to one of the masterpieces of Spanish theatre, "La Vida es Sueno," or "Life is a Dream," with a modern interpretation by Jose Rivera, presented in the style of a telenovela, or Spanish soap opera.

Rivera and Director Tatyana-Marie Carlo have chosen to parody Pedro Calderon de la Barca's 1600s play to the nth degree, creating cartoonish characters in outlandish costumes (Shahzad Mazaheri), and combining verbal and physical humor with some pretty heavy material.

Patrick Lynch's set changes from dungeon to king's palace as characters race around and behind, while stagehands pass them props.

The Spanish king (Anne Scurria), always on top of her role, plays the outlandish king whose mission is to save Spain from those nasty outsiders.

He sends his son (Daniel Duque-Estrada) to prison for 25 years before revealing his existence to him and the world.

Can Segismundo save the kingdom, or will he react with vengeance?

Or is this all a dream?

Will the king's prophecies, based on the stars, prove false?

The tragicomedy is a metaphor for chaos, questioning whether or not life is but a dream.

Amidst profound questions raised, Rivera jumps from the sublime to the ridiculous. At one moment, we are dealing with issues raised by the world's great philosophers. The next moment, we witness shades of the Three Stooges or Abbott and Costello. Characters are spitting their P's in each other's faces or trying to enter a narrow door in an oversized dress.

"Sueno" is like something you have never seen before. It will challenge you. It will make you think about honor, patriotism, reality and prompt more questions than you can absorb.

It will also cause a few giggles and groans.

Prepare yourself for a wild and crazy evening.



The cast of Sueno. By José Rivera. Directed by Tatyana-Marie Carlo; Assistant Directed by Gia Yarn; Set Design by Patrick Lynch; Costume Design by Shahzad Mazaheri; Lighting Design by Christina Watanabe; Sound Design by Germán Martínez; Fight Choreography by Mark A. Rose. (Photo by Mark Turek.)

Jenna & the Janes get personal with debut album

By ROB DUGUAY

Music can show a special kind of authenticity when it relays a true story from the artist. As the lyrics, notes, beats and strums go along, the song examines an event concerning a relative, a loved one, a former flame or something out of serendipity or happenstance. When the craft is approached this way, it can give visuals to the listener as they're diving into the recorded track via their ears. All of this I just mentioned is evident within "Earth Dog Year," the debut album from the Brooklyn indie folk act Jenna & the Janes which came out April 1. It's the first installment of a creative partnership between this particular project headed by Jenna Smith and the Cranston-based record label Pitch & Prose.

Multi-instrumentalist Kenny Florence, bassist & pianist Michael Sanders, drummer John Stallings and cellist Polina Kermesh joined Smith for the making of the album. Florence also handled the production duties and some of the mixing while lend-

ing his talents on guitar, pedal steel, organ, clavinet, keyboards and cello. Neal Shaw took on some of the mixing as well while doing the engineering at the legendary recording studio, The Power Station, in New York City. Nikki Grande and Ben Miller assisted Shaw with the engineering while Dan Millice took on the mastering while additional tracking was done at Moon Recording in Brooklyn with Josh Liebman. As you can tell, it took a lot of talented folks to make this record a reality.

In my opinion, what really makes this album stand out are the melodies and harmonies. Smith's vocal delivery has a heartfelt substance to it while having a unique range that can hit the high notes in a peculiar way. Sanders and Florence on backing vocals adds a bit of vigor to the chorus of various songs as well. The instrumentation also has a stellar cohesiveness; it makes for a genuinely great listening experience with the tunes going together seamlessly.

I like the way the guitar leads off the title track. There's a slight psychedelic tone within the song as well. "Northern Light" is an ode to anyone who has had to get up and move on from their surroundings. The piano plays a nice part while going along with the steady drumbeats. Another track I like a lot is "Signs Of Life" -- everything builds from the guitar at the beginning to a stellar chorus.

If you're the type of person who enjoys harmonic vocals, melodic song structures and depth within songwriting, then you should check out "Earth Dog Year." To give it a stream and a purchase, log on to Pitch & Prose's Bandcamp page at pitchandprose.bandcamp. To keep tabs on what Jenna & the Janes will be up to in the future, follow them on Instagram at instagram.com/jenna.and.the.janes.



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Mark Wahlberg stars as Father Stu.

FATHER STU

*** 1/2 (Joyce) *** (Don)
From Boxer to Priest

Mark Wahlberg stars as Stuart Long, a foul-mouthed, womanizing boxer whose body has taken a beating over the years both in the ring and from crashing his motorcycle.

He ponders on what to do with the rest of his life. Why not become an actor?

Stu heads for Hollywood where getting acting jobs isn't as easy as he thought. He gets a job in a meat market, where he meets a devout Catholic Sunday School teacher who leads him to her church.

The motorcycle accident leads him to a coma-like state where he "finds God" and decides to become a priest, much to the chagrin of the Monsignor (Malcolm McDonald).

Stu's body fails him, making it impossible for him to carry on the required priestly duties, changing his life and his outlook completely.

The subplot involves Stu and his stubborn father (Mel Gibson) and their strained relationship.

Joyce like this one better than I did. The fact that it is based on a true story held my interest, although it still was hard to believe that this poor lost soul could become a priest.

Wahlberg gained a lot of weight for the movie, looking quite different from the muscular actor at the end of the tearjerker.

FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE SECRETS OF DUMBLEDORE

** 1/2

(More Wizardry)

If you are new to this pre-Harry Potter wizardry, you will be completely lost in the characters and the story.

While you will enjoy the fantastic beasts, the humans (both good and evil) are bores.

Mads Mikkelsen plays dark wizard Gellert Grindelwald, determined to rid the world of the Muggles.

Newt Scamander (a dull Eddie Redmayne) gathers his motley crew to stop Grindelwald.

The movie is filled with political dialogue (shades of 1930s Germany) and overlong battles with magic wands that look like sticks.

There are two more films planned for the series, and we don't have a clue as to where it is going

Except for the amazing computer-generated animals, there was nothing of interest for us in this long 2:20 hour movie.

