

## Coach's ex-coach: 'One of the proudest days of my life'

### Johnston's Mazzulla loses 'interim' tag, becomes 19<sup>th</sup> Celtics head coach

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Boston Celtics of the NBA elevated Johnston native Joe Mazzulla to head coach last week, removing the "interim" tag that was placed prior to the start of the regular season. Mazzulla will be the 19<sup>th</sup> head coach in Celtics history.

Mazzulla, 34, played his high school basketball for Bishop Hendricken and would later play for Division I West Virginia in college. He later rose through the college coaching ranks and would be the head coach at Division II Fairmont before being hired as an assistant under Brad Stevens for the Celtics in 2019.

Former Celtics coach Ime Udoka was suspended by the team in the offseason for violating team rules. Mazzulla was promoted to interim head coach shortly after.



**COLLEGE DAYS:** Johnston native Joe Mazzulla during his college coaching days at Fairmont State. (File photo courtesy of Fairmont)

COACH - PAGE 12

## Hope shines Prayers of remembrance 20 years after The Station fire

By JOHN HOWELL and EDWARD KDONIAN

A lot has happened in two decades, yet the memories and, yes, the pain is as fresh as yesterday for those who lost loved ones in The Station nightclub fire on Feb. 20, 2003.

With tears streaming down his cheeks, Jody King stood before the altar at St. Kevin Church Sunday morning. King lost his brother Tracy to the inferno that killed 100 and injured, many severely, another 200. Tracy was a bouncer at the nightclub where pyrotechnics set off by the band Great White ignited the sound-proofing that was installed to deaden the sound.

"I wish Tracy was here with me," King said clutching a wrinkled photograph of his brother that he carries in his wallet.

Bruce Cain also attended the remembrance mass that Gina Russo, president of the Station Fire Memorial Foundation, Sue Stenhouse who at the time of the fire was working in the office of Gov. Donald Carcieri and Father Robert Marciano planned. Fearing inclement weather, the trio planned the St. Kevin mass and set Sunday, May 21 as a remembrance to be held in West Warwick at The Station Fire Memorial Park.

Cain lost his fiancée, Tina Ayer, to the fire. They had planned a June wedding.

"There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think of her," he said.

That feeling of loss was echoed by many attending the mass at St. Kevin and visiting the site of the memorial park the following morning. But there was so much to overcome that feeling of loss.

It was a reunion of many who during those dark days following the fire supported each other and the families of victims, first responders and the medical community. For others like newly named Bishop Richard Henning of the Diocese of Providence, The Station fire is a tragic event with little or no personal connection.

"As you know this tragedy, nearly 20 years ago, was our state's 911, and your family history, of your dad's faithful and lifelong service as a NY city firefighter and his role as a volunteer fireman in the town that you called home on Long Island brings you into our firefighter family and we take comfort and solace in your prayerful presence this morning," Father Marciano said addressing Bishop Henning in his homily.



**REMEMERING HER MOM:** Sarah Jane Ballard beside the memorial stone for her mother, Sarah Jane Telgarsky.



**IN A SHOW OF SUPPORT:** Sue Stenhouse, who worked the family resource center following the fire, greets Jody King who lost his brother, Tracy, to the fire. Looking on is fire survivor Robin Petrarca.

FIRE - PAGE 14

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# JHS Panther of the Week



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**POTW:** This week's Panther of the Week is Bobbi-Sue Trahan. Bobbi-Sue is a tenth-grade, first honors student who is also a Student Council Class Representative, as well as a member of the Float Committee and was on the Sophomore Battle of the Classes team. She was nominated by Ms. Amanda Areson. Ms. Areson said, "Bobbi-Sue is a conscientious student and a very hard worker. She treats her peers and teachers with the utmost respect. She has come out of her shell this year, as she is not only doing well in school but also participates in different clubs. She is the definition of a well-rounded teenager." (Photos submitted by Matt Velino, Johnston High School Assistant Principal)

**Editor's Note:** This is the newest installment of an ongoing weekly series highlighting Johnston's amazing students. Staff at Johnston High School will be nominating students and submitting a caption and a photo for publication. You'll find each week's winning Panther on Page 2 of the Johnston Sun Rise.

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**GOLDEN TICKET WINNER:**

Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School recently announced their latest Feinstein Jr. Scholar Golden Ticket winner Lyalo Harrison. The prize package included a \$5,500 grant for Ferri Middle School, a congratulatory letter from Alan Shawn Feinstein, a Golden Ticket certificate, a special set of collectibles for Lyalo from Alan Shawn Feinstein's personal holdings and a Youth XL Feinstein Jr. Scholar sweatshirt. According to Ferri Assistant Principal Lisa Hunt, Harrison has decided "to give the money back to Ferri (woohoo!)." (Submitted photo)



# Eat, paint, wine



**COLORUL CREATIONS:** Among those people who took part in last week's Wine and Stencil Paint special social are: Brie Mutzke, Erin Campbell, Carol Conley, Mike Mangasarian, Lucy Short and Joan Stanizone. (Sub Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

By PETE FONTAINE

People "listened to their art" on a recent Thursday inside The Bridge at Cherry Hill in Johnston.

Yes, A-R-T, during an event when people enjoyed wine and awesome appetizers that were part of Stencil Painting with Chrystal-Lee Trudeau.

People who work fine facilities like the Elmhurst Rehabilitation Center, Capitol Ridge and Rhode Island Film & Television Office — just to name a few — produced colorful works that could be used in their home of office.

"We could call this sip, dip and dab," mused Michael Mangasarian, The Bridge at Cherry Hill's popular sales/community relations director. "This is certainly a unique way to create a work of art."

The night began with people sitting at tables that featured a white and colorful, red-accented Valentines Teddy Bear and reading slogans on one of four blue stencil boards with white lettering that read: "Love with Gnomes," "You Don't have to be crazy to work we'll train you," "Believe in yourself," and "I will start working when my office does."

After receiving instructions from Trudeau and getting small, plastic plates topped with a rainbow of colors, the guests picked up tiny sponges from a small bowl they dipped into a myriad of colors and began dabbing or filling in all white spaces on the 10-inch by 10-inch square stencil board including the border.

Meanwhile, Trudeau — who is a veteran and certified elementary school teacher in the state — went from table-to-table smiling and observing the work of her "newest class" suggesting various mixes they could use from the selection of 24 colors.

"This is so much fun!" exclaimed many of the attendees who echoed those sentiments with other ladies and Trudeau. "What a great way to socialize and be creative."

Likewise, Trudeau told the group "teaching and art have always been my two biggest passions. I began

this (Listen to Your Art) in 2018 to explore the joy of art education and celebration. It has been an incredible journey so far. I have fallen in love with dozens and children and made so many new friends like everyone here tonight."

Trudeau, who received sincere thanks from people like Mangasarian while emphasizing, "I look forward to many years of love, laughter and art!"

It was that and more and guests enjoyed classic color creations from the kitchen of Executive Chef Marvin Carter whose skills surfaced again in form of grilled Memphis seasoned chicken medallions wrapped in hickory smoked bacon and chilled shrimp with citrus infused cocktail sauce.

Carter also had pan seared Ahi Tuna with Wasabi Aioli, beef teriyaki skewers, Maryland crabcakes with Cajun-mustard remoulade and grilled margherita pizza with Italian prosciutto that went rather nicely with three different flavors of wine.

At night's end — after all the painted boards dried — Trudeau showed everyone how to remove the stencil sheet to look at their colorful art creations.

She then took out a roll of ribbon and tied it into two holes of each board so it could be used as a wall-hanging in an office or home.

All of which concluded another special social success that just might come back to The Bridge at Cherry Hill — and other places in Johnston — sometime soon. Upon receiving thank yous, the former third grade teacher explained: "Classes are offered for all ages. A variety of mediums will be used as you explore your artistic freedom and develop your craft. The goal of these classes is to provide opportunities for you to explore freely with no worry about the right way or wrong way. I will be there to guide, support and encourage throughout the process."

Just like she did last during last Thursday's visit to The Bridge at Cherry Hill.

Trudeau also has a studio behind her home in Chepachet. Contact her at 401-744-7490 or [listenyourart@gmail.com](mailto:listenyourart@gmail.com).



**PAINT PALS:** Mike Mangasarian, Sales/Community Relations Director at The Bridge at Cherry Hill, is all smiles as he and Crystal-Lee Trudeau hold the boards used in last week's Wine and Paint.



**CLASSEY CHEF:** The Bridge at Cherry Hill's Executive Chef Marvin Carter completes setting up appetizers people enjoyed during last week's Wine and Stencil Paint Night.



**PERFECT PAINTING:** Lucy Hebert shows off her finished multi-color stencil board painting she created during last week's unique Wine and Paint at The Bridge at Chery Hill in Johnston.

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**LOVE LANE:** The JSC's new-look Valentine's Day luncheon featured fine food, delicious dessert and people enjoying their special day dancing to music. (Submitted photo)



**CENTER CREATORS:** Gloria Renzi (left), who coordinated last week's JSC "Art Rock" day, joins Algeria Vaughn-Bailey and Isabel Moore during the fun-filled and first-ever event. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)



**PRIZE PAINTINGS:** This is an example about the "Art Rock" program during which JSC members painted special valentines and messages on rocks that washed ashore on the state's coastline. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

# JOHNSTON SENIOR CENTER



**SPECIAL SUPPLIES:** Bob and Doreen Balmforth, Bruce Hyder and Tarja Vienonen hold a special board filled with brushes and paints used in last week's "Art Rock" program. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)

## Hard rock painting

By PETE FONTAINE

There was a unique and rock-solid two-day Valentine's celebration last week inside the Johnston Senior Center.

In fact, the nationally-accredited facility, once the famed El Morocco Supper Club, was a flurry of activity ranging from creating works of art on rocks that once washed ashore on Rhode Island's beaches to changing the theme of Red Roses for a Blue Lady.

Both days, in fact, were the epitome of Executive Director Richard J. DelFino Jr.'s plan to make the JSC a place where Johnston's senior citizens could utilize their time and talents in a variety of programs before enjoying the day's always tasty lunch.

DelFino, who wants to make the JSC "a second home for seniors" also asked members for their input on programs they'd like to have offered.

Enter Gloria Renzi, a clever and creative artist, who suggested the idea of painting rocks in different colors along with wishes for Valentine's Day.

"Let's do it!" DelFino exclaimed. "I'll provide the rocks and have all supplies provided by the center — there will not be any cost."

So, early last Monday morning women like Algeria Vaughn-Bailey, Isabel Moore, Tarja Vienonen, Doreen Balmforth and her husband/popular member/pianist Bob Balmforth and John DiRicco were among the early arrivals as Renzi was placing small brushes, multi-color

paints and markers on four long tables.

Before long, every seat was occupied as members began creating their own works of "Rock Art" as the first-ever program was entitled.

"Great stuff," DelFino related as he went table-to-table watching the JSC's artists. "Wow! Each rock is becoming impressive; this is exactly what we want to develop here."

Tuesday was what DelFino called "a normal lunch day made extra special as the spacious multi-use dining room was transformed into a sea of red balloons, flowers and centerpieces and while most of the staff and guests were dressed in some sort of apparel while commemorating that special day like years past."

The luncheon was highlighted by raffles and a special delivery from John Dick — a great supporter of the center and town groups who owns Atwood Florists in Johnston — who donated what DelFino noted were "dozens upon dozens of red carnations."

Even the day's dessert of red velvet cake was a huge hit as was the variety of bakery goods donated by BJ's Wholesale Club that went along nicely with the morning coffee.

"We want our seniors to come here, be treated with respect and feel honored and special," DelFino said. "I want the center to be a thriving community where they receive quality services and special recreational programs. Most of all I want our members to feel this is their happy place — making a regular lunch day extra special."



**FANTASTIC FLOWERS:** There weren't any "Red Roses for a Blue Lady," only dozens upon of red carnations that Atwood Florist Owner John Dick donated for the JSC's special Valentine's Day Lunch. (Submitted photo)

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# Johnston to share \$10 million mental health grant

By RORY SCHULER

It's no secret. Our kids need more help than ever. Johnston has been awarded grant funding to provide additional mental health services, and school administrators welcome the money.

"Johnston will share in the award of a \$10 million school-based Mental Health Grant program as one of four districts chosen," Johnston Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. said recently. "The grant, administered by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) over the course of five years, will be piloted in four local education agencies (LEAs) Coventry Public Schools, Johnston Public Schools, Exeter West Greenwich Regional School District, and the Segue Institute for Learning, with the goal of supporting all students."

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) received the \$10 million federal grant to recruit and retain mental health service providers and further support student wellbeing, according to a press release from the agency.

"The district is thrilled to receive the School Based Mental Health grant from (RIDE)," said Edda Carmadello, Johnston's Director of Special Services. "We are committed to developing sustainable recruitment and retention strategies in the field of mental health while partnering with other LEA award receipts and post secondary institutions."

Rhode Island Gov. Dan McKee announced the state had received the grant last month.

"School mental health providers are essential in creating and sustaining safe, successful school communities," McKee said. "Today's announcement is a significant step as we work to recruit and retain these professionals. My administration sends its gratitude to the uniquely trained and committed school psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other mental health providers making a positive impact on our students each day."

Following the pandemic, school faculty members have been faced with more student mental health concerns than ever before.

"School psychologists, social workers and counselors provide services to students and families from preschool to high

school," Carmadello explained. "Their vision has been to create a multi-tiered level of social and emotional support for each student in every building. Most staff have been in the district for many years and have a vast amount of expertise and knowledge in this area, however, over the last several years we've seen an increase in the number of students who require ongoing social, emotional, and wellness support."

DiLullo said Johnston will be able to "hire more school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists" thanks to the grant.

"The district intends to provide multiple full time clinicians in each building," Carmadello said. "Universal screening, social and emotional district wide curriculum, and professional development are some initial strategies during year one of implementation. District staff and school teams will complete a needs assessment to determine future plans for years two (through) five."

According to RIDE, the grant will benefit an estimated 10,000 students and cover the hiring of "approximately 24 school counselors, 23 school social workers, and six school psychologists across the four pilot LEAs to meet the national ratio recommendations."

"Through comprehensive school-based mental health services, Rhode Island will not only address inequities in access, but also reduce the stigma associated with receiving support," RIDE Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green said. "This grant will allow our LEAs to double down on recruitment and retention of mental health professionals while weaving emotional well-being into the fabric of our schools."

The grant program also aims to increase the number of mental health service providers from diverse backgrounds, better reflecting the student population, Carmadello explained.