Author

(Continued from page 19)

Knowing that he wanted a career where he could make a living he chose journalism. After graduating from Harvard he began freelancing for different publications while working as a baggage handler for Delta Airline in Boston.

After applying to a number of different places, he got a response from the editor of the North Adams Transcript.

"He took a shot on me," said Miller.

Miller said his first short story was published in a mystery magazine. He was paid a penny and a quarter per word. He still has his acceptance paperwork to this day.

Eventually he found an agent Kay McCauley, whose brother Kirby was the agent for Stephen King at the time to help him get more of his books published.

"That was a huge breakthrough," said Miller.

A Warwick resident, Miller said that he enjoys writing fiction because he is able to be creative.

"Your imagination is your only control," he said.

To this day Miller continues to write stories about mental health, with his latest being about a bill requiring the state to build suicide barriers on the Jamestown, Pell, and Mount Hope Bridges.

Throughout his career Miller said that he has seen less stigma around mental health.

"It's okay to talk about mental illness, it's okay to have mental illness," said Miller.

Miller's book can be found online on Amazon.

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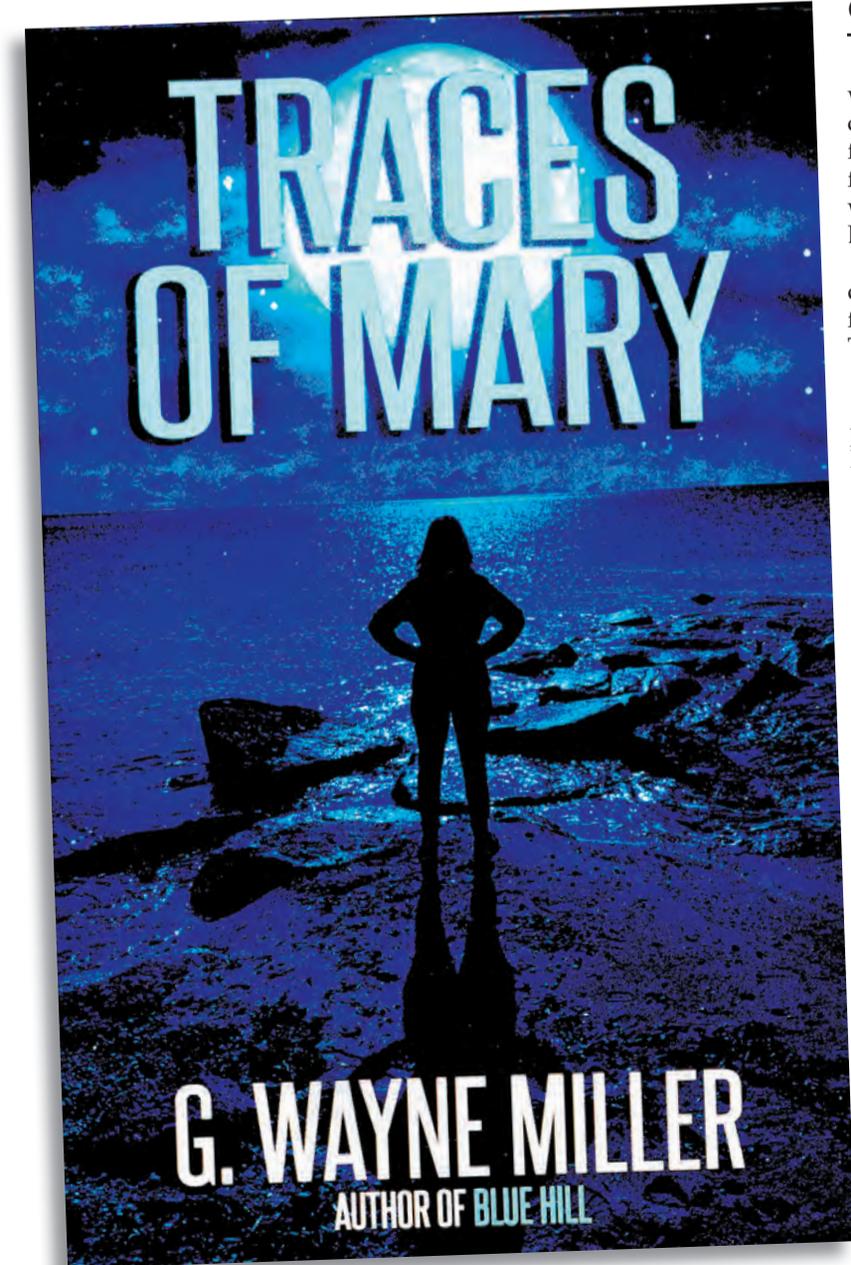
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Mother's Day Plans

Celebrate with Mom, Grandma and Great-Grandma as pandemic restrictions are lifted



Mother's Day has felt a little less than normal over the last couple of years. The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of many Mother's Day gatherings in 2020, and while things felt more familiar in 2021, this year may mark the most normal Mother's Day celebrations since 2019.

Pandemic-related restrictions have now been lifted in many towns and cities. Though it's best to confirm if any rules and restrictions are still in place before making any plans, individuals who want to make sure Mom has a special day can consider these planning pointers.

- Revisit old traditions. There's many ways to let Mom, Grandma and Great-Grandma know she's special, but after two years of living under the specter of a pandemic, few things might be as meaningful to Mom as a return to pre-pandemic traditions. Book a trip to a destination you've visited on Mother's Day in the past. If possible, visit a locale where Mom spent her first Mother's Day as a parent, ideally staying in the same hotel or rental home that hosted you back then. If it was once tradition to spend Mother's Day in a big city, return there and enjoy a day that recalls pre-pandemic life.

- Book a special trip. Millions of people canceled or postponed travel plans during the pandemic. Now that many places, including foreign countries, have lifted travel restrictions, families can feel safe taking off for parts unknown. Such a trip can be even more special if it's a surprise for Mom on Mother's Day weekend.

- Make it a family affair. Even Mother's Day celebrations in 2021 were likely smaller affairs than some moms might have preferred. If Mom spent some time wishing more family could be around on Mother's Day over the last two years, make a concerted effort to include as many family members as possible this year. Encourage grown children to travel home for the holiday and invite Mom's parents and siblings over to celebrate as well.

- Get out of the house. A homecooked meal might have warmed Mom's heart in recent years, but a day out of the house might be especially welcomed this Mother's Day. Book a reservation at Mom's favorite local restaurant so no one has any cooking or cleaning to do this year. Just be sure to book a reservation early, as the competition for a table figures to be especially stiff this year.

- Start the day off with a spa visit. Moms might have put pampering on hold during the pandemic. Now that public health agencies have given the go-ahead to lift restrictions, a good pampering is undoubtedly in order. A Mother's Day morning spa trip can start the day off right.

Mother's Day celebrations in 2022 should feel more normal than they have in years. Families can capitalize on that by planning a day Mom won't soon forget.

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SOCIAL SECURITY

by CHERYL TUDINO
SOCIAL SECURITY PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

How to Get Help from Social Security

In early April, local Social Security offices plan to add more in-person appointments and will again offer in-person service for people without an appointment. We have not set an exact date in April. **We continue to provide help in our offices by appointment only.**

As we expand in-person service, we strongly encourage you to continue to **go online, call us for help, and schedule appointments in advance.**

- The best way for people with access to the internet to get help from Social Security is online at ssa.gov.
- If you cannot use our website, call our National 800 Number (1-800-772-1213) or your local Social Security office for help. For quicker access to a representative at our National 800 Number, try calling early in the day (between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. local time) or later in the afternoon (between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. local time). We are also less busy later in the week (Wednesday to Friday) and later in the month.
- If we are unable to help when you call our 800 number or local office, we will schedule an appointment for you by phone or in-person.
- We may need to schedule you for an appointment at a later date or call you back to provide the service you are requesting.

- As we get closer to early April, we continue to offer more telephone and in-person appointments.
- The number of people a local office can help in person will depend on local health conditions and other factors.

Know before You Go

- If you visit an office, please keep these very important points in mind:
 - You must complete a self-assessment checklist to see if it is safe for you to enter an office.
 - Everyone must wear a mask. We will provide a mask if you do not have one.
 - You may need to wait outside because space in our offices may be limited. Please plan for the weather.
 - We ask that you come alone unless you require help with your visit. If you require help, we can only permit one adult to join you. Children are allowed.
 - Until announced, we are only able to help you in person if you have an appointment.
 - When we resume helping people without an appointment in early April, they should expect long lines, especially during the busiest times in our offices: Mondays, the morning after a federal holiday, and the first week of the month.

YOUR TAXES

by MEG CHEVALIER

File on Time

Taxpayers should file their tax return on time to avoid costly interest and penalty fees

Taxpayers should file their tax return by the deadline even if they cannot pay their full tax bill. Taxpayers who owe tax and don't file on time, may be charged a failure-to-file penalty. This penalty is usually five percent of the tax owed for each month, or part of a month that the tax return is late, up to 25%. If an individual taxpayer owes taxes, but can't pay in full by the April 18, 2022, deadline, they should:

- **File their tax return or request an extension of time to file by the April 18 deadline.**
 - People who owe tax and do not file their return on time or request an extension may face a failure-to-file penalty for not filing on time.
 - Taxpayers should remember that an extension of time to file is not an extension of time to pay. An extension gives taxpayers until October 17, 2022, to file their 2021 tax return, but taxes owed are still due April 18, 2022.
- **To get an extension to file, taxpayers must do one of the following:**
 - File Form 4868 through their tax professional, tax software or using Free File on IRS.gov.
 - Submit an electronic payment with Direct Pay, Electronic Federal Tax Payment System or by debit, credit card or digital wallet and select Form 4868 or extension as the payment type.
- **Pay as much as possible by the April 18 due date.**
 - Whether filing a return or requesting an extension, taxpayers must pay their tax bill in full by the April deadline to avoid interest and penalties.
 - People who do not pay their taxes on time will face a failure-to-pay penalty.
 - The IRS has options for taxpayers who can't afford to pay taxes they owe.
- **Set up a payment plan as soon as possible.**
 - Taxpayers who owe but cannot pay in full by April 18 don't have to wait for a tax bill to set up a payment plan.
 - They can apply for a payment plan on IRS.gov.
 - Taxpayers can also submit a payment plan request using Form 9465, *Installment Agreement Request*.

Interest is based on the amount of tax owed and for each day it's not paid in full. Interest rates are determined every three months and can vary, based on type of tax; for example, individual or business-tax liabilities. More information is available on the Interest on Underpayments and Overpayments page of IRS.gov.

Laura M. Krohn

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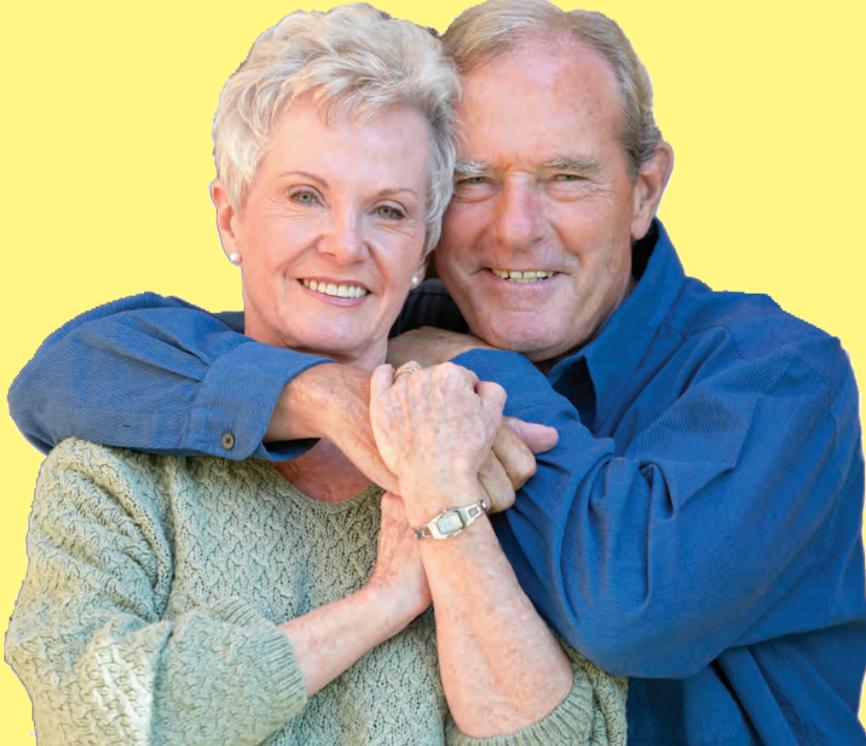
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MY SIDE OF THINGS
by LARRY GRIMALDI