"The Council is thrilled to see yet another significant investment in the mental health of our students," said Chair of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education Patti DiCenso. "The relationship between student mental health and academic success is well-documented, and we are grateful to the educators who have stepped up and supported students and families during trying times. We're excited that

with this funding we will strengthen support systems in our school communities."

U.S. Senator Jack Reed, D-Rhode Island, helped to sound the alarm recently following a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report showing an urgent need for more school-based mental health support.

The new data, revealed by the latest CDC Youth Risk Behavior report, "shows teens — especially girls — are experiencing shockingly high levels of depressive symptoms, suicidal thoughts, and mental health challenges," according to a press release from Reed's office. "Nearly 1 in 3 high school girls reported in 2021 that they seriously considered suicide and nearly 60 percent of teenage girls reported feeling so persistently sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in a row during the previous year that they stopped regular activities."

Reed said the data "should serve as a national wakeup call and spur Congress to take further action to address the mental health crisis impacting today's youth."

"This is an emergency and we're seeing more kids end up in emergency rooms experiencing mental health issues because we're not being proactive enough and providing integrated care and sustained support," Reed said. "When it comes to mental and behavioral health services, it's important to meet children where they are and connect them to the help they need. Early intervention and timely services are essential and schools can play a key role. We must ensure an integrated system and appropriate, professional staffing is in place to support student well-being and assist schools with their mental health resources to better serve at-risk students."

Reed helped the Ocean State secure the \$10 million federal grant.

"The youth suicide crisis is a waking nightmare," Reed said. "Congress should treat this as a national emergency and help save lives by ensuring young people have immediate and comprehensive access to mental health care. We want everyone to know that help is available and we need to do appropriate outreach so people can access the support they need."

## SUN RISE SCOOPS

### Sun Rise Staff Reports

#### More at Mohr Library

West Bay RI is providing beginning American Sign Language classes at Mohr Library starting Wednesday, March 8 at 1 p.m. The classes will continue each Wednesday except the first Wednesdays of the month. The instructor will cover letters, numbers and simple phrases. All are welcome to this free class.

Mohr Library will participate in this year's "Read Across Rhode Island" programming to read and discuss True Biz, a bestselling book which the publisher calls "an unforgettable journey into the Deaf community and a universal celebration of human connection." Dates to be decided (let the library know of your interest and request the book soon).

The library will host a 3-part book discussion of Prince Harry's popular memoir, "Spare," on Thursday nights at 6:30, on April 6th, 13th and 27th.

Regular storytime for preschoolers is offered Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. There are afterschool activities nearly every day, in-

cluding varied programs for middle and high-school age kids and crafts for younger kids.

For adults, the crochet group continues to meet Fridays at 10 a.m.

The Library is located at 1 Memorial Ave. in Johnston. Call 401-231-4980, email info@mohrlibrary.org, or visit their website at mohrlibrary.org.

#### Johnston Senior Center highlights

The Johnston Senior Center is better than ever. Offering more exercise programs and trips every week; Hi Lo Jack, Monday & Wednesday and Poker on Wednesday. Arts & Crafts, on Monday, Mar Jong on Thursday & Quilting on Wednesday, Tia Chi on Tuesday. The Senior Center also has a book Club the last Tuesday once a month.

There is no charge for Senior Center activities. They offer Bingo on Thursday and Friday. Lunch is served daily at 12 p.m. (with a suggested donation of \$3).

A Social worker/Medicare Counselor is also provided 5 days a week. Contact Madeline Ravenelle at 944-3343.

Feel free to come in for a tour of the facility at 1291 Hartford Ave.

#### Soul of '71 Scholarship Fund

The Johnston High School Class of 1971 is raising donations for The Soul of '71 Scholarship Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation. A generous donor has offered a \$4,000 challenge! The donor will match all gifts to the Fund up to a total of \$4,000. The Class of 1971 initiated the fund on the occasion of its 50th reunion in 2021. Each year a scholarship will be awarded to a Johnston High School Senior planning to attend a college, university, trade or technical school. Donations are tax according to your filing status. To donate, go to the following website: [www.rifoundation.org/funds/soul-of-1971-scholarship-fund](http://www.rifoundation.org/funds/soul-of-1971-scholarship-fund).

#### NAMI-RI: Registration open for Family-to Family course

The Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness is now accepting registration for our next virtual Family-to-Family course which begins Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023. This is a free, 8-session educational

program for families, 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](http://namirhodeisland.org) or call 401-331-3060 or email [beth@namirhodeisland.org](mailto:beth@namirhodeisland.org).

**Editor's Note:** Send submissions to [rorys@rhodybeat.com](mailto:rorys@rhodybeat.com). Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit 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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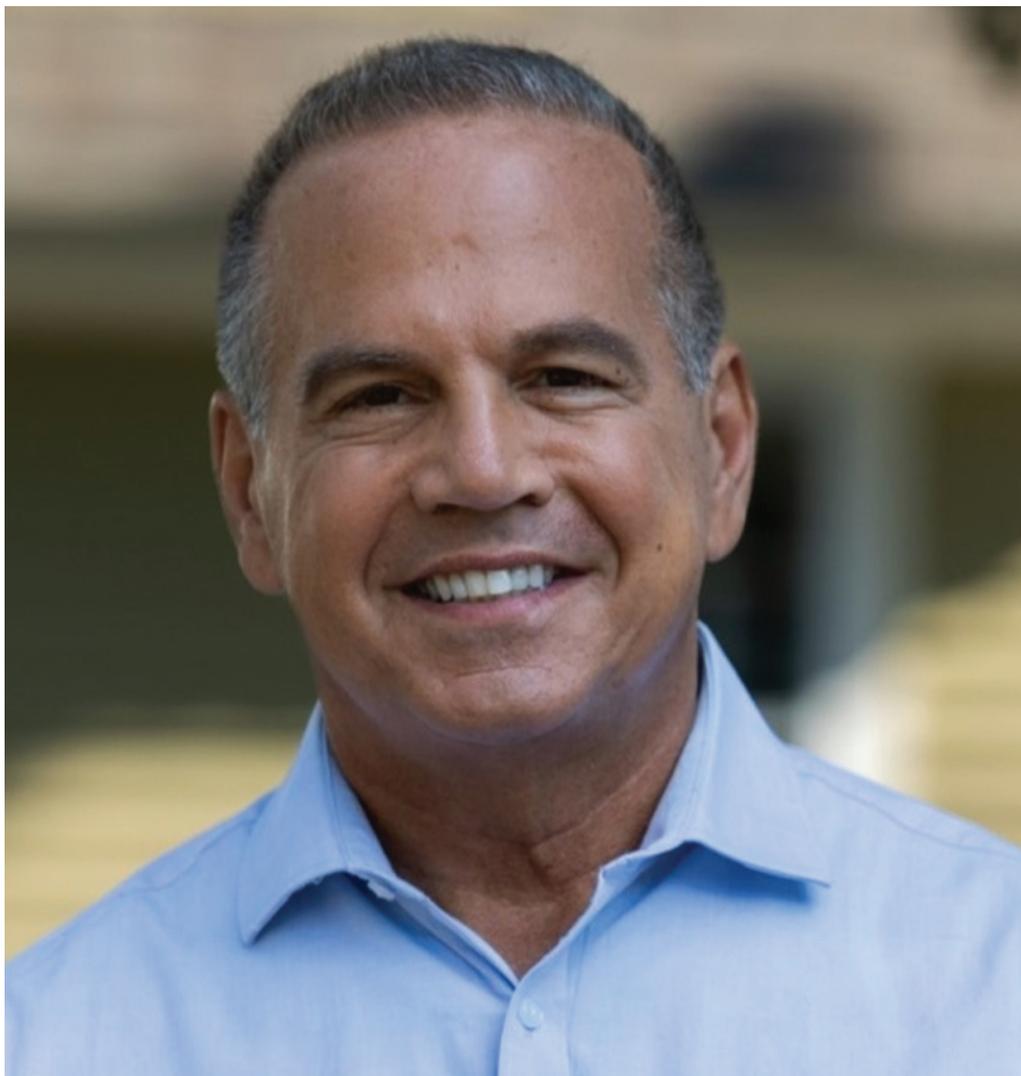


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**VACATING SEAT:** U.S. Rep. David Cicilline will give up his seat to head the Rhode Island Foundation. His salary will nearly quadruple, from \$174,000 as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, to \$650,000 as CEO of the Rhode Island Foundation. (Courtesy photo)

# Cicilline to vacate house seat, head Rhode Island Foundation

By RORY SCHULER

Rhode Island's senior congressman will be getting a raise. Though to get the paycheck, he'll be giving up his seat representing Rhode Island's First Congressional District.

As of June 1, U.S. Rep. David Cicilline will give up his seat to head the Rhode Island Foundation. His salary will nearly quadruple, from \$174,000 as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, to \$650,000 as CEO of the state's "community foundation."

"That figure is consistent with what CEOs of community foundations of similar size across America earn," explained Chris Barnett, Rhode Island Foundation Senior Communications and Marketing Officer. "With assets totaling \$1.3 billion, the Foundation is the largest funder of nonprofits in Rhode Island. In 2021 — the most recent year for which final numbers are available — the Foundation awarded \$76 million in grants to 2,300 nonprofits."

Cicilline's career move will trigger an election that's sure to be an Ocean State free-for-all. Several potential candidates have already declared interest in running for the seat, once Gov. Dan McKee sets a date for the special election.

"For more than a decade, the people of Rhode Island entrusted me with a sacred duty to represent them in Congress, and it is a responsibility I put my heart and soul into every day to make life better for the residents and fami-

lies of our state," Cicilline said in a statement released Tuesday morning. "The chance to lead the Rhode Island Foundation was unexpected, but it is an extraordinary opportunity to have an even more direct and meaningful impact on the lives of residents of our state."

Cicilline, a Democrat serving his seventh term in the U.S. House, "was selected by the Foundation's board of directors after a thorough national search that included significant community input and generated an impressive pool of diverse candidates."

"I am thrilled with the choice of Representative Cicilline as the next president and CEO of the Foundation, having seen first-hand — over many years — his commitment to a better Rhode Island," said Neil D. Steinberg, the Foundation's current president and CEO. "He has the experience, the skills, the passion, and the network to ably lead the Foundation. I'm confident that he will very successfully engage with our donors, non-profit grantees, and community stakeholders."

The new congressman doesn't necessarily have to live in Rhode Island's First Congressional District to run for the seat. While many names of potential candidates were floated throughout the day Tuesday — from unsuccessful Democratic gubernatorial candidate Helena B. Foulkes to Joe Paolino III, son of former Providence Mayor Joe Paolino Jr. — McKee can't set the election date until Cicilline vacates the seat in June.

"Today is not the day for political speculation," said Rhode Island House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi. "I want to thank Congressman Cicilline for his many years of outstanding public service to the people of Rhode Island. David is a tireless worker and advocate, and I am confident he will lead the Rhode Island Foundation in the same strong manner as Neil Steinberg has done for many years."

Cicilline served as a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Upon Cicilline's departure, U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner, newly elected in 2022, will become Rhode Island's senior congressman.

"Congress's loss is the Rhode Island Foundation's gain," Magaziner said in a statement released Tuesday. "Although I've only had the privilege of serving alongside Rep. Cicilline for a matter of weeks, I am eager to build upon our partnership during the remaining months of his term and in his new role."

First Congressional District constituents can continue contacting Cicilline's office for assistance with federal agencies and to engage with staff on legislative issues. "Members of Cicilline's staff will continue to operate offices in both Rhode Island and Washington, D.C. under the supervision of the Clerk of the House of Representatives until a new member of Congress is elected to fill the unexpired term," according to his office.

Prior to Congress, Cicilline was elected to the Rhode Island General Assembly (where he served from 1995 to 2003), and as mayor of Providence (from 2003 to 2011). The Rhode Island Foundation touted Cicilline's stature as "the first openly gay mayor of a U.S state capital city" in the press release announcing his hiring.

"From his time as Mayor of Providence to the halls of Congress, David is a hard charger who brings passion and energy to any task he undertakes," U.S. Senator Jack Reed said in a statement released Tuesday afternoon. "He's a results-oriented coalition builder, and those skills will serve him well in this next chapter of his career."

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- Sun. Feb. 26- VALLEY C. C. Warwick\*
- Wed. Mar. 1- LOBSTER POT, Bristol
- Fri. Mar. 3- COURTHOUSE CTR. W.King.
- Sat. Mar. 11- The ISLANDER, Warwick
- Sun. Mar. 12- TWIN OAKS, Cranston\*
- Wed. Mar.15- LOBSTER POT, Bristol
- Thu. Mar. 16- WHITE'S, Westport- St. Pat's\*
- Sun. Mar. 19- DAVENPORT'S, East Prov.\*
- Sat. Apr. 8- The ISLANDER, Warwick
- Sat. April 22- BELLA, Glenville

Fri. Mar. 24- Doreen Collins' The Ladies Room  
All Female Comedy Night, The Event Center, Wrk.  
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Reservations/Info/More dates at  
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**PROMOTED:** Johnston Police Department recently announced a pair of promotions. Dana Gousie has been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, and Derick Ofori has been promoted to the rank of Sergeant. (Photos courtesy Johnston Police)



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**Sun Rise**

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# JOHNSTON POLICE LOG



**SEIZED:** Johnston Police seized this Glock 27 from a Cranston man during a traffic stop Feb. 8. (Johnston Police photo)

## UNLICENSED GUN

Around 9:51 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 8, Johnston Police Sgt. David Galligan was traveling south on Atwood Avenue when he observed a vehicle traveling north. The vehicle drove left of the center double yellow line and passed three cars on the left, according to police. Galligan turned his cruiser around and initiated a traffic stop.

Galligan approached the vehicle and informed the driver about the reason for the stop. The driver initially stated that he did not have a license, and provided Galligan with a false name. During questioning, Galligan observed that the driver was extremely nervous and struggled to answer basic questions. Additional officers then responded to the scene to assist.

Due to the driver's movements, behavior, and evasive demeanor, he was asked to exit the vehicle so that officers could conduct a search. As he exited, Galligan observed a bulge resembling a firearm in the top front of his waistband. A search of the driver then revealed a Glock 27 containing seven 0.40 cal. rounds in a loaded magazine.

The operator was subsequently advised of his rights and placed under arrest. Through the course of the investigation, the driver was identified as Vanny Proeun, 36, of Cranston. Proeun had one previous arrest on his record and does not possess a license or permit to carry a pistol, according to police.