Baseball is Striking Out

As you read this, the 2022 Major League Baseball season has begun. The last strains of the National Anthem linger over the park. Umpires have reviewed the ground rules and lineup cards have been exchanged. The home team has taken their positions on the field. Other roster members have settled into the dugout or strolled out to the bullpen. Fans have found their seats and vendors begin stalking the aisles hawking their wares. If you look closely, however, modern-day baseball is markedly different from the once pastoral, symmetrical, and intricate game of its origins.

Not all of baseball's changes over the last generations have been detrimental to the game. For example, retro stadiums like Oriole Park at Camden Yards, PNC Park in Pittsburgh, the Great American Ballpark in Cincinnati, to name a few, have replaced the massive concrete bowls carpeted with artificial turf. On the field, MLB is looking to a 14-second rule for pitchers to deliver the ball to the plate (bases empty) and 19 seconds (with base runners). If today's hurlers are as technically savvy as they claim to be (we'll discuss baseball ruination by technology later), they should already have determined their next pitch without consuming time it would take to read *War and Peace*. Rule infractions will be penalized and recorded as a ball. I am ambivalent about the National league finally adopting the designated hitter. Eliminating the pitch from the batting lineup does add offense to the game, but it also removes a bit of managerial strategy in the later innings.

Thankfully, MLB has abandoned the Sunday Morning Beer League seven-inning doubleheader and return to nine-inning games. However, MLB has decided to keep the ridiculous, softball-inspired International Tie Breaker rule. According to this idiotic rule, a runner is placed on second base, with no outs, at the beginning of each extra inning. I'm sure that Abner Doubleday and Alfred Goodwill Spaulding, two of baseball's most famous pioneers, rolled over in their graves when news of those diamond disasters reached them at Celestial Park.

I've a few more complaints about modern-day baseball travesties. Feel free to disagree. Let's start with the batter. Games slow to a snail's pace as he steps out of the box, fixes his batting gloves, glances at his bat, adjusts his uniform sleeves, and takes several practice swings before every pitch. Unless the batter is hit by a pitched ball, he should be allowed only one wandering from the box in each at-bat. The second exit, all consequential departures, will be recorded as automatic strikes.

Speaking of player-owner relationships, it's hard to sympathize with either side in a school yard spat between billionaires and millionaires. I don't know about you, but my first salary was not \$700,000, with a guarantee of a three and a-half month vacation! Long term contracts are another MLB mistake. What would be the incentive to keep producing at a high level if you know you were still going to rake in \$25 million or more for the next five, seven, or 10 years?

In my view, revenue sharing is uniquely anti-capitalism venture. As an owner, why should I share my profits with owners whose main objective is to count their millions while putting a Triple-A product on the field year after year (See the Baltimore Orioles and the Pittsburgh Pirates as examples). If there is a luxury "tax" for franchises willing to spend money for a competitive team, owners who do NOT expend at least a minimum amount on team salaries should be excluded from the revenue-sharing bonanza for that season. Why pay for consistent failure?

Baseball has evolved into a series of decisions made by computer read-outs. Computer "research" has established an arbitrary maximum of 100 pitches as the commandment for removing a pitcher from the game. In bygone days, if Oriole Earl Weaver went to the mound to take out Jim Palmer after 100 pitches, I dare say that even Weaver would be shocked at Palmer's "suggestions." MLB is also considering using a computer to call balls and strikes. WHAT? Removing the human element would represent a monumental surrender to technology. Periodic reviews of an umpire's strike zone calls would be more useful.

We already have milquetoast managers who will not make a strategic move without con-



sulting the all-powerful OZ of baseball- the statistical analysis. Clubs could fire the managers and coaches, save their salaries, and install AI in each major league dugout. I have absolutely no interest in the launch angle or velocity of a home run. I can see homers and don't need computer-generated graphics to confirm it. I'm also tired of the antics of a player who hits a home run in the bottom of the ninth with two outs and nobody on base celebrate like he just won the seventh game of the World Series, when in reality he has closed the gap to 10-2 instead of 10-1.

Most importantly, a family of four should not have to take out a home equity line or a payday loan at attend an MLB game. Using the closest team to me, the Red Sox, the cost of attending the Red Sox-Twins an April 16 game at Fenway might look like this:

Four Upper Bleacher Tickets:	\$200
Parking:	\$60
Two Score Cards	\$5
Year Book:	\$25
Four Chicken Finger Plates:	\$100
Two Beers:	\$30
Two Sodas:	\$15
Souvenirs:	\$75
TOTAL:	\$510

And, "Hold on to your homburg," the cost for ONE of those Upper Bleacher seats for the July 9 game with the New York Yankees is **\$118 per ducat!** It appears that the "free market" business model means that Red Sox ownership is "free" to fatten their wallets while fans they get "the business."

Nevertheless, if you can afford it, don't mind watching pitchers take forever to deliver a pitch (the 14-second experiment will fade into baseball history faster than you can say 14-second rule), or don't mind taking a nap while the batter completes his mindless repetition of superstitions, take in an MLB game. Play ball!

Larry Grimaldi is a freelance writer from North Providence. Comments can be e-mailed to lvgrimaldi49@gmail.com.



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MEMOIRS

by SUSAN DEAN

Helen's Legacy

Loss is a part of life. But we're never ready. We wake each day expecting everything to be the same - and for the most part, it is.

I wrote about my aunt and uncle, Don and Helen Mellor, back in November. They were the Grand Marshals in the Cranston Veterans Day parade. Heroes in every way. To their country and to their family.

Aunt Helen passed away at the end of March. Some might say that it wasn't unexpected - she was 98. But it was sudden. She had a difficult night and by morning it became apparent that the end was near. Her six children and their families arrived and spent a final week with her. She was surrounded by love, laughter, tears, and many, many shared memories. The NCAA was blaring on TV in the background. Helen was a fan of basketball, as well as all sports, and so it was a fitting backdrop.

Funerals are never easy, but hers can only be described as beautiful. The church was packed, the procession to the Veterans Cemetery miles long. Helen's children and grandchildren spoke about her - not in terms of formal eulogies - but in words telling of the simple things. They remembered the fun they had with her - how she was always laughing and upbeat. They talked about the early years when she would take them places and the later years when they would do the driving. She would comment on how beautiful the day was simply because the sky was so blue, giving them an appreciation of the world around them when they were young. They recalled singing together and laughed at how she usually changed the lyrics of well-known songs to fit the occasion, and how every excursion ended with sharing ice cream. They remembered summers in Maine, where Helen and Don had a house on a lake. The stories

they told - both funny and poignant - were a testament to her impact.

Within the stories, however, was a deeper truth. They all knew that each and every one of them was valued and loved. Six children and fourteen grandchildren - all knew that they had her full attention and felt her love when they were with her. They talked about how supportive she was of all of their endeavors. Never judgmental - from fashion advice to life's lessons - from living life to the fullest to following one's heart and finding their way to their dreams. There is an old saying about roots and wings - she gave her children the perfect balance of both - all wrapped up with humor and love.

I remember Helen's humor and love, too. She got me into running years ago when she was in her fifties and I was in my thirties. We were getting ready to run a four mile race in Maine one year - something we did along with many of our extended family every July. I had just turned 50 and she had just turned 79. Just before the race she lamented, "Oh, I wish I was 80 so that we could be moving into our next age divisions together!" And she truly meant it. Who wishes they were a year older - especially at age 79??

During the funeral church service one of her sons, addressing his father, had just finished saying, "Now, Dad, we know that Mom always gets the last word" and he'd barely gotten the words out when a cell phone rang out from somewhere in the filled pews. He ad-libbed, "In fact - she's calling now!" The church erupted in laughter that lasted several minutes. We all agreed that Helen would have approved.

Later, at the restaurant where we gathered to share a meal, my brother had set up a computer where he displayed a slideshow of family pictures. Between sets of pictures there were videos running of Helen playing the piano. She played her piano right up to her final days and my brother filmed her many times. The computer was running continuously while we

were eating, but at one point my cousin tapped a spoon on a glass calling out that he wanted everyone's attention. As we all quieted down, Helen - who was cheerfully playing one of her favorite classics on video - at that exact moment stopped playing, turned and looked straight into the camera attentively, and then started to laugh.

It was the second uncanny, serendipitous, hugely humorous coincidence of the day. Or maybe neither was coincidence at all. Maybe... just maybe she had a hand in making them happen and was laughing right along with us from wherever she is on her journey.

I visited with my Uncle Don in the days following Helen's send-off. He talked about how they married after only nine dates and celebrated 76 years together. How they raised six great kids - still calling them kids - and recalled their many travels and adventures. We laughed about Helen's humorous bent. When Don retired from his "retirement" job at the Cranston Library at age 99, Helen said that she was thinking she'd need to divorce him as he wouldn't be able to support her in the manner to which she'd become accustomed. We laughed together as we remembered.

Helen's legacy is one of love, too. She used to say that if Don passed first her heart would break into a million pieces. Don's heart, I'm sure, broke upon her passing. But a heart can only break if it is filled to the brim with love. Don's heart is still full - not just with love, past and present, but with gratitude, too. He is grateful for the love and years they shared - each moment a gift.

Uncle Don is 101. He still embraces the gift of every day. Before Covid he was visiting local schools and sharing his experiences of his Navy days. He wants to resume those visits soon.

Helen is sorely missed, but her spirit is living on in the lives and legacies of her family as we remember, and I know that she is laughing, always finding the humor and the joy - wherever her next adventure has taken her.



ACCORDING TO DON

by DON FOWLER

Being Neighborly

Spring is finally here. Pandemic restrictions have eased. It is time to venture outdoors and make contact with our neighbors once again.

We have lived on our dead-end street in Edgewood for over fifty years. We were the youngest when we moved here, and are the oldest today.

Neighbors come and go. We have been fortunate over the years to have had a 100% batting average with friendly, helpful neighbors.

After two trips to the hospital recently, I came home to a month of rehabilitation only to discover that neighbors still bring casseroles.

Scott brought venison stew. John brought a freshly baked, still

warm Irish bread on St. Patrick's day.

My doctor made a house call (Hon-est!), bringing his own special-recipe beef stew.

We have eight houses on our street, three of them with . They took turns plowing me out this winter. When it is icy, Patrick salts my walks.

My next door neighbor picks up my daily newspaper, which is dropped at the end of the driveway or in the bushes and puts it on my steps every day.

His son writes and distributes a neighborhood newsletter, informing us of new pets, people on vacation, and other happenings. The children play in our yard and shoot baskets in front of the house. We love to watch them. Before the pandemic, people invited us to

backyard picnics and special parties. Hopefully, our annual Christmas potluck party will return this year.

We have heard of other neighborhoods in Edgewood/Pawtuxet that hold annual block parties and street wide garage sales

- It's the little things that count:
- . Giving a homebound senior a call.
 - . Dropping by to check on seniors.
 - . Cutting the lawn/Shoveling the snow.
 - . Sharing the tomatoes from your garden.
 - . Keeping your eye on the neighborhood, especially when someone is on vacation.
 - . In short," Being Neighborly."



Is it time to downsize?

Individuals work hard to save enough money to purchase their homes. And the hard work doesn't end there. Once homeowners settle into a new home, they may set their sights on renovations that suit their individual needs. And even when buyers find a home that needs no such work, maintenance requires homeowners' utmost attention.

All that hard work is perhaps one reason why seniors may be a little reluctant to downsize as they advance through their golden years. In addition to the sweat equity homeowners put into their homes, all the memories they've made within their walls can make it harder to put a home on the market.