Proeun was charged with felony License or Permit Required for Carrying a Pistol, Obstructing an Officer in the Execution of Duty, Driving

with a Suspended License (first offense) and Overtaking on the Left.

We would like to commend Sgt. Galligan and the assisting officers for their outstanding situational awareness and professionalism.

## FELONY ASSAULT

At 9:50 a.m., Feb. 9, Johnston Police responded to a store in town to investigate a reported disturbance. Upon arrival, the victim told police they were involved in a verbal argument with another party who allegedly brandished a red and black utility knife, which he drew from his waistband.

The argument was "in reference to the store aisle being closed."

Police identified the suspect as Adan Castillo Carpio, of 33 Pekin St., Apt. 1, Providence.

The victim told police that Carpio brandished the knife, pointed it toward him and stated "what do you want to do" followed by an expletive in Spanish. The victim told police that the argument ended after the knife was drawn, and Carpio eventually left the building parking lot in a gray Dodge minivan.

Police located and detained the vehicle as it was exiting the lot. They found the knife in the vehicle glove box, according to the arrest report. Carpio was arrested and transported back to headquarters, processed and held pending arraignment on Felony Assault and Disorderly Conduct charges.

## FATAL CRASH

Rhode Island State Police (RISP) are investigating a fatal crash on Route 6 in Johnston.

Around 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 11, State Troopers from the Scituate Barracks as well as members from the Johnston Fire Department responded to crash involving a single motor vehicle on the off ramp to Killingly Street from Route 6 East in Johnston.

The investigation revealed that a BMW sedan was traveling on Route 6 East in the area of Killingly Street, according to RISP.

The driver of the BMW attempted to negotiate the off ramp from Route 6 East to Killingly Street at a high rate of speed, police said, but

failed to negotiate the right-turning curve in the off ramp. The car entered the grass embankment and traveled approximately 250 feet east down the embankment.

At this time, the operator steered left, attempting to correct back toward the highway, causing the vehicle to rollover on its passenger side, police said.

The BMW rolled down the embankment before striking the ground with the passenger side front fender, rolled over on the passenger side hood, making one full revolution. The flipping car cleared the on ramp from Killingly Street to Route 6 East, and came to final rest on its tires, facing east in the wood line, police said.

The driver, identified as Jimmie Pemberton, 49, of Fall River, Massachusetts, was unbelted and ejected, according to state police. The front seat passenger, the only other occupant, was extricated from the vehicle by Johnston Fire and Rescue.

Pemberton was transported to Rhode Island Hospital by Johnston Rescue and pronounced dead a short time later. The passenger, a female resident of Providence, was also transported to Rhode Island Hospital with life threatening injuries. She remains in critical condition, according to RISP.

Members of the State Police Accident Reconstruction Unit and the Forensic Services also responded. The crash remains under investigation.

## EMBEZZLEMENT

Around 11:09 a.m., Feb. 3, Johnston Police responded to a local business to investigate the report of embezzlement.

A loss prevention officer at the store told police that the suspect, Iris Hernandez, of 100 Stone Hill Drive, Johnston, had allegedly made 12 fraudulent transactions, totaling \$1,464.27, between Jan. 10 and Jan. 28.

Police said Hernandez is accused of keeping receipts of items for which customers paid in cash, and then exchanging them (though the merchandise was not returned) and keeping the refunds.

Hernandez was arrested by Johnston Police and charged with Embezzlement and Fraudulent Conversion, a felony.

## LEGAL NOTICES

### Public Auction Legal Notice

Form of notice under RI General laws 39-12.1 to 12.1-15

To: Francisco Ortiz Escoto 67 Daniel Ave Providence RI, Rivas Auto Sales and Repairs INC 11 Roger Williams CT Providence RI 02907  
A public auction will be held at 100 South Street Johnston RI on March 3, 2023 at 900 am. The vehicle a 2011 Honda JHLRE4H47BC002064 belonging to the above, the auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

# Opinion

EDITORIAL

## A public transportation power grab

Over the weekend, the Rhode Island Senate leader called publicly for RIPTA CEO and former Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian to step down, paving the way for Rhode Island DOT to take over as the leader and organizer of the state's quasi-public transportation agency responsible for ferrying millions of people each year to their destinations they otherwise couldn't access.

In his statements, Sen. Dominick Ruggiero sought to lay all of RIPTA's shortcomings at Avedisian's feet, and said, "It is time for wholesale reform at RIPTA."

While there is certainly merit to the argument that RIPTA can find room for improving its performance (the staffing shortages preventing kids from getting to school in the fall was a gaffe) — and even less debate regarding the looming financial crisis the agency faces as federal aid supplied during Covid runs dry — we strongly question the hypothetical efficacy of folding the entire organization under the auspices of the DOT.

Logistically, this would be anything but straightforward. RIPTA employs around 800 people, according to their website, many of whom are union-represented and have their own pension plan separate from the state pension plan that would be utilized should they be transformed into DOT employees. The complexities of this factor alone make us question whether or not such a move is remotely worth the effort or cost of the many legal hours that would be required.

Politically speaking, this overhaul would also be no easy feat. Ruggiero's Senate, and whatever legislation comes out of that chamber, will have to earn the approval and support of Joe Shekarchi's House of Representatives — the same Shekarchi who has been publicly supportive of Avedisian's tenure at RIPTA.

Making matters muddier is that there is also absolutely no reason to believe that DOT could do a better job of running RIPTA than RIPTA can. The Rhode Island Department of Transportation has more than enough to worry about as the stewards of infrastructure — highways, state roads, and bridges throughout Rhode Island — without trying to expand their horizons into the world of public transportation logistics that operates atop that infrastructure.

While we would not claim that Avedisian is beyond criticism, we think it simply unfair for him to be scapegoated during a time when it seems the entire public transportation sector faces similar issues across the country. Although it may sound like a cop-out, the majority of RIPTA's problems come down simply to a lack of funding, not a lack of leadership or thoughtful direction.

The General Assembly and Governor McKee would be better served finding ways to better fund the public transportation system that is relied upon by so many as it currently exists, not attempting what amounts to a political coup backed by no empirical evidence.

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



LETTER

## Match this donation and help your community

Our organization decided to contact all Italian organizations in the area to see who would get on board in helping those in need.

Well, eight letters were sent out and we only got a few responses.

But, the Pannese Society from Cranston came across big with \$500.

David Veditalli is the president, who took over for Joseph Spremulli, who passed away a year ago. Dave told us he liked what we were doing and asked other organizations in the area to match his donation.

The funding is going directly to those in need.

The next big step for the Spirit of Hope is helping those with mental illness. There is a plan being worked on as we speak, with a professor at one of our colleges in Rhode Island. We hope to get all our information together, review all data to submit for some type of support from our government.



**Louis Spremulli**  
Founder, Spirit of Hope  
Johnston

**BIG DONATION:** Louis Spremulli, Spirit of Hope Founder, accepts a \$500 donation from David Veditalli, Pannese Society President. (Submitted photo)

## BALLY'S AND LOCAL LAWMAKERS ARE PUSHING TO PERMIT ONLINE GAMING



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# JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL Q2 HONOR ROLL

## High Honors

Melissa Aguilar 2025  
 Lucas Anderson 2025  
 Kaitlyn Barbosa 2026  
 Allison Benoit 2023  
 Kevin Biscelli 2024  
 Trinity Blondin 2024  
 Logan Brennan 2024  
 Hailey Brown 2023  
 Olivia Bryant 2026  
 Emily Buddenhagen 2024  
 Tyler Buote 2025  
 Hannah Calabro 2023  
 Samuel Cambranes 2023  
 Kylie Caroselli 2023  
 Michael Cepeda 2023  
 Vincent Chan 2023  
 Sofia China 2024  
 Matthew Clements 2025  
 Haley Connors 2023  
 Destinee Costa 2023  
 Alexia DiLorenzo 2024  
 Willson El Hage 2023  
 Caitlin Fasteson 2023  
 Cameron Ferrara 2024  
 Joshua Galeas 2023  
 James Guilmette 2023  
 Jonathan Guilmette 2024  
 Victoria Hansen 2026  
 Lauren Hill 2023  
 Emma Homenick 2023  
 Aliyah Hunt 2023  
 Siera Jeetan 2023  
 Emily Klein 2023  
 Alyssa Kleinberg 2026  
 Fujiy Kue 2023  
 Brenton Lang 2025  
 Jaylin Loeum 2024  
 Dylan Lussier 2024  
 Channosophonn Mam 2025  
 Chelsea Maranhao 2024  
 Logan Martins 2025  
 Maylin McAteer 2023  
 Bennett McClish 2026  
 Peyton McClish 2024  
 Ava Melo 2023  
 Jaylen Molina 2023  
 Jacob Muller 2023  
 Alexandra Musa 2026  
 Eliyahna Negrón 2024  
 Brendon Norris 2024  
 Janelle Nunez 2025  
 Ayomide Olagundoye 2023  
 Lilian Oliva Garcia 2023  
 Sebastian Orozco 2024  
 Nicole Patenaude 2025  
 Noelle Patenaude 2025  
 Joshua Philbrick 2023  
 Genesis Pineda 2025  
 Emily Pistocco 2023  
 Skyla Prata 2025  
 Fallon Provoyeur 2026  
 Tyler Renaud 2023  
 Gianna Ricci 2025  
 Isabella Ricci 2026  
 Anthony Rini 2023  
 Hollan Rodgers 2026  
 Justin Rogala 2023  
 Steffi Rotella 2023  
 Phoenix Russell 2023  
 Lana Salamone 2024  
 Derek Salvatore 2023  
 Raylin Santos 2024  
 Makayla Scuncio 2023  
 Andrew Sia 2024  
 Shane Simeone 2023  
 Lucas Simpson 2026  
 Aiden Soto 2025  
 Jayden Testa 2024  
 Abraham Tillet 2025  
 Jackson Troxell 2023  
 Cameron Veitch 2026  
 Anghelina Vejarano 2023  
 Dominic Whitten 2023  
 Nathen Zalisk 2023  
 Catrina Zinni 2023  
**Total High Honors: 85**

## 1st Honors

Katlyn Allen 2026  
 Elizabeth Almonte 2023  
 Jenna Aucone 2024  
 Camani Batista 2023  
 Kalina Bonetti 2024  
 Kara Bonetti 2026  
 Gianna Brodeur 2023  
 Macenzie Buddenhagen 2024  
 Andrew Cardullo 2026  
 Elliot Cortesi 2025  
 Michael Cucca 2026  
 Giuseppe Cucinotta 2025  
 Jazmin Cuello-Pineda 2025  
 Charles Curci 2023  
 Arianna Dandy 2025  
 Timothy Davis 2024  
 Anthony DiBiasio 2025  
 Ava DiNobile 2026

Adrianna Dinucci 2025  
 Linda Echeverria 2023  
 Emily Feinstein 2023  
 Olivia Forgetta 2026  
 Robert Franchini 2025  
 Ayberson Garcia Cruz 2025  
 Naomi Garcia Ore 2026  
 Amanda Giron Caballero 2025  
 Kinya Glenn 2025  
 Serenity Gonzalez 2024  
 Riley Guenette 2024  
 Carlos Gutierrez Deleon 2025  
 Gianna Halliwell 2024  
 Susana Huevo 2023  
 Michelina Irons 2023  
 Talia Laflamme 2023  
 Nina Lautieri 2024  
 Timothy Liang 2026  
 Katelyn Loffler 2025  
 Angelica Maddaline 2026  
 Gabriella Manchester 2023  
 Samantha Marcotte 2024  
 Balla Marone 2025  
 Dylan Martins 2023  
 Dylan Moore 2023  
 Connor Niles 2025  
 Elijah Odhiambo 2023  
 Daniel Ordonez-Flores 2026  
 Gianna Orozco 2025  
 David Pagliarini 2024  
 Lexie Palma 2024  
 Gregory Panarello 2024  
 Alexis (Alex) Pannone 2024  
 Juliana Pires 2023  
 Michelle Recinos 2024  
 Tzivya Reyes 2026  
 Nicholas Rianna 2023  
 Alexis Rivera 2026  
 Dylan Robbins 2023  
 Jesse Santillan 2025  
 Caitlyn Savard 2023  
 Jason Schino 2026  
 Christian Sonner 2024  
 Marlon Soto 2023  
 Shylah Soto 2024  
 Carl Taglianetti 2024  
 Luke Taglianetti 2025  
 Branden Testa 2024  
 Bobbi'Sue Trahan 2025  
 Cameron Vanstone 2023  
 Anthony Vendetti 2026  
 Ava Waterman 2024  
 Jordan (Fae) Weston 2025  
 Austin Wheeler 2025  
 Syeda Zainab 2024  
**Total 1st Honors: 73**

## 2nd Honors

Ferlandi Aguilar Lopez 2023  
 Logan Hayden Akins 2025  
 Saad Alam 2025  
 Iraís Alcorta-Franco 2024  
 David Allan 2023  
 Vincent Allen 2026  
 Skyla Almeida 2026  
 Amelia Almonte 2024  
 Anayeli Almonte 2026  
 Tala Alsheikh Kassem 2026  
 Christopher Alves 2025  
 Emily Anderson 2023  
 James Anderson 2023  
 Mya Angell 2025  
 Nicki Aucone 2025  
 Kayleigh Baker 2025  
 Genesis Bamba 2026  
 Gabriella Barata 2026  
 Isabella Barata 2025  
 Joseph Benoit 2025  
 Jordan Bracey 2025  
 Jack Bremer 2025  
 Mark Brouwer 2023  
 I'daizha Brown 2026  
 Sadie Bun 2025  
 Ella Rose Butterfield 2025  
 Dylan Calabro 2026  
 Melanie Capraro 2023  
 Ryan Capraro 2026  
 Michael Carlino 2024  
 Dariana Carrascoza 2023  
 Autumn Cartwright 2026  
 Lorenzo Catanzaro 2026  
 Joseph Centeno-Gonzalez 2023  
 Dylan Cerio 2025  
 Henri Chan 2025  
 Michael Chavier 2024  
 Christopher Civetti 2024  
 Elise Connors 2024  
 Jaiden Cordero 2026  
 Evan Correia 2023  
 Juliana Correia 2023  
 Anthony Corsinetti 2023  
 Jonathan Cruz Granados 2026  
 Nolan Cumiskey 2023  
 Madison Dacosta 2023  
 Armando DeCosta 2023  
 Antonio DeFalco 2023  
 Chantal DeJesus 2025

Yarielis DeJesus 2026  
 Hunter D'Elia 2026  
 Devin DelSanto 2024  
 Fernando Diaz 2026  
 Michael DiIorio 2025  
 Samantha DiMaio 2023  
 Tyler Diodati 2025  
 Jada DiRaimo 2026  
 Lauren Dixon 2025  
 Regan Estrella 2024  
 Landon Faucher 2024  
 Vanessa Febus 2026  
 Alex Fedorchuk 2024  
 Gianna Ferranti 2026  
 Abigail Ferri 2026  
 John Ford 2023  
 Haileigh-Rose (Alister) Fredette 2026  
 Deanna Funches 2026  
 Stanley Garcia 2023  
 Hannah Gervais 2023  
 Annabella Gesualdi 2026  
 Jesse Geyer 2026  
 Kyle Glode 2023  
 Valeria Gomez 2023  
 Angela Gonzalez 2023  
 Joseph Grenier 2026  
 Caleb Guimaraes 2023  
 Zachary Hanna 2025  
 Adam Heywood 2026  
 Walter Homenick 2026  
 Malikai Hopp 2025  
 Dineishka Hunt 2024  
 Olivia Iafraite 2026  
 Ariana Iasimone 2024  
 Jada Irons 2023  
 Vanessa Javery 2025  
 Marcel Johnson Goncalves 2025  
 Emily Joseph 2026  
 Hailee Joyal Weiss 2025  
 Hayden Judd 2026  
 Devin Kent 2023  
 Lucio La Terra Bellina 2024  
 Devyn Lacasse 2024  
 Ashley Lainez Natareno 2025  
 Gavin Lapan-Brayall 2023  
 Michael Lariviere 2026  
 Hannah Lavergne 2024  
 Noah Lavergne 2023  
 Thadeus Leomensah 2023  
 Joseph Lopez Tavares 2025  
 Genesis Luna-Olivo 2023  
 Isabella Maggiasimo 2024  
 Neko Mahony 2025  
 Gabriella Marandola 2024  
 Analese Marcano 2026  
 Samantha Marcotte 2023  
 Mouhamadou Marone 2023  
 Kameron Martins 2024  
 Hailee McDaniel 2025  
 Aidan McGarry 2023  
 Ariana Medeiros 2023  
 Ava Mello 2026  
 Rachael Mendoza 2026  
 Ernesto Mercado Anez 2026  
 Gabriela Mercado 2024  
 Jiana Mitsoulis 2024  
 Jaden Mollock 2026  
 Melissa Emely Monteiro 2026  
 Karissa Morales 2025  
 Jonathan Morris 2025  
 Max Mousseau 2026  
 Heber Munoz Lopez 2026  
 Hector Munoz-Lopez 2024  
 Ahmad Naser 2026  
 Neriah Nhar-Matko 2025  
 Mia (Ryo) Nilsson 2025  
 Randy Ortega 2025  
 Jeremy Ovalles 2025  
 Dean Paris 2025  
 Gabriella Pascale 2025  
 James Pastore 2024  
 Loren Pastore 2025  
 Jianilda Perez Figueroa 2023  
 Ariana Perron 2026  
 Michael Perugino 2024  
 Alessandra Pesere 2024  
 Caroline Pesenecker 2025  
 Jacob Pettit 2026  
 Brea Pezzullo 2026  
 Kaylee Phillips 2026  
 Xavier Pol 2024  
 Matthew Ponte 2025  
 Kaylee Poole 2024  
 Jonathan Prata 2026  
 Catherine Privitera 2025  
 Danny Quinn 2024  
 Hailee Quinn 2024  
 Donavin Quinones 2024  
 Miguel Quintanilla 2023  
 Isabella Ragosta 2023  
 Joseph Ramos Cardoza 2026  
 Victoria Repollet 2026  
 Johan Rodas Cruz 2024  
 Jahaziel Rodriguez 2024  
 Yandery Rodriguez 2024  
 Jayannah Rollins 2024  
 Janzel Roquez 2023  
 Diana Rosales 2024

Aiven Rua 2025  
 Rayven Russell 2026  
 Lilianna ( Warren ) Salois 2025  
 Leah Sanchez Perez 2026  
 Kiara Sanchez 2026  
 Joshua Sanford 2024  
 Celeste Santanelli 2025  
 Selina Santanelli 2025  
 Christian Sarmiento 2025  
 Shanna Scopelliti 2024  
 Anthony Sevigny 2023  
 Athena Sin 2023  
 Nathaniel Smith 2024  
 Paul Souza 2023  
 Ariana Stoepker 2025  
 Alexander Subirana 2026  
 Parker Sylvia 2023  
 Alik Symoungkoun 2026  
 Sunny Sysomphou 2023  
 Alejandra Torres Morales 2023  
 Lena Torti 2024  
 Isabella Vargas 2026  
 Leanna Vargas 2026  
 Marques Vasquez 2025  
 Ronald Vento 2026  
 Nicolas Viau 2023  
 Lia Vidal Roman 2026  
 Victoria Villafane 2026  
 William Vizcaino 2023  
 Cameron Walker 2024  
 Nicholas Williams 2025  
 Logan Woodall 2025  
 Janelle Yeomans 2026  
**Total 2nd Honors: 190**

## 3rd Honors

Jacob Abbruzzi 2023  
 Santiago Aguilar 2024  
 Aubree Allen 2024  
 Willow Andrews 2024  
 Hailey Arroyo 2024  
 Gabriel Bandoma 2024  
 Marlice Baptista 2026  
 Nicholas Benoit 2026  
 Haley Boudreau 2026  
 Gerson Cabrera 2024  
 Georgiana Cardullo 2024  
 Kayla Carpentier 2024  
 Jacob Carr 2024  
 Ryan Carvalho 2025  
 Nevaeh Cole 2023  
 Yohani Cortez 2023  
 Enajah De La Cruz 2023  
 Nathan Della Morte 2026  
 Franger Diaz Pena 2026  
 Santo DiRaimo 2025  
 Briana Dominique 2023  
 Sam Dominique 2023  
 Samson D'Uva 2025  
 Amir Espinal Carrasco 2026  
 Alberto Estrada 2024  
 Kingstan Glenn 2024  
 Yadier Grullon 2026  
 Jasmin Guerrero 2024  
 Kenderra Guertin 2025  
 Jake Hicks 2023  
 Dylan Hill 2024  
 Logan Horne 2024  
 Karen Lastor Rojas 2024  
 Jared Lee 2025  
 Jayla Mainey 2024  
 Cidalia Major 2026  
 Olivia Medeiros 2026  
 Michael Messina 2026  
 Benjamin Monahan 2024  
 Alan Montenegro 2025  
 Ashley Morales 2025  
 Davian Nunez 2024  
 Julianna Ortiz 2025  
 Alvin Pena 2026  
 Matthew Penafiel 2025  
 Sheyla Perez Sosa 2025  
 Anthony Perito 2026  
 Jaqueline Pinto Lopez 2023  
 Ethan Placella 2025  
 Thainaliz Quinones Cruz 2024  
 Daisy Rickett 2026  
 Alan Rietwijk 2023  
 Alayath Rietwijk 2025  
 Joemil Robles Torres 2026  
 Sofia Rose 2025  
 Jaselle Santos 2023  
 Kimberly Sibilis 2025  
 Jonathan Simpson 2023  
 Ayva Soprano 2026  
 Sheyla Soto 2023  
 Skyley Soto 2025  
 Brandon Souza 2025  
 Jacob Spinella 2024  
 Michael Stone 2025  
 Gianna Usenia 2025  
 NeAri Vasquez 2024  
 Samantha Vasquez 2026  
 Sarah Vasquez 2025  
 Anderson Villa 2025  
 Jenna Whitman 2023  
**Total 3rd Honors: 70**

# Obituaries

## Gary David Young

Gary David Young, 81, passed away Thursday, February 16, 2023. He was the fourth of seven children born to George Albert and Ferdona (Spaulding) Young, June 6, 1941 in Mexico Maine.,

He is survived by his wife Ellen (Fraser) Young and children Heather Preuss and her husband Robert and their two children Andrew and Catherine from Milton, VT. and Gary II and his wife Laura and their two children Benjamin and Evan from Johnston, Rhode Island.

He is also survived by five sisters Noreen Milledge and her husband John of Mexico, ME., Dolores Mowat of Mexico, ME., Dona St. Cyr and her husband Richard of Delaware, Sheila Weld and her husband Bruce of Dixfield, ME., and Joette Carlton of Hebron, ME. He was predeceased by his parents and brother Steward and sister-in-law Georgie Young, brother-in-laws Thomas Mowat and Raymond Carlton.

Gary graduated from Mexico High School and the University of Maine at Farmington, at Farmington Maine.

He was a selectman for the Town of Livermore, Maine. He owned and operated H & G Supply in Livermore, ME. and was a special education teacher for MSAD#43 Rumford, ME. Gary was master of Whitney Lodge #167 AF & AM, Canton, ME. and Oriental Star Lodge #21 AF & AM, Livermore Falls, ME. He was also District Deputy for the 20th Masonic District. He was a volunteer with two programs that the Mason's promoted, bikes for books and the Chips program as well as the Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts. Gary loved to spend time in the out of doors mostly hunting and fishing.

In June due to his illness he moved to Johnston, R.I. and built an in law apartment onto his son's and daughter -in-law Laura's home.

There will be no funeral or burial services per his request. In lieu of flowers, donations to your favorite charity will be appreciated.

For Online Condolences visit, [www.TuckerQuinnFuneralChapel.com](http://www.TuckerQuinnFuneralChapel.com)



## Angelo Imondi

It is with deep sorrow that the family of Angelo Imondi share the sad news of his passing at the age of 91. He was the husband of the late Lois (Gisselbrecht) Imondi for 61 years. Born in Providence, he was the son of the late Angelo and Vincenzina (Mancini) Imondi.

Angelo, a Korean War Veteran, a loving father, grandfather, brother, and uncle, is survived by his daughter, Lois O'Brien, granddaughters, Alexandra Brown and her husband Richard and Angela O'Brien. He also leaves his great-grandchildren, who he referred to as his paisans, Chayden, Ava, Alivia, Camden, and Amaya, and his sister, Evelyn Grindley and brother, William Imondi and his wife Muriel, and sisters-in-law, Grete and Janice Imondi. He was predeceased by his siblings, Ann Blackwood, Carmine (Hank) and his wife Rita, Joseph and his wife Angie, Albert and his wife Maria, Mary Kusmierz and her husband Stephen, John and his wife Nancy, Paul and Richard Imondi.

We wish to offer a special thanks to the Hular Hospice Center for the compassionate care of Angelo.



**OUTSTANDING ORGANIZERS:** Vin LaFazia, Jessica Fede and Steve Pacella are all smiles after collecting each of the 220 tickets for the recent told out Ricky Salzillo Memoria Game Dinner that will be back on Feb. 4, 2024. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

# Date set for 2024 Salzillo dinner

By PETE FONTAINE

People are still abuzz about the recent Richard D. "Ricky" Salzillo Memorial Game Dinner.

So much so, in fact, Chairman Steven M. "Steve" Placella, speaking on behalf of the long-time and dedicated volunteer committee, this week announced, "We're coming right back here next year!"

"We are thrilled and thankful for everyone that turned out to make it such an overwhelming and special success," Placella offered. "Please save the date — it's Feb. 4, 2024 — right here at the Santa Maria DiPrata Society (on 29 Walnut Grove Ave. in Cranston.)"

Placella, who along with Vin LaFazia and their close-knit group of friends that includes Frank and Nick Fede, John Graham, Ken Fellela, Jessica Fede, John LaFazia and Nicole De-Christofaro, also wanted it known: "Ralph's Food & Kitchen is also coming back!"

In fact, as many people have told organizers: "Ralph's food is second to none; it's always hot and there's lots of it. His food is fantastic."

Likewise, Ralph's staff received kudos for their extraordinary service which explains why every one of the 220 attendees helped fill up a huge plastic salad bowl with tips for the waitresses."

That has, in recent years, been a tradition for the now 42-year-old fundraiser that will again provide college scholarships to graduating Johnston High student as well donations to important non-profits in the state.

Placella also announced that the brothers Fede, Johnston natives who own and operate Kingstown Liquors on Post Road in North Kingstown, will also be back bigger and better than ever with another raffle that this year included countless bottles of liquor in coolers, a variety of beers in special containers as well as well-stocked wine racks and helped raised additional revenue for the highly successful non-profit.

"The raffle is unmatched," people concurred at the 2023 event. "It all adds up to a terrific tribute to Ricky, who we wish could have been here to see this super special memorial success."

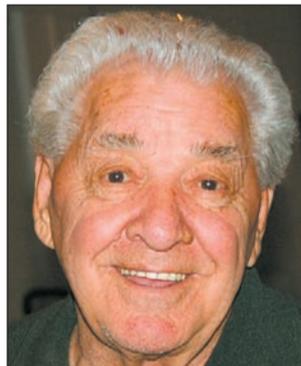
The late Salzillo was killed back in 1976 in an automobile accident that resulted in his friends starting the unique fundraiser that has been held at such places as The Ruffstone Tavern, Kelley Gazzero VFW Post and now the Santa Maria DiPrata Society.



**SUPER SPECIAL SUPPORTERS:** The brothers Fede — Frank and Nick — Johnston natives who own and operate Kingstown Liquors, are standing behind the three-tier liquor rack of 36 bottles was just one of prizes during the recent dinner raffle.

## Antonio "Anthony" Iannuccilli, Jr.

Antonio "Anthony" Iannuccilli, Jr., 94, of Johnston, passed away peacefully on Monday, February 13, at Briarcliffe Manor. Born in Providence, he was a son of the late Antonio "Anthony" and Eva (Payette) Iannuccilli. Known to family and friends as "Junior" and "Papa Tony," Anthony and his late wife Grace (Nicini) Iannuccilli raised their family in the Thornton section of Johnston, also known as Frog City.



A U.S. Airforce veteran, he worked for the family-run Angel Home Improvement Construction Company in the 1960s, then owned and operated Tony's Sandwich Shop in Downtown Providence. He was the sales manager at J&K Electric for 10 years before buying The Vineyard Restaurant in Johnston, which he operated with his son David in the 1980s.

A lifelong New York Yankees fan, he enjoyed playing golf, reading and listening to music, especially Frank Sinatra and country.

He will be remembered for his bright smile, incredible resilience in the face of multiple health issues, and above all else, his great devotion to his family.