Downsizing is a difficult decision that's unique to each homeowner. Seniors who aren't quite certain if downsizing is right for them can consider three key factors to make a decision that's in their best interests.

- **Cost:** Perhaps no variable affects senior homeowners' decisions to downsize their homes as much as cost. No one wants to outlive their money, and downsizing to a smaller home can help seniors reduce their monthly expenses by a significant margin. Even homeowners who have long since paid off their mortgages can save substantial amounts of money by downsizing to a smaller home or even an apartment or condominium. Lower property taxes, reduced insurance premiums and the need to pay for fewer repairs are just some of the ways downsizing can save seniors money.
- **Space:** Many people love the extra space that single-family homes provide. But seniors can take a walk through their homes and see how many rooms they still use on a consistent basis. If much of the home is unused, seniors can probably downsize without adversely affecting their daily lives.
- **Market:** The real estate market is another factor to consider when deciding if the time is right to downsize. A seller's market can help seniors get the biggest return on their real estate investment, potentially helping them make up for meager retirement savings. For example, home prices skyrocketed across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, making that a great time for sellers to put their homes on the market. Seniors selling to downsize may capitalize on such spikes since they won't be looking to turn around and buy larger, equally expensive homes once they sell their current place. If the market is down and seniors can withstand the work and cost a little longer, it may be best to wait until things bounce back in sellers' favor.

Downsizing requires careful consideration of a host of variables. No two situations are the same, so seniors should exercise due diligence to determine if downsizing is right for them.



RETIREMENT SPARKS
by ELAINE M. DECKER

GOATS and PIGs and Other Acronyms

By now you would have heard that Tom Brady had decided to retire, his status as the GOAT football professional firmly in place. For those who don't know (likely very few of those who follow sports), GOAT stands for Greatest Of All Time. Since I started writing this, Brady has come out of retirement, likely poised to become even greater. Simone Biles is also a GOAT, for women's gymnastics. She has a goat tattoo on her shoulder. There are other animal acronyms that undoubtedly are not familiar, so I'm going to define them here.

My personal favorite is PIG. It stands for Popular Inspirational Guru. That title is held by my husband, Jagdish Sachdev, owner of SPECTRUM-INDIA on Thayer Street in Providence. He's so well recognized as the Guru of Thayer Street that a selfie with him often shows up as an item on scavenger hunts.

Another porcine acronym is SOW. That stands for Senior Opportunistic Widow, of which there are quite a few in almost every community. SOWs go on the hunt for recent widowers, especially ones who are financially well-heeled. Advice to any men who have recently lost your spouse: BOLO for SOWs in your circle of acquaintances. They are relentless.

Widowers might be attracted to a LAMB, however, if she's not also a SOW. A LAMB is the Last And Most Beautiful in her circle of widowed friends who has not yet found a new mate. If she does latch onto a widower, she might become an alternative LAMB, that is: Luckiest And Most Beautiful. As long as she's not a SOW, either LAMB can make a fine partner for a lonely widower.

Next we have DUCK, a Dude Using Charming Karma. DUCKs exist in all age groups. Just as a SOW will go after a recent widower, a DUCK might go after a recent widow, if she's been left enough assets by her late husband. BOLO to recent widows, DUCKs can be relentless, too. As far as I know, there's no male equivalent to the LAMB.

Someone else to watch out for is the SKUNK—a Senior Kahuna Using Noisy Kisses. The SKUNK latches onto you at a neighborhood gathering and plants a noisy,

wet kiss on your cheek before you realize what's happening. In the SKUNK's mind, if the kiss is noisy enough, he hasn't stolen it, so you shouldn't complain. If you expect any SKUNKs at a garden party, keep a packet of tissues handy. Noisy ones are usually wet ones. Also, some SKUNKs use a seemingly innocent 'hello' hug to cop a feel. Have a stiff-arm ready when you see a SKUNK coming.

Desirable members of your community earn the acronym CHICKEN. The Charitable Helper In Community Kitchens (for) Elderly Neighbors is someone you'll want in your contact list. They'll help out in food pantries, soup kitchens, any place that provides food for older folks of limited means. And please, no jokes about chicken pot pies.

Another welcome older community member is a SHEEP. Those of you who care about our environment will be thrilled to have Senior Humanitarians Ending Environmental Pollution in your group. They're often on the front lines of recycling efforts. They're also likely to volunteer to help with park cleanup in the spring.

A truly noble acronym is FISH, First In Social Harmony. FISH are always welcome in social circles. They are the peacemakers in the community. Unlike real fish and the proverbial unwanted guests, they do not start to stink after three days either.

A SNAKE, on the other hand, is to be avoided at all cost. SNAKES rarely last long in a community, or at least not long as a member in good standing. Be especially wary of SNAKES if you have a neighborhood pool. Why? A SNAKE is a Sexy Newcomer And Kinky Exhibitionist. That says it all.

Finally, I propose one additional acronym, of which I hope to take ownership. That's GOOSE. It stands for Greatest Of Our Senior Essayists. If anyone would like to challenge me for that title, go for it! I know at least one PIG who will vote for me.

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Elaine M. Decker's books include *Retirement Downsizing—A Humorous Guide*, *Retirement Sparks*, *Retirement Sparks Again*, *Retirement Sparks Redux* and *CANCER: A Coping Guide*. Her essays appear in the anthologies: *80 Things To Do When You Turn 80* and *70 Things To Do When You Turn 70*. All are available on Amazon.

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HEARTY AND FLAVORFUL

Make your meal a hearty, tasty one by starting it off with this recipe for Herbed Veggie Focaccia Bread, a pizza-esque flatbread that's a delicious alternative to all-too-common unhealthy appetizers. Topped with mushrooms, tomatoes, peppers, olives and onion, this delightful small plate packs a nutritious load of veggies. Find more nutritious recipes at AICR.org.