Anthony is survived by his four children: Gerald Iannuccilli, Deborah Livingston (John Luzcz), Janice Cappelli and Johnston Fire Chief David Iannuccilli (Carolyn). He also leaves seven grandchildren: Duane Livingston (Shalem), Laura Kaufer (Kyle), Mark Livingston (Jenna); Nicole and Michael Cappelli; David Jr. and Emily Iannuccilli; and seven great-grandchildren: Kaleesi, Dylan and Maddox Livingston; Grace and David Kaufer; Mark and Layla Livingston.

He was predeceased by his brothers Thomas, Arthur, Joseph, James and Raymond Iannuccilli.

His family would like to extend its deepest thanks to the staff at Briarcliffe for the great care and attention they gave to him during his time there.

Visiting hours were held Thursday, February 16 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Winfield and Sons Funeral Home, 571 W Greenville Rd., Scituate. Burial was private.

## Anna Russo

On January 25, 2023, Anna Russo, our adored mother, gram, sister, aunt, and friend to many throughout her 81 years, passed away suddenly but very peacefully in California. A daughter of the late Nicola and Angelina Croce, she was born in Providence and raised in Johnston, Rhode Island, together with her five siblings. Ann moved to Southern California in the early 1960's where she raised her family and lived there for most of her life.



Mother to Michael Joseph Russo and Joanne Russo Cordero; grandmother to Joseph and Jason Russo and Alexa Cordero; and great-grandmother to Avery Paige and Parker Ann Russo, she is also survived by her sister and best friend, Linda Lazzareschi and her family of Johnston, and several nieces, nephews, and cousins. Ann was predeceased by her parents, her sisters, Josephine Parrillo and Marie Iacubucci, and two brothers, Nicola Croce, Jr., and Louis Croce.

Overcoming barriers for divorced women and single working mothers in the 1970's & 1980's, Ann worked tirelessly to provide for her children. Throughout her life, her family was her highest priority and her greatest source of pride; her love and support were constant, selfless, and unconditional!

With her strong, 'old-fashioned' work ethic, Ann enjoyed a successful 45+ years' career in the mortgage lending industry, from which she retired in 2011. Highly respected and regarded as a woman of dignity, integrity, and professionalism, she was a loyal, trusted, diligent, and hard-working leader and mentor' endearing herself to many during her professional career and elsewhere throughout her life. She'll undoubtedly be most remembered for her incredible sense of humor and making lifelong friendships.

In retirement, Ann enjoyed quality time spent with family and friends, walks and workouts, various volunteer activities, and quiet time reading. Her greatest joy was the special relationship she shared with her grandchildren. She especially treasured her life-long friendships with her beloved 'high school buddies', Denise Orton, Maureen Denman, and Marilyn Hartman. Highlights of her trips home to Rhode Island always included excursions to fabled Newport to shop with Linda (for sale items only!) while strolling along Thames Street, Bowens' Warf, and Brick Market Place, and long lunches with her 'BFF's' at Newport Creamery, always topped-off with a "Dusty Sundae with extra (extra, extra, extra) dust, please!"

Despite some challenging health and memory issues in recent years, Ann's profound love of family and friends, awesome sense of humor, and jubilant smile never wavered as she remained our shining star and revered matriarch through it all!

Ann's Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, February 25, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at Saint Rocco Church in Johnston; her family will welcome visitors in the Church foyer beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Immediately following holy mass, Ann will be laid to rest alongside her parents in the family lot at St. Ann's Cemetery in Cranston, RI.

Arrangements are entrusted to the Berarducci Funeral Home & Cremation Care Center, Providence, RI. For those who so desire, memorial contributions to one's local chapter of the Alzheimer's Association would be appropriate and appreciated.

Now rest in love & eternal peace, dear Ann.

## Obituaries

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

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

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**ANSWER TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE:**



# Old for his years

**OLD SCHOOL:** Don't let the cap, moustache and glasses fool you, DJ Becket is a fourth grader at Brown Avenue Elementary School. To lend even more authenticity to his attire, he borrowed the suspenders from his 80-year-old grandfather Joe Fontana to celebrate the first 100 days of school recently. (Submitted photo)

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is effective as of 11/7/2022 and subject to change thereafter. \$60,000 minimum daily balance is required during each monthly cycle period to earn interest. Other fees and/or charges may apply and could reduce earnings.  
<sup>2</sup> Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is effective as of 11/7/2022 and subject to change thereafter. \$1,000 minimum daily balance is required during each monthly cycle period to earn interest. Fees could reduce earnings. Substantial penalties for early withdrawal.



**FAMILIAR FACES:** Joe Mazzulla (far right) with former Hendricken president John Jackson (center) and Jamal Gomes (left) in this 2011 file photo. (File photo)



## Coach

(Continued from page 1)

Since then, the Celtics have rolled to a league-best 42-17 record, which is good for first place in the Eastern Conference. Mazzulla and his staff just coached in the All-Star game as the league is on break.

"As he has shown, Joe is a very talented coach and leader," said Celtics President of Basketball Operations Brad Stevens. "He has a unique ability to galvanize a room around a mission. We are thankful for the work he has done to help us get to this point, and excited that he has agreed to lead us into the future."

Along with the promotion, Mazzulla also received a contract extension with the franchise. The terms of the extension were not disclosed.

"This is a very special day for Joe, his family, the town of Johnston, and Bishop Hendricken High School," said Hen-

dricken Athletic Director and Mazzulla's former coach Jamal Gomes. "As one of his former coaches and mentors, this is one of the proudest days of my life. But, as great as this day is, the best is still yet to come for Joe Mazzulla."

Former Hendricken Chaplain Fr. Marcel Taillon also said, "What joy among the Hendricken family today. Coach Mazzulla is right for the job, not only because of the Celtics' record, but his ability to form the whole person whom he leads. His faith life, his family life, and his deep gratitude for all he has received makes his life a response instead of a job."

Mazzulla comes from one of Rhode Island's greatest basketball families. His late father, Dan, was a legend at Johnston High as both a player and coach. He is also a member of the Bryant Athletics Hall of Fame as a player. His younger brother, Justin, played for Division I Vermont and is an assistant at URI.

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# GENEROUS LOAD



**HELPING HANDS:** Students in Matt Gingras' piano class and Ron Lamoureux's music group at JHS helped load 3,824 pounds of used clothing and other items in his 15-foot truck to make a special delivery to Savers in Warwick.

## Johnston High music department collects 3,824 pounds of clothing

By PETE FONTAINE

When it comes to fundraisers, the Johnston High School Music Department has held many unique events to raise revenue for scholarships and trips to compete in national competitions.

A perfect example was the recently and highly successful used clothing drive during December and February which resulted in an \$800 profit.

"We collected soft goods, clothing, shoes, curtains and handbags," said Ron Lamoureux, who chairs the national award-winning JHS Music Department. "Today, we're making the delivery to the Savers Store in Warwick."

How, though, did they transport what weighed at 3,824 pounds of clothing etc. to the Savers Store in Warwick?

Earlier in the morning Lamoureux and JHS music teacher Matt Gingras went to the Atwood Car Wash & Quick Lube just a few steps from the school where owner Paul Shabo — who also has a U-Haul Truck Rental operation — showed his generosity and community spirit by donating the truck to transport all the goods to Warwick.

"We can't thank Mr. Shabo enough" said Lamoureux. "Without his donation it would be difficult to take the collection to Savers."

When the music department leaders re-

turned to Cherry Hill where students in Gingras' piano class and Lamoureux's music theory group teamed up to load the spacious 15-foot truck for the delivery in Warwick.

Likewise, some students — Joshua Galeas, Ricsa Soth and Fughyi Kue — went to Warwick to meet and unload what they called "quite the heavy unique haul" to Savers, which is a second hand used clothing and vintage store that has more than 300 locations throughout the North America.

The delivery weighed 3,824 pounds and resulted in a Savers official presenting Lamoureux with an \$800 check made out to the Johnston School Music Association (JSMA) that supports number of programs including the prestigious Rachel E. Carson Scholarship, named for a former JHS music student who passed way back in 2018.

"Rachel was a senior when she unexpectedly passed on Jan. 14, 2018," Lamoureux remembered. "She was a sweet kid that played bass clarinet in the band, wrote skits for our Friday Night Live shows, and was an exceptional student. She especially loved science and her parents named her after famed ecologist Rachel E. Carson."

"The JSMA is the steward of the scholarship fund and continues to raise money each year to remember an incredibly kind, funny and generous person that left us way too soon."

**TEAM EFFORT:** Paul Shabo (left) owner of Atwood Car Wash and Quick Lube hands the keys of a U-Haul Truck to Ron Lamoureux so the JHS Music Department's delivery to Savers in Warwick. (Submitted photos)



## SPIRIT OF HOPE, JOHNSTON, RI

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MONTHLY LOCAL NEWS REGARDING MENTAL ILLNESS, THE HOMELESS AND THOSE IN NEED

SOH is hosting an event on 2-26-23 at Chelo's in Warwick. We all ready have 100 seats sold for an introduction to who we are, what we do, and how we do it. We have guest speakers from Crossroads, Providence The Providence Rescue Mission and John Tassoni. All sponsors and partnerships have been invited to hear about what is going on here in Rhode Island. We have just partnered with the Johnston Senior Center to help us assemble our Rescue Kits. Seniors will get a chance to pitch in and help those in need. We did get a call from the RI Foundation regarding approval on a grant to help those in need.

For the year 2023 we will be looking for more people to help us get our work done for the needy. Some of the people we are looking for: **Webmaster, Facebook Host, News Writer, Computer input assistant and Committee Chairmans.** Everyone has special skills that they can apply, just do it from your heart and the word of God. We are also going to be focusing on the book "Holy Moment", which can change your life. This book brings a positive attitude between everyone in society.

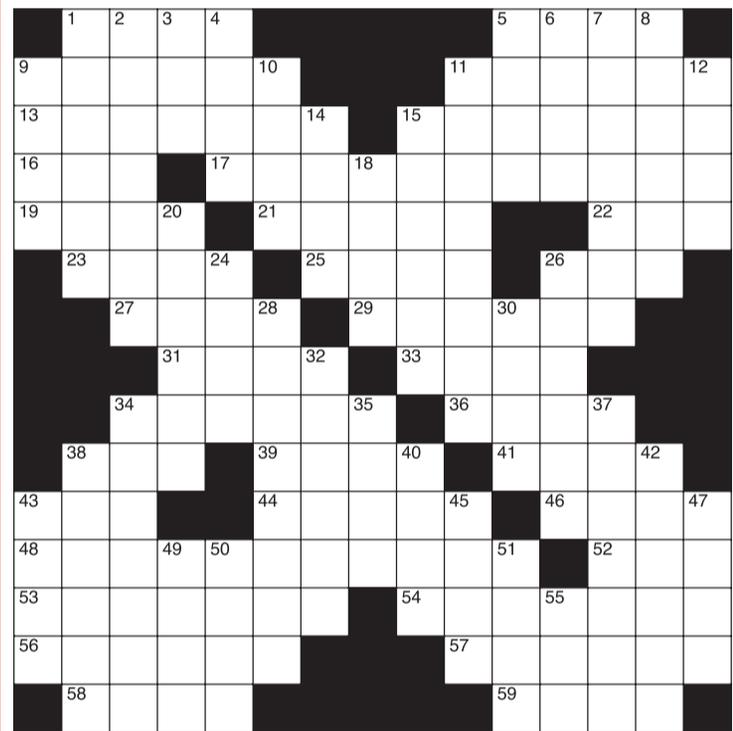
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### CLUES ACROSS

1. Sea grape
5. European public health group (abbr.)
9. A way to delight
11. Appetizers
13. Ancient heralds' wands
15. Make a booking
16. '\_\_\_ death do us part
17. Pearl Jam frontman
19. Spider genus
21. Fill with high spirits
22. A major division of geological time
23. Catch
25. An independent ruler or chieftain
26. Electronic music style (abbr.)
27. Influential Spanish cubist painter
29. Illegally persuades
31. A way to derive
33. British School
34. Appear alongside
36. Surely (archaic)
38. Harsh cry of a crow
39. A day in the middle

### CLUES DOWN

1. Gastropods
2. Confusing
3. Romanian monetary unit
4. The rate at which something proceeds
5. A prosperous state of well-being
6. Asked for forgiveness
7. Makes less soft
8. Part of speech
9. Outside
10. Advice or counsel
11. Badness
12. Protein-rich liquids
14. Not moving
15. Call it a career
18. Poetry term
20. Not wide
24. Pastries
26. Turns away
28. Satisfies
30. Gift adornments
32. San Diego ballplayers
34. Manufacturing plant
35. Check or guide
37. Dogs do it
38. Chilled
40. Scorch
42. Unproductive of success
43. Electronic counter-countermeasures
45. Attack with a knife
47. Feel bad for
49. Enclosure
50. Assert
51. Geological times
55. Midway between east and southeast

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# Fire

(Continued from page 1)

Father Marciano spoke of the legendary Phoenix rising to life from the ashes, adding, "the bird is not legendary at all, I have met her in a fine lady named, Gina Russo, here with us this morning, and many others, survivors and founder behind the Station fire foundation and memorial, who out of the ashes rose again to life in his fullness. The goodness that came out of this tragedy far outweighs the pain that we endured. Thank you Gina, and so many others, including the survivors and families of those whom we lost and our brave first responders, for giving us HOPE and a glimpse of God's love for us, through your love for us."

Bishop Henning talked of the healing power of community solidarity and compassion and how that can turn tragedy to inspiration bringing people together in love.

The following morning, the sun's unseasonably warm rays bathed the landscaped stonework and brick paths of the memorial park. Visitors stood silently reading the inscriptions on bricks lining walkways or the names etched on stones for each of the "angels." Despite the constant arrival and departure of visitors paying their respects, an introspective silence was broken only by an occasional word of condolence or comfort. Visitors found comfort in each other and, for those who needed it.

Susan Parker of Paws From The Heart introduced her new therapy dog, Ranger, who took to his first day on the job giving out licks and wagging his tail.

Gina Russo, president of the Station Fire Memorial Foundation, said people had been arriving to pay their respects and walk the park since she first arrived that morning just after 6 a.m.

Seated beside her mother's memorial stone Sarah Jane Ballard said, "I was only 18 at the time. Both of my parents went, but only my dad made it out. From what he's said he jumped out the window and lay in the snow before walking over to the Cowesett Inn to get water. They helicoptered him to UMass and had him in a medically induced coma for weeks. I remember when he finally woke up he didn't even know my mom hadn't made it out."

Ballard's mother, Sarah Jane Telgarsky, lost her life in the fire.

Ballard, who lives in Connecticut, visits the memorial park at least once a year. On Tuesday she brought along her daughter.

Ballard explained how she hadn't even known that her parents had gone to the club that evening. She didn't find out what had happened until the next day. She received a call from her aunt asking if she'd heard of the club that burned down and reminding Sarah to always know where the exits were. Both Sarah and her aunt were still unaware of just how impacted their lives were by the fire.

"It was just a few hours later after that call that we found out we had to go file a missing persons report," Sarah said, the pain still present even after 20 years. "It was crazy. I was 18 years old and I'm racing up to West Warwick to find out that my mom died."

Despite 20 years having passed since the fire, it is clear that the lives lost that night have not been forgotten, even by those whose lives were touched only briefly.

Scott Lester has visited the memorial every year to pay his respects and give his condolences. "We only shared one Spanish class together," Lester recounted. "I still come down every year. It could have been any one of us. Though I was sad this year to see, usually someone takes the time to clean up the water stains and some other touches. Still, it really is peaceful and beautiful though. Everything is just perfect and quiet."

Even in an ocean of memory, loss and pain inspiration can still be found. Bill Franzen has spent the last five years working on a book about the Station fire. Franzen has made it his mission to connect as many pieces of the story as possible and to create a comprehensive picture of the calamity that shocked Rhode Island that night 20 years ago. "After a while you start to match up the clues," Franzen explained. "You'll have a person say 'Oh I have no idea who rescued me just that he had a blue shirt on. He hugged me and said I have to go rescue others...' and then after a while details come together and you start to match up these pieces with the process of elimination and next thing you notice it comes together."

It is easy to forget after 20 years just how life changing an event the fire at The Station was, yet here, in this small but beautiful park those lives are being remembered with care, respect and a sense of dignity.



**MASS OF REMEMBERANCE:** A flag flew outside St. Kevin Church Sunday for a mass held in remembrance of the victims of The Station nightclub fire twenty years ago.



**INTRODUCTIONS:** Father Robert Marciano, president of Bishop Hendricken High school and pastor of St. Kevin Church introduces Bishop Richard Henning of the Diocese of Providence to former Warwick Mayor Frank Flaherty at Sunday's mass. In the background is Sue Stenhouse who played a role in organizing the event with Gina Russo, president of the Station Fire Memorial Foundation.

### AFTER ALL THESE YEARS:

Alexandria McNamara and her mother Catherine Girard of Coventry visited the memorial Tuesday. They were living in West Warwick at the time of the fire and remember hearing helicopters airlifting victims from the site 20 years. It was Alexandria's first visit to the memorial park.



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**BRAVE BATTLER:** Lorenzo Almeida, 6, who is battling Leukemia and will have treatments for the next two years, is hoping to make an extraordinary donation to Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence. (Submitted photo)

# Help a young fighter help others fight

By PETE FONTAINE

He's only six years old, yet Lorenzo Almeida wants to give back to Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence.

During the past Thanksgiving and Christmas season, Lorenzo spent two long months in Hasbro Children's Hospital after being diagnosed with Leukemia.

"Lorenzo went through severe bouts of chemotherapy during that time and will continue treatments for the next two years, if not more," Peter Goneconte of Classic Blend Doo Wop fame, explained with emotion ringing in his voice. "His mother Jessica (Goneconte) and father Tony spent day-and-night at his side in the hospital, praying and trying to keep his spirits up."

Goneconte, who is Lorenzo's grand uncle, went on: "It was — and still is — a very sad situation. The doctors and nurses have been like a family to Lorenzo throughout the entire ordeal. With God's help and our prayers, we know he will beat this and get back to being a sweet little boy."

Which is why Goneconte, Ron Giorgio, Ron Iacobucci, Jack Meno and Maria Russo who make up the incomparable Classic Blend group, are expected to sell out their annual St. Joseph's St. Patrick's Day Party on Saturday, March 18 at the Santa Maria Di Prata Society hall at 29 Walnut Grove Ave. in Cranston.

The dinner, which will be prepared and served by Ralph's Catering and Kitchen, will feature a full Italian dinner and Irish corned

beef and cabbage meal that will also feature coffee, tea and delicious dessert (from 6:30 to 10 p.m.).

People who'd like to hear the always-special sounds of Rhode Island's premiere oldies/doo wop group, or people who'd like to enjoy what Goneconte said "will be a fantastic feast," are urged to purchase tickets as soon as possible.

"Please come and enjoy a night of great food and great music," said Goneconte, who said tickets are priced at \$40 per person. People who'd like to reserve tickets should call Goneconte at 401-575-0200 or text him at the same number.

With a special smile on his face, Goneconte announced that "the night's total proceeds will be donated to Hasbro Children's Hospital in Lorenzo's name. Classic Blend wants to thank everyone, in advance, for their continued support and are looking forward to seeing them on Saturday, March 18."

The entire event will be bolstered by a mega-raffle with proceeds also being donated to Hasbro Children's Hospital in Lorenzo's name.

"We will have ton of prizes," Goneconte related. "There will be toys, DIOR gift baskets, liquor and Italian food baskets and much, much more. Our committee and friends are all working for the special night and help Lorenzo make his donation for other children at Hasbro Hospital."

Raffle tickets are 5 for \$10 and 10 for \$20. Anyone who'd like to help or would like other information should call Goneconte.



**CLASSIC CAST:** Ron Giorgio, Ron Iacobucci, Maria Russo, Jack Mento and Peter Coneconte will be singing their famous doo wop and oldies songs on Saturday, March 18 during a unique fundraiser at the Santa Maria Di Prata Society hall in Cranston. (Photo by Nancy Houde)

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# LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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By JENNIFER COATES



One of the warm and inviting common rooms at Briarcliffe Gardens. Call 401-944-2450 to schedule your tour of this modern and state-of-the-art Memory Care Assisted Living Residence in Johnston.

In his novel entitled *It's About Time*, author Richard Ratcliff penned these poignant words: "I am learning daily to be the reluctant guardian of your memories. There was once light in those eyes; I miss that." There are many family members and caregivers who share these same sentiments when talking about the ones they love who are suffering from memory loss.

Memory loss, whether the result of aging, dementia, Alzheimer's Disease or other causes, can alter the course of our life's journey. As painful as it is to admit, there often comes a time when those who suffer from memory loss can no longer live independently or, in many cases, remain at home with family or other caregivers. Safety becomes a deep concern, but so does the sustainability of a situation which can be stressful and even debilitating for long-term caregivers.

It is times like these when the support and resources of a memory care assisted-living residence such as Briarcliffe Gardens become so important. This established, state-of-the-art residence, situated on a private, 30-acre campus in Johnston, provides a comprehensive and compassionate home where memory-loss residents can still live fulfilling, vibrant and active lives.

Thought has been put into every feature of this memory-care residence. When the plans were being drafted for Briarcliffe Gardens, director and owner Akshay Talwar, along with his team, poured over every detail. Each design decision was based on thorough research conducted by evaluating other memory care programs around the country. Talwar felt he could improve upon what was previously available to people in need of these services and broke the mold in the design of Briarcliffe Gardens.

Every detail here was carefully curated, from the soaring

ceilings and skylights of their common rooms to the variety of therapeutic programs to the caliber and training of its professional staff. All are intended to enhance the quality of life and the safety of the residents of this homey center.

Special attention has been paid to those activities which spur memories, encourage socialization and connectedness, lift morale and offer support, give a feeling of predictability, calm and order, and entertain and inspire.

Some of the many other features of Briarcliffe Gardens include:

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Schedule your personal tour of Briarcliffe Gardens, located on Old Pocasset Road in Johnston by contacting them at 401-944-2450, ext. 202. For more information, you can also visit them at [www.briarcliffegardens.com](http://www.briarcliffegardens.com).

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## URI Blue MBA student combines fascination with sharks, passion for ocean exploration



### Christine de Silva will appear in her third Shark Week episode in 2023

BY TONY LAROCHE

Christine de Silva's interest with sharks may have started in a bizarre way – an autopsy. An undergraduate at the University of Miami, de Silva was in a class of STEM and communication students teamed up to promote scientists' research through infographics and short videos. One day, Professor Neil Hammerschlag, head of the university's Shark Research and Conservation lab, came into the class.

"He asked, 'Does anyone want to come in and film a necropsy for us?' And my hand went straight up. I was thinking, 'Yup, that's me. Don't look at anybody else.'"

Fast forward about 10 years. De Silva sits in the Ocean Science & Exploration Center on the University of Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay Campus – a student in URI's Blue MBA program, chief executive officer of a small oceanography technology company, and preparing for a trip to South Africa to film deep sea sharks for the Discovery Channel's popular Shark Week.

■ SHARK - PAGE 23



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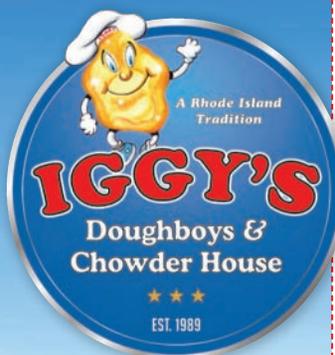
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# Sports

## JHS grapplers shine at sectionals

By PETE FONTAINE

When Johnston High School's wrestling program held its traditional "Salute to Seniors Night", Panther Head Coach John Antonucci made a bold prediction.

"This has been a challenging year," the veteran Panther coach explained, noting "we have a smaller than usual team that is missing wrestlers for several weight classes. However, the seniors have all wrestled well and some have an excellent chance at making it onto the podium."

Enter the brothers Martins - Captain Dylan and Logan - and Captain Elijah Odhiambo who upheld Antonucci's theory and thus wrestled well in their respective weight classes during last weekend's annual Rhode Island Interscholastic League D-2/D-3 Sectional Tournament at Coventry High School.

Thus, the talented Panther trio were awarded their medals on the Olym-



**RUNNER UP:** Logan Martins was second in the 120-pound class at last weekend's Sectional tournament at Coventry High. (Submitted photos)

pic-like stand while also earning a berth in the always highly-competitive and grueling state tournament this Saturday at the

spacious Providence Career Technical School.

Senior Dylan Martins, who wrestles at 160 pounds, was the runner-

up in his weight class while his brother Logan also finished second at

■ SHINE - PAGE 21



**LEADING SCORER:** Johnston's Bella Gesualdi works past a defender. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

## Lady Panthers upset in quarters

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Providence Country Day girls basketball team traveled to Johnston and upset the Panthers 58-53 in the Division IV Quarterfinals on Monday night.

PCD jumped out to a big lead in the first half and would enter the break up 33-23. Although the Panthers fought back and got within three points late in the fourth quarter, it would not be enough as the Knights held on for the win.

Freshman Bella Gesualdi led Johnston with 22 points while Hannah Calabro added 21 points, all coming from 3-point shots. Ava Waterman also scored seven points.

It was the third meeting between the two teams

■ PANTHERS - PAGE 19

## Hoops for Heart event raises 2k

By PETE FONTAINE

The under grads at Johnston High School last week set an impressive and heart-warming record.

For inside of nearly three hours, over 75 students participated in a music-filled event entitled "Hoops for Heart" that doubled last year's \$1,000 and last week on Valentine's Day raising \$2,010 that will be donated to the American Heart Association.

"Hoops for Heart is an on-going and important Rite of Winter coordinated by SADD (Students Against Dangerous Decisions) that also collects food for needy families and other important charitable community programs during the school year.

SADD officers President Emily Klein, Vice President Hailey Brown and Secretary Michelina Irons along with Science Department Chair Greg Russo who serves as advisor coordinated the 2023 Hoops for Heart that included everything healthy food and a variety of fun-

■ HEART - PAGE 19



**HEARTY HOOPSTERS:** JHS SADD officers President Emily Klein, Vice President Hailey Brown and Secretary Michelina Irons are backed by Faculty Advisor Greg Russo (left) and fellow students who helped raise a record \$2,010 for the American Heart Association last week. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

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## ■ Panthers

(Continued from page 18)

this winter, and the Panthers took home wins in the first two contests. Things were different on Monday, though, and Johnston coach Meg Reall felt that PCD's shooting was the difference.

"I tell the girls all the time that whenever we see these teams the second, third time around, we're going to be a better team but so are they. The second time we played (PCD) they didn't have (Vyannis Moranta), so that was a difference. They shot the ball really well tonight, (we adjusted a little late to it) which probably hurt us in the first quarter. When they shoot the ball that well, it's tough to defend against," Reall said.

The Panthers had a bounce back season this winter after missing the playoffs last year when they co-opped with North Providence. Although their journey was cut short, Reall was happy with the progress

that the program made as a whole. "It was challenging coming off a co-op year, so to come back this year and have a home playoff game, it's a huge accomplishment for the team and a step in the right direction," said Reall. "I'm really proud of them for getting here. It was not the result that we wanted, but I'm extremely proud of the girls for fighting through the adversity tonight and the whole season."

The Panthers will be returning a large portion of their roster next season, including Gesualdi, and are looking to return to the post-season.

"We have a good core coming back, we had a few young players get in the game tonight so having that experience is huge in getting them used to those situations," said Reall. "They'll be even more prepared moving forward and hopefully we'll be back next season."

Johnston finished the season with a 10-5 league record.



SHARP SHOOTER: Hannah Calabro puts up a shot on Monday.



HELPING HANDS: JHS Physical Education teacher Peg Guilmette and Athletic Director Justin Erickson held the rope that Caitlyn Savard, Hailey Brown and Jalen Molena used during last week's record-setting Hoops for Heart fundraiser.



SUPER SPORTS: It was basketball and badminton for these students during last week's event. They are in front: Joseph Grenier, Logan Finelli, Ryan Capraro and top Jon Prata, Jiana Mitsoulus, Alessandra Pesare, Ralin Santo and Cameron Vetch.

## ■ Heart

(Continued from page 18)

and-laughter filled games.

Likewise, JHS' popular Physical Education teachers Peg Guilmette, Ellen Quantmeyer, Joe Acciardo, Scott Leonard and Athletic Director Justin Erickson received special thanks from SADD officers and students for helping with the special event.

"This was a great show of school spirit at its finest," Russo related. "We are always proud of all our students who maintained a terrific tradition by paying their say to actually participate."

In keeping with tradition, students who want to take part are asked to obtain dona-

tions of at least \$20 and all money raised is contribute to the American Heart Association.

In all, over 75 students enjoyed friendly games of volleyball, hot potato, chicken in the hen house, jump rope, basketball, badminton along with shootout/knockout and more that keeps students active for the first four periods of the school day. Prizes are then awarded that are supplied by local vendors, the American Heart Association and the Rhode Island Blood Center.