Herbed Veggie Focaccia Bread

Reprinted with permission from the American Institute for Cancer Research
Servings: 12

- Dough:**
- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour, divided
 - 1 package (1/4 ounce) quick-rise yeast
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup warm water, 125-130 F
 - 1 tablespoon canola oil
- Topping:**
- 7 medium fresh mushrooms, sliced
 - 3 plum tomatoes, chopped
 - 1 small green bell pepper, slivered
 - 1/2 cup sliced black olives
 - 1/4 cup chopped red onion
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 - 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 1/4 teaspoon thyme
 - 1/4 teaspoon basil
 - 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
 - nonstick cooking spray
 - 2 teaspoons cornmeal

Heat oven to 475 F.
To make dough: In mixing bowl, combine whole-wheat flour, 1/2 cup all-purpose flour, yeast and salt. Add water and oil. Beat until smooth. Stir in remaining all-purpose flour to form soft dough. Place onto floured surface and knead by hand until consistent and elastic, about 4 minutes. Cover and let stand 15 minutes.
To make topping: In bowl, combine mushrooms, tomatoes, green bell pepper, olives, onion, oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, oregano, thyme, basil and garlic powder. Coat 15-by-10-by-1-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle with cornmeal. Gently press dough into pan. With fork, generously prick dough. Bake 10 minutes, or until lightly browned. Cover dough with topping mixture. Bake additional 10 minutes, or until edges are golden brown.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

FIX UP A FLAVORFUL

Spring Table



FAMILY FEATURES

Finding the perfect recipe to share with loved ones can prove to be a year-round challenge. These tasty dishes that include a flatbread appetizer, shrimp main dish and a favorite seasonal dessert made with strawberries can help you serve up a meal perfect for any spring gathering.
Visit Culinary.net for more tips and recipes to make your springtime gatherings as nutritious as they are delicious.

FAST, FLAVORFUL FISH DINNER

If warm spring weather has you in the mood for a simple fish dinner, look to your humble sheet pan. Follow these simple tips from Dr. Wendy Bazilian, McCormick Health Advisor and Registered Dietitian, to enjoy tasty seafood recipes you'll want to make all year long.

- Sheet pans are perfect for simple fish dinners because they require minimal cleanup and everything is baked on one pan.
- While lemon is a great complement to seafood, think about pairing with other citrus flavors like orange and lime. Try marinating shrimp in a mixture of lite coconut milk, lime extract, ginger and red pepper.
- Add colorful vegetables like zoodles or asparagus to your sheet pan to boost both seafood and vegetable servings. You don't need a spiralizer to make zoodles because many grocery stores offer pre-made zoodles in the produce section.

Explore more recipes to enjoy during spring and beyond at McCormick.com, or look for McCormick Spice on Facebook and Pinterest.

Coconut Lime Shrimp with Zoodles

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Servings: 4

- 1/4 cup Thai Kitchen Coconut Milk (regular or lite)
- 1 teaspoon McCormick Ground Ginger

- 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Garlic Powder
- 1/4 teaspoon McCormick Crushed Red Pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon McCormick Pure Lime Extract
- 1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 small zucchini, cut into thin noodles with spiralizer
- 1 medium yellow squash, cut into thin noodles with spiralizer
- 1 medium carrot, cut into thin noodles with spiralizer
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon McCormick Ground Black Pepper

Heat oven to 375 F.
In large, re-sealable plastic bag, mix together coconut milk, ginger, garlic powder, crushed red pepper and lime extract. Add shrimp; turn to coat well. Refrigerate 15-30 minutes. Remove shrimp from marinade. Discard any remaining marinade. In center of large, shallow, foil-lined baking pan, arrange shrimp in single layer.
In large bowl, toss vegetable noodles and oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; toss to coat well. Spread noodles around shrimp in pan.
Bake 10-15 minutes, or until shrimp turn pink and are cooked through and noodles are tender. Serve shrimp over vegetable noodles.
Test kitchen tip: For faster prep, use 4 cups store-bought spiralized vegetable noodles instead of spiralizing them yourself.

DESSERT MAKEOVER

Strawberries are a seasonal favorite. Indulge by skipping the shortcake and whipping up this lower-calorie dessert for more flavor and less guilt. A whole-wheat crust layered with simple, low-fat ingredients and topped with fresh strawberries provides a tasty springtime treat. Find more good-for-you recipes at AICR.org.

Strawberry and Cheese Refrigerator Pie

Reprinted with permission from the American Institute for Cancer Research
Servings: 8

- 1 prepared whole-wheat graham cracker pie crust (9 inches)
- 4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 2 tablespoons extra-fine sugar
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 pound strawberries
- 1/2 cup strawberry fruit spread
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice (optional)

Heat oven to 350 F.

Place crust on baking sheet and bake 8 minutes, or until golden and fragrant. Transfer to wire rack and cool completely.
Place cream cheese, sour cream, sugar, lemon zest and vanilla in small bowl. Using hand mixer on medium speed or wooden spoon, blend until combined and smooth. Spread cheese mixture evenly over bottom of pie crust. Refrigerate until set, 1-2 hours.
Before serving, cut off tops of strawberries. Halve largest ones and place in bowl. Cut remaining berries lengthwise in quarters and place in another bowl. Melt fruit spread in bowl in microwave or in small saucepan over medium heat, stirring often. Mix in lemon juice, if using, and divide hot fruit spread between two bowls of berries. Using fork, toss until fruit is coated.
Spoon quartered fruit into center of pie, turning most pieces cut-side down. Arrange larger halves in circle around edge of pie with flat side facing rim of crust and pointing toward center of pie. Fill open spaces with any remaining fruit spread.
Serve pie within 1 hour.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images



Create structure after retirement

Many people typically look forward to retirement and the freedom that comes with it. The notion that commuting and deadlines will one day be a distant memory is enough to make anyone excited for retirement. But when the day to leave the daily grind behind arrives, many retirees admit to feeling a little anxiety about how they're going to find structure.

Retirement is a big transition, and Robert Delamontagne, PhD, author of the 2011 book "The Retiring Mind: How to Make the Psychological Transition to Retirement," notes that some retirees experience anxiety, depression and even a sense of loss upon calling it a career. Some of those feelings can undoubtedly be traced to the perceived lack of purpose some individuals feel after retiring. Without a job to do each day, people can begin to feel useless. Overcoming such feelings can be difficult, but finding ways to build daily structure can make the transition to retirement go smoothly.

- Find something to truly engage in. People who truly enjoy their work tend to be fully engaged, so it's no surprise if such individuals have a hard time adjusting to retirement. Some may suggest volunteering can help fill the void created by retirement, but researchers with the Sloan Center on Aging and Work at Boston College have found that only those individuals who are truly engaged in their post-retirement volunteering enjoy the psychological benefits of such pursuits. So before retirees dive right in to volunteering as a means to creating structure, they should first exercise due diligence and find an opportunity they'll find genuinely engaging.

- Embrace the idea of 'bridge employment.' 'Bridge employment' is the name given to the trend that has seen retired individuals take on part-time or temporary employment after they have retired from full-time working. COVID-19 has no doubt skewed post-retirement working statistics since the World Health Organization first declared a pandemic in March 2020, but a 2019 survey from the LIMRA Secure Retirement Institute found that 27 percent of pre-retirees with at least \$100,000 in assets planned to work part-time in retirement. Even part-time work can provide enough daily structure to help retirees feel as though each day is not just a free-for-all.

- Make a concerted effort to be more social. Volunteering and working are not the only ways to create structure in retirement. A concerted effort to be more social can help retirees fill their days with interactions with like-minded individuals who may be experiencing the same feelings. Join a book club, a local nature group that goes on daily or semi-daily morning hikes or another local community organization. These are great ways to build structure and meet new people. Retirees can create social media accounts to find local community groups that cater to their interests. Even if it seems hard to believe, plenty of retirees are seeking to create structure in retirement life, and social media can make it easier to find such individuals in your community.

Structure and retirement may seem like strange bedfellows. But many retirees seek structure after calling it a career, and there are many fun ways for seniors to create more organization in their lives. TF222687

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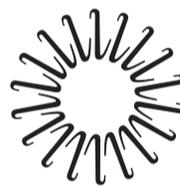


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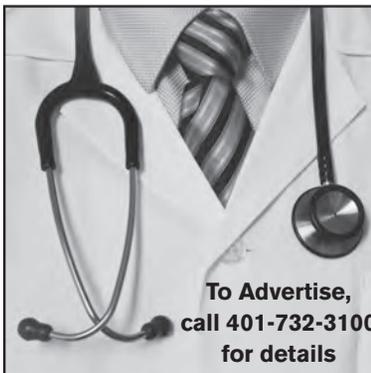
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AARP - RHODE ISLAND
by CATHERINE TAYLOR

Where Will You Live?

The “American Dream” has always included the promise of living comfortably in a home of our choosing – a dwelling well within our means in a community that meets our basic needs. Especially as we age.

Once, it seems, that wasn’t asking for much. But for too many Rhode Islanders today, fulfillment of this dream has become more like a nightmare. Our state is experiencing a housing crisis that is hitting older Rhode Islanders especially hard.

Affordability is a key factor. Historically low inventory in both rental units and homes for sale has sent prices through the roof. To make matters worse, only six of Rhode Island’s 39 cities and towns – Burrillville, Central Falls, Newport, New Shoreham, Providence and Woonsocket – have met an affordable housing goal the state set in 1991.

AARP Rhode Island’s recent *Vital Voices* survey of adults age 45 and older found that nearly half consider the availability of affordable and accessible housing a very serious problem.

Communities that want to thrive must have an array of creative housing options that are suitable for all incomes, ages, abilities and life stages. It’s time to reframe how we think about housing. It’s in everyone’s interest.

On April 26, AARP Rhode Island is holding a free virtual forum – **Thinking Outside the Four Walls: Age-Friendly Housing Ideas for How and Where You Want to Live** – so you may explore exciting housing possibilities and trends. National and local experts will discuss housing choices such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), tiny homes, intergenerational home sharing, communities of mutual support, and popular modifications you can make to your current home. I am delighted that Danielle Arigoni, Director of Livable Communities, AARP Government Affairs, will join us as our keynote speaker.

“Most homes and communities are not designed to be age-friendly,” says Danielle. “AARP’s Livable Communities initiative supports efforts to diversify housing options, so that people who want to downsize or move into a more accessible unit in their community can do so.”

Among our panelists will be Caroline Gangji, Executive Director, The Village Common of Rhode Island, a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization offering supports and social engagement for older adults who wish to age in their community.

“The Village Movement is strong across the United States with over 250 villages nationwide and began in Rhode Island in 2015,” she explains. “It is a system of mutual support, with neighbors helping neighbors with tasks such as providing rides to appointments, minor home chores, technology support and engaging social activities. “The strength in the village model is that it is never ‘just a ride’; rather, it is an opportunity to connect, make a friend, and act as a volunteer safety net around our members and volunteers.” Caroline will talk about villages in Barrington, Edgewood, Providence and Westerly, and a pilot village in Burrillville.

Another speaker, Andrea Burns of Age Friendly Boston, will discuss Boston’s Home-share initiative. “A majority of seniors in Boston spend more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing,” she says. “Home sharing can alleviate the high cost of housing for both renters and owners and the public health crisis of social isolation.”

I’m looking forward to hearing from panelist David Salvatore, a member of the Providence City Council and the Government Affairs Director for the RI Association of Realtors. He also sits on the RI House of Representatives Low and Moderate Income Housing Act Commission. An advocate for affordable housing, David is a crusader for developing affordable tiny homes in Providence.

“Exacerbating Rhode Island’s problem is a reputation for opposing new and creative construction, instead of focusing on building a housing model that works for all families, including our aging population,” he says. David will share his excitement about creatively converting existing, low-occupancy-rate office buildings into adaptive housing.

Our fourth panelist is Mark Kravatz, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence, who so eloquently reminds us that “a decent home provides the strength, stability, and independence that individuals need to thrive.”

I agree wholeheartedly with Mark, and that is why our event is so timely and important. Are you giving thought to where you will live as you grow older? Participating in this event may lead to compelling new discoveries. It’s all about thinking outside the four walls.

Please join us at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 26. It’s free and open to anyone interested, but you must register at www.aarp.org/RIEvents. We look forward to seeing you and finding some answers together.

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