Moreover, music rang out throughout the event that began with a variety of fruit and refreshments that were available all morning in the lobby of the Panthers' famed Edward DeSimone Gymnasium with competition on the Robert A. Smith Memorial Court.

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# Shellfish good for the ecosystem

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Shellfish are good for the ecosystem in many ways. They serve to filter water, provide a great food source and provide other services that support the health and well-being of Rhode Island's estuarine systems and local communities.

In recognition of this importance, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM), Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is creating a Shellfish Restoration and Enhancement Plan (SREP). An online information session will be held Thursday, March 2, 2023, from 6-7 p.m. to announce the kickoff of the SREP Planning Process.

The Zoom meeting link for the March 2, 2023, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. meeting is: <https://northeastern.zoom.us/j/94689038494?pwd=aTJCT2RHalc5UjN1WUhhjUWISSmhhQT09> [northeastern.zoom.us]. Meeting ID: 946 8903 8494, Passcode: 028228, One tap mobile: +13092053325,,94689038494# US.

Also, please save the date for upcoming in-person workshops aimed at identifying and prioritizing restoration and enhancement goals. In-person meeting dates and locations include: March 13, 2023 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Coastal Institute, URI GSO, in Narragansett which will focus on Little Narragansett Bay, the coastal ponds, and the Narrow River; a second meeting will be held March 14, 2023 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. (venue to be announced) focusing on the East Passage of Narragansett Bay and the Sakonnet River; and a third meeting will be held March 15, 2023 from 4:30-6:30 (venue to be announced) focusing on the West Passage of Narragansett Bay and the Providence River.

For more information visit [risrep.org](http://risrep.org) [[risrep.org](http://risrep.org)] or contact Eric Schneider at [eric.schneider@dem.ri.gov](mailto:eric.schneider@dem.ri.gov).

## Recreational fishing data getting better

NOAA Fisheries' recreational data collection program, also known as the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), is the state-regional-federal partnership that develops, implements, and continually improves a national network of recreational fishing



**UNDER THE BRIDGE:** East End Eddie Doherty with a 30 pound striped bass caught at the Bourne Bridge. He will be guest speaker at the Springfield Sportsmen's Show, West Springfield, Sunday, February 26, 10:30 a.m. (Submitted photo)

surveys to estimate total recreational catch. These estimates are used by fisheries scientists and managers to help inform sustainable fisheries management decisions and ultimately to help make fishing regulations.

NOAA Fisheries has published a report to Congress with their response to the National

Academies' of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's 2021 recommendations on recreational fishing data collection, data use, and alternative management strategies. The intent of this report was to evaluate how NOAA Fisheries recreational data collection program is meeting the needs of in-season management of fisheries with annual catch limits.

Several recommendations in the Academies' report call for exploration and development of forecasting methods for in-season catch and management. The report also recommends conducting research and pilot studies on a number of statistical methods to improve catch and forecasting estimates, as well as recommendations to pursue

alternative management approaches to better align management actions

Many of the report's recommendations suggest continuing ongoing agency practices while also encouraging partners to take equivalent actions. NOAA Fisheries and their partners are also already taking action on a number of recommendations outlined in the study. NOAA Fisheries will explore recommended statistical methods where applicable and recommend their consideration by partners.

Further discussion, planning, and coordination are underway with NOAA Fisheries, Councils, Commissions, and states to develop detailed plans to address some of the recommendations identified for further action. Efforts will be prioritized based on regional needs and availability of funding.

More to come on bolstering MRIP as NOAA addresses National Academies of Science recommendations. If you have a question about recreational fishing data collection or estimates email Sarah Lazo at [sarah.lazo@noaa.gov](mailto:sarah.lazo@noaa.gov) or

visit [countmyfish.noaa.gov](http://countmyfish.noaa.gov).

## Fishing the Canal for striped bass

Take the chill off of winter with fishing talk. East End Eddie Doherty will be presenting a Cape Cod Canal fishing seminar featuring stunning color photography by world renowned professional photographer and legendary surfcaster John Doble.

Surfcasting the Cape Cod Canal for Striped Bass will be presented at the Springfield Sportsmen's Show in West Springfield on Sunday, Feb. 26 at 10: a.m.

Doherty is the author of SEVEN MILES AFTER SUNDOWN which was announced on Amazon as the No. 1 New Release in Fishing and selected as an Award Winning Finalist for American Bookfest in the Sports Category at the 2019 International Book Awards in Los Angeles.

## Where's the bite?

Cod fishing south of Cape Cod is still open. Party boats fishing for cod this winter include the Frances Fleet at [www.francesfleet.com](http://www.francesfleet.com) and the Island Current at [www.islandcurrent.com](http://www.islandcurrent.com).

Freshwater fishing has been good as not many have fished ponds in Rhode Island and Massachusetts that were stocked in fall and early winter. John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, Riverside, said, "Both trout and salmon are being caught in stocked ponds. Willet Avenue Pond, Riverside is still yielding fish for anglers using shiners and PowerBait."

Angler Joe Klinger of South County reports a good salmon and trout bite at Barber Pond, South Kingstown. For licenses and trout/salmon waterway stocking information in Rhode Island visit [www.dem.ri.gov/fishing](http://www.dem.ri.gov/fishing), and in Massachusetts [www.mass.gov/service-details/trout-stocking-report](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/trout-stocking-report).

Dave Monti holds a captain's master license and charter fishing license. He serves on a variety of boards and commissions and has a consulting business focusing on clean oceans, habitat preservation, conservation, renewable energy, and fisheries related issues and clients. Forward fishing news and photos to [dmontifish@verizon.net](mailto:dmontifish@verizon.net) or visit [www.nofluefishing.com](http://www.nofluefishing.com).

# Portsmouth hockey players skate by on drinking controversy

A few weeks back, the Portsmouth boys hockey team created some ruckus when a few of its players filmed themselves drinking alcohol in the locker room after a victory. I am not a Portsmouth reporter, so when the story broke, it was a headline that I briefly read and figured the kids would be thrown off the team and that would be that.

Well, news broke last week that the kids in the video received a two-game suspension from the team and that the Rhode Island Interscholastic League would not investigate the situation further.

As you could expect, it created quite the controversy and triggered a response from the Rhode Island High School Hockey Coaches Association, which condemned the team and RIIL for the lenient punishment and lack of response.

The details of the video have been veiled pretty well. I'm assuming since they've since been deleted and it also involved minors. In the coaches association's statement, it even referenced possible sexual harassment taking place. Again, I am not aware of many specific details, but either way, what a mess this situation is.

I join the masses in saying that it is a horrible example being set for the kids. At minimum, the players in the video should be removed from the team. They were caught breaking the law as well as team rules and being reckless in doing so. There is no justifiable reason to keep them on board at this point.

In my opinion, the coaches should be investigated, too. Not because I believe they were aware, or bought the kids the booze or anything like that. But, instead, because this all happened under their supervision. You can't see everything all the time, but kids filming themselves drinking in the locker room seems pretty tough to miss.

Then, when it comes to the RIIL. I can't say I blame it for staying out of it while it waited to see the response from the team. At this point, now that we have seen the two-game suspensions be handed out, I do believe it is time to act.

I do agree with some that the entire team should not be punished. It's not like I am saying the club should be shut down to set an example. The kids involved, though, at best should be suspended for the remainder

## My pitch



by  
ALEX  
SPONSELLER  
SPORTS EDITOR

ALEXS@  
RHODYBEAT.COM

of the year. If they play spring sports, I also think a suspension into those months should be considered as well.

A part of this story that is sad and pretty relevant was who the team was facing that night: West Warwick.

Last hockey season, West Warwick hockey player Matthew Dennison was killed by a drunk driver while teammate Kevin MacDonald was also injured in the crash.

Portsmouth beat the Wizards and insulted the West Warwick team in the video. I'm not sure if the kids thought about the big picture when it came to the Wizards, but either way, it was disgusting.

Kids will be kids and part of growing up as teenagers is

learning from mistakes. This was a big, big mistake made by these kids. There needs to be a real punishment handed out, and a two-game suspension is anything but. It's just a slap on the wrist.

Not to mention their parents. Easy for me to say when it was not my child involved, but I could not imagine being able to see my son behave that way and allow him to move on after a brief suspension from the team. In a way, a two-game break is a reward. It allows the kids to hang out, rest up and return in time for the playoffs.

It is time for the RIIL to step in, especially if the team does not amend its decision. The kids should not be allowed to step foot on the ice. Plain and simple. To have to explain that is dumbfounding.

On the national level, Johnston native and Boston Celtics' Joe Mazzulla was elevated to head coach last week as the team removed his "interim" tag. The Celtics have been the best team in basketball this season, so the transaction is far from a surprise.

What a great achievement for the Mazzulla family and the state of Rhode Island as a whole. Rhody now has three head

coaches in pro sports: Mazzulla, Rocco Baldelli and David Quinn.

These positions are so limited when you really think about it. In major American sports, there are only a little more than one hundred head coaching gigs, and Rhody has claimed three of them. Definitely a cool thing to see.

As for Mazzulla, especially, it will be fun to see if and how he changes things up now knowing that the job is his. He's young and has taken a few, very few, lumps this season. Sure, his roster is extremely talented, but it takes a good coach to make the most of it and he has done just that.

One of the things that I actually detest about the modern NBA is how it is a players' league. The players run the show oftentimes while the coaches are the chaperones.

Mazzulla has done a great job of connecting with his players and keeping them motivated, all while managing the controversy surrounding former coach Ime Udoka. This season could have easily gone sideways, and Mazzulla deserves much credit for helping keep it together.

# RIC takes 7th at LEC Championship

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

Junior Anna Vygoder (Lincoln) took home two program records and earned a trio of Second Team All-Little East awards as Rhode Island College finished in seventh place (10 teams) at the 2023 Little East Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Championship, hosted at the Boston Sports Institute on Friday-Sunday.

Rhode Island College finished seventh (10 teams) with a team score of 246.0. Keene State took home the title with a team score of 830.50.

Vygoder placed second in the 50-yard breaststroke (32.11), 100-yard breaststroke (1:10.24) and the 200-yard breaststroke (2:35.86), seventh in the 800-yard freestyle

relay (9:05.23) and eighth in the 200-yard medley relay (2:03.04), 400-yard freestyle relay (4:01.54) and the 400-yard medley relay (4:35.22).

With her second place finishes in the 50-yard breaststroke, 100-yard breaststroke and 200-yard breaststroke, Vygoder earned Second Team All-Little East honors in each of those events. Her 50 and 200-yard breaststroke times established new program records.

Junior Meghan Laflamme (Smithfield) placed seventh in both the 50-yard backstroke (30.58) and the 800-yard freestyle relay (9:05.23), eighth in the 200-yard medley relay (2:03.04), 400-yard freestyle relay (4:01.54) and the 400-yard medley relay (4:35.22), 10th in the 200-yard freestyle (2:15.02) and 11th in the 200-yard backstroke (2:28.88).



**SECOND PLACE:** Dylan Martins (16) was the runner-up in his 160-pound weight class last weekend and is ready for this weekend's state tourney.

## Shine

(Continued from page 18)

120 pounds.

Meanwhile, Odhiambo – who was 11-0 heading into Senior Night, finished fifth at 220 pounds.

Once again, Antonucci said “all three of our wrestlers will be looking for their first state tournament podium appearance this weekend.

On behalf of myself and coaches Jose Echeverria and Joe Regnault, we are proud of each and every wrestler; they have all represented JHS very well.”

Likewise, four other Panthers qualified for last weekend's Sectional Tournament and turned in fine performances. They were: Fabricio Brun, 126; Gino DeSimone, 132; Luke Sharpless, 145; and Joshua Galeas, 182.

Those Panther wrestlers who

were honored at Senior Night are: Michael Picerno, Joshua Galeas, Dylan Martins, Elijah Odhiambo and Devon Cole.

With the Johnston youth Wrestling Program that's headed by veteran President Lisa Bacala continuing to offer excellent programs and training at all weight classes, Antonucci and company are looking forward to bigger numbers and more success in 2024.



**FIFTH PLACE:** Elijah Odhiambo stands atop the podium after last weekend's fifth place finish in the 220-pound weight class.

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■ Shark  
(Continued from page 17)

“Looking back, I can see that this is where I was always meant to be. I don’t think I could ever work in an industry that is not marine related,” says de Silva, 29, who grew up on Ryder’s Cove in Chatham, Massachusetts, and now lives in Jamestown. “Over the past 10 years, I have executed a plan that ensures that I can continue to work on all my passions – field work, science communication, academic research and starting my own business.”

De Silva likes to say everything in her life is intertwined. So, when she travels to South Africa later this month for her third Shark Week show since 2020, she will be representing her company, Juice Robotics, her research work with Beneath the Waves, and URI.

Going deep

“I try to make sure that everything I say and do as an individual on these shows is real and educational,” she says. “But what’s really great about these shows is I can bring all my equipment and do research without having to get funded. For this trip, they want to obviously film deep sea sharks. You can’t have a show without video, so there’s only a few places that they can get these cameras. And my company makes them.”

Since her youngest days as a child gazing into tidal pools for sea life during summers on Cape Cod, she’s loved the ocean. She grew up sailing, surfing, windsurfing, and attending science camps in the summer – “not going to the cool camps,” she says.

“My mom loves the ocean. My dad loves the ocean. And I think I’ve always had an obsession for the natural world and a draw to the ocean. I have to make sure that if it’s too cold to go in, I can see it every day. And if it’s warm enough once I get in my 3/2mm [wetsuit], I’m in it every day,” says de Silva, who still sails competitively, especially on trips back to Miami.

At the University of Miami, de Silva became a part of the Shark Research and Conservation lab, eventually trading in her research interest in spiders for sharks. As part of her work for the lab, she took part in every sea trip she could. Her job was to photograph the sharks – tigers, nurse sharks, bulls, black tips – after they were measured and tagged.

“I was the only person who was allowed in the water with the shark, which made each experience all the more special,” says de Silva, who graduated in 2015 with a bachelor’s degree in biology and minors in marine science and art, focusing on photography.

Happy to escape

At times, she helped sharks get underway after they were pushed back into the sea. One of the largest sharks was a 15-foot scalloped hammerhead, says de Silva, who is 5-foot-4 on her best day. But there was never a scary moment – the sharks were just happy to escape “an alien abduction,” she says.

“I just became obsessed with spending time in the water with them because they’re so beautiful,” she says.

That obsession followed her to Beneath the Waves, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting ocean health and using science and technology to promote ocean policy. The organization was founded by Austin Gallagher, who was a Ph.D. student in the Shark Research and Conservation lab when de Silva was an undergraduate. He hired her at Beneath the Waves and got her involved with Shark Week.

In her research with Beneath the Waves, she travels regularly – about a week each month last year – to research the deep sea and deep-sea sharks. It fits perfectly with her personal life. “I try to spend winters in Florida and the Bahamas and my summers on Cape Cod,” she says. “The sharks are doing the same thing. So, it works well.”

For Shark Week, her vantage point will be strictly from the boat, deploying cameras and filming sharks in the deep ocean off South Africa and lending her expertise on deep sea sharks to the episode, “Alien Sharks,” which will air on Discovery in July. The show is renting the cutting-edge, light-weight cameras from her company, Juice Robotics. The technology was originally developed by Brennan Phillips, a URI assistant professor of ocean engineering.

The episode, hosted by outdoor adventurer and Shark



**RESETTING GEAR:** De Silva resets gear after safely and humanely catching and satellite tagging a 9-foot porbeagle shark 25 miles off Cape Cod. (Photo by Tyler Norgeot)



**CAMERA RETRIEVE:** De Silva and Austin Gallagher, founder of Beneath the Waves, retrieve a camera that had been filming at a depth of 1,200 meters – surveys that can measure biodiversity and abundance – in Tongue of the Ocean, Bahamas. (Photo by Sami Kattan)

Week regular Forrest Galante, will search for sharks found at depths of up to 2,000 meters. “When we think of a deep-sea animal, usually we’re talking about things that live in the dark, under lots of pressure,” she says. “They’re going to look pretty crazy to us. They’re probably going to be very dark colored, close to black. They’re going to have really big eyes or no eyes. They’re going to move very slowly.”

“For me the draw goes beyond academics,” she adds. “We need to study this to understand how the deep ocean fits into global biogeochemical processes and affects things like the carbon cycle. But it’s also exploration for exploration’s sake. Each time I look at the footage from these cameras it’s a chance to discover something new. Sometimes that means we extend the range of an animal by finding it deeper than scientists previously thought.”

Wanting to make an impact

It was while working on Shark Week’s “Tiger Shark King” in 2019 with Phillips that she learned about URI’s Blue MBA program, a dual degree program in which students can earn master’s degrees in oceanography and business administration, advancing their potential roles in the blue economy. As they sat on an inflatable waiting for sharks to appear, she told Phillips about how she wanted to make a greater impact. She loved being a scientist but was interested in starting a company focused on the ocean. Phillips, who knew a few students who had gone through the Blue MBA program, thought it would be a good fit for her.

“Christine is an incredibly talented and motivated person who is passionate about exploring and protecting our oceans,” says Phillips. “Having worked with her on several research trips, she has a knack for operating oceanographic equipment safely and effectively, and she can also drive a boat better than almost anyone else. She also has a pretty expansive network of scientists and engineers that she works with, which really shows the breadth of her experience and ability to work with a diverse group of people.”

Phillips also introduced her to Matthew Jewell, who graduated from URI with a bachelor’s degree in ocean engineering in 2009 and founded Juice Robotics four years later. She joined the company two years ago and runs the business side, while Jewell focuses on technology. The company sells innovative, rugged and affordable technologies that make accessing all ocean environments easier and safer. The technology uses epoxy to make the equipment water and pressure proof, instead of heavy metal housings that are cumbersome and can fail at deeper depths. One of its products is a fiber optic fishing reel deployment system developed with Phillips, who is a partner in the company.

“Today, for the majority of equipment used in ocean exploration, you need a really big support vessel. That vessel is gas guzzling and requires a 20-person crew,” says de Silva. “What we’re doing is making equipment so small and so affordable that you can deploy it from a jet ski or an aerial drone.”

In her role as CEO, the Blue MBA, which she will complete this spring, has helped her on the business and science sides. Coming into the program with little background in business, she’s benefited from classes in such areas as finance, marketing and business administration. While she minored in marine science at Miami, the oceanography master’s degree program has helped her fully put the role of the ocean in perspective.

De Silva says URI is well-positioned to be a leader in the blue economy, and the Blue MBA is important to that role. She’s heard from college students and recent graduates who have studied business and want careers

in which their work can have an impact on the ocean or the world, but don’t know where to turn. The Blue MBA program can be an answer for many.

“I think that’s something that students are looking for. I know they already are because I get kids calling me about it all the time,” she says. “URI can be the university on the East Coast that says, ‘You want to fit into the blue economy? Come here and get our degree.’”

**ANIMAL TALK**  
By Karen Kalunian  
Local ♥ Adoptable ♥ Loveable



Photo credit: Exeter Animal Shelter

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# Rhody TREASURES

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# PEZ



## The Candy Collectible



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

er and in 1949 they were introduced to the public. Obviously, the idea for these pocket-sized PEZ dispensers was a big hit!

After 1952 PEZ made its way to the United States and the creativity with both the dispensers and the candy flavors took off. Did you know chlorophyll, coffee, and flowers were all PEZ flavors? In a brilliant move, PEZ started making cute toy-like dispensers to increase the appeal to children. By 1973 PEZ was so popular in the states they opened a manufacturing plant a few hours away in Orange, Connecticut. In addition to custom characters, the dispensers started featuring the three dimensional heads of licensed characters in pop culture, like Popeye, along with historical figures like Betsy Ross.

From the 1970s and beyond, folks loved PEZ not only for the candy but for the variety dispensers they came with, and the desire to collect them grew. As we all know, pop culture has a direct effect on collectability, and the incorporation of fan favorite characters from Disney, DC Com-

ics, Warner Bros., and Marvel attracted collectors of all ages. Today, PEZ is available in over 80 countries around the world, and you can find PEZ conventions throughout the year in different cities; There is even a PEZ visitors center you can visit in Orange, Connecticut, home of the largest PEZ memorabilia on display anywhere!

If you're wondering what PEZ dispensers (if any) are valuable, don't worry; I'm here to give you the scoop on that too. The ones that would bring in the biggest bucks are only a few of a kind: those include the "Political Donkey" (one of which belonged to JFK) and "Political Elephant" from 1961. Their estimates are over \$10,000 each. Legend has it there is also an extremely rare variant from the 1978 PEZ Animals series where the Panther has green eyes and a black nose instead of the regular yellow eyes and pink nose. If you can find one of those, you'd be looking at an estimated value of \$4,000. Another cool one to keep an eye out for is the 1972 Mr. Potato Head-like "Make-A-Face" dispenser. As the name implies, you could actually build custom faces for your PEZ dispenser with tiny accessories they provided. If you happen to have one of these sealed in its box with all its pieces intact, you'd be looking at a value over \$3,000.



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## Should I Buy or Rent a Home?

StatePoint

If you're feeling stressed about rising rents and interest rates, you are not alone. Most American renters say their rents increased in the past 12 months, and for many, their wage gains didn't keep pace. In addition, mortgage rates have reached a two-decade high.

This means that for those in the market to rent or buy a home, there is a lot to consider. According to Freddie Mac, deciding whether to rent or buy depends on your financial situation, future plans and lifestyle. You should also carefully assess the benefits and financial commitments that come with each option.

### Why Buy?

If you plan to stay in your home for at least five to seven years, buying can make financial sense. Homeowners may be eligible for certain tax benefits, and increases in home equity are important to building long-term financial independence. Plus, for those with a fixed-rate mortgage, stable monthly payments provide important predictability when creating a budget. Another benefit to homeownership is the freedom to make decisions about your house that best suit your needs without the approval of a landlord.

### Why Rent?

Compared to owning, renting is flexible and is usually low risk. Renting can require less money up front and provides you immunity to declining home values. It's also a good option if you enjoy the ability to move relatively quickly. Not handy? Renting is also great if you prefer to leave home repairs to someone else.

### Next Steps

As you make your decision, here are a few questions to ask yourself:



GETTY IMAGES

1. Am I ready for homeownership? Mortgage-ready homebuyers typically have not had a foreclosure or bankruptcy in the past seven years and no severe delinquencies in the past 12 months. Potential buyers are also often required to have credit scores and debt levels that meet certain criteria. To learn more about credit scores and managing credit, consider using free educational resources from Freddie Mac.

2. How much can I afford? Free online tools can help you get a better idea of

how much you can afford based on your personal financial situation.

3. Do I have enough saved? Determine how much you have saved for a security deposit or down payment. Look into down payment assistance programs, low down payment mortgage programs and learn more about budgeting for upfront rental costs.

If you're still unsure which path is right for you, check out My Home by Freddie Mac, which offers financial education

resources. Compare costs with the site's Rent vs. Buy Calculator, and explore the tips and tools geared to those who are renting or buying. Visit myhome.freddie.com to get started.

Whether you choose to rent or buy, it's important to keep an eye on your long-term financial goals. Building good credit and making a savings plan today can better position you for the future.



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# Exterior renovations that boast the best ROI

**METRO**  
Remodeling with a return on investment in mind can be a smart strategy for homeowners, whether one is thinking about moving in the next few months or further down the road. Though this approach is an inexact science, in many instances, it's savvy for homeowners to consider what buyers may want when planning home improvements.

Homeowners may be surprised to learn which renovations garner the best ROI at resale. The home loan and refinancing company RenoFi indicates that overall home improvement projects provide a 70 percent ROI on average. Many high-ROI projects add functional space and improvement. The following are some exterior renovations that help homeowners recoup the most money at resale, according to Remodeling magazine's "2022 Cost vs. Value Report."

1. **Garage Door Replacement:** 93.3 percent recouped of \$4,041 cost
  2. **Manufactured Stone Veneer:** 91.4 percent recouped of \$11,066 cost
  3. **Siding replacement (Fiber Cement):** 68.3 percent recouped of \$22,093 cost
  4. **Window replacement (Vinyl):** 67.5 percent recouped of \$20,482 cost
  5. **Siding replacement (Vinyl):** 67.2 percent recouped of \$18,662 cost
  6. **Window replacement (Wood):** 66.3 percent recouped of \$24,388 cost
  7. **Deck addition (Wood):** 64.8 percent recouped of \$19,248 cost
  8. **Entry Door Replacement (Steel):** 63.8 percent recouped of \$2,206 cost
- The majority of renovations on Remodeling magazine's list of the best



investments are exterior renovations, making this area of a home a particular point of interest for homeowners. The only interior project that cracked the Top 10 ROI for projects was a minor midrange kitchen remodel.

Exterior renovations perhaps add the most bang for your buck because they're not only functional, but also because they

add immediate curb appeal. Much in the way it has been said people eat with their eyes first — which is why chefs spend so much time on elaborate plating — buyers will judge a property by how it looks when they arrive, even before they've stepped inside a home. In essence, home buyers often judge a book by its cover. A worn exterior may indicate to potential

buyers that the home was not maintained, however false that assumption may be.

It's important for homeowners to consider all factors before beginning a renovation. Certain projects offer a stronger return on investment than others, and that's a significant consideration for homeowners thinking of selling their homes.

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# 4 ways to make your home come to life with colorful and patterned tile

Brandpoint

Whether you are looking at making a dramatic statement or adding a pop of color to a more neutral space, tile is an excellent and expressive choice for any home renovation project. Because of the range of glazes, surface patterns and materials, there are virtually limitless options to elevate and personalize your home.

Tile's expressive nature allows you to define your spaces with pattern, color and personality. You can use tile to update your flooring, create a focal point within a room - like a coffee nook, bar area or fireplace - or as decorative borders.

If you're considering updating your home's design, check out these four ways you can create welcoming and unique spaces using tile.

## 1. Ideal for kitchens

Because of tile's versatility and vast range, it's a natural choice

for adding color and pattern to your kitchen. For example, if you have a white kitchen, choose a colorful tile with interesting patterns or textures to draw the eye. A benefit of using tile in the kitchen is that depending upon the tile selected, it can also provide the strength and durability to address any cooking misadventures with its easy maintenance.

For a stunning kitchen backsplash that presents an artful, visually compelling pattern within a room, opt for a textured tile like the bespoke Senso by Kelly Wearstler collection. Designed by award-winning American designer Kelly Wearstler in a collaborative partnership with ANN SACKS and handcrafted in its Portland, Oregon, factory, this stoneware tile collection imparts the beauty of plaster without the upkeep and expense.

"Plaster has such a beautiful hand quality," said Wearstler. "It is a favorite application for



subtle, yet standout features in an interior ... translating this subtle surface into versatile stoneware opens the potential for truly striking design moments throughout the home."

## 2. Bold patterns for bathrooms

Tile is also an excellent choice for bathrooms for many of the same reasons it's become so popular for kitchen surfaces. Its water-resistant quality makes it the perfect material to add color and pattern to showers, walls and flooring.

The ANN SACKS Liaison by Kelly Wearstler Tuxedo Check tile pattern offers the natural colorations and veining of marble. The stone tile's durability and bold design make it a practical and visually striking choice for a bathroom renovation.

"There is an earthiness to these tiles and a rich tactile quality natural to these designs that I love," said Wearstler. The collections of geometric patterns and symmetry of these marble tiles provide contrast, soft shading and textural nuance to

any bathroom project.

## 3. Outdoor spaces

Tile isn't limited to indoor design. It's tough enough to withstand the natural elements as well as daily use. It's a versatile option for pool surrounds, fountains, pavers, and outdoor kitchens and patios.

The Liaison Linqs collection is a great choice for outdoor projects, depending on climate and method of installation. Like the Tuxedo Check pattern, the geometric designs are imaginative and playful, with visual textures and natural colors that add depth and composition to any space.

## 4. Adding decorative touches

While tile is a great material for big projects, it also excels as a decorative element. Ceramic tile is a superb choice to create decorative accents throughout your home.

It can range from traditional to contemporary in approach with various colors, shapes and patterns to help you

express yourself. Whether in an imaginative fireplace surround, intriguing trim, elegant border or sophisticated backdrop, there is virtually no limit to the creativity and level of customization you can achieve.

Wearstler's Scout tile collection by ANN SACKS pushes boundaries with ornamental linear, geometric and curvaceous shapes that draw focus to accentuate spaces - large and small - from dramatic feature walls to intricate borders, and can be mixed and matched to create one-of-a-kind installations. Also handcrafted in Portland, the collection's range of custom glazes, colors and distinct designs was designed to make a space come to life.

Are you ready to add intrigue and variety to your home? Using these four tips, you can creatively incorporate tile into your interior and exterior spaces for a simple yet striking renovation. To view ANN SACKS Kelly Wearstler Collection designs and other ANN SACKS tile and stone options, visit ANNSACKS.com.



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# Country & Characters at Park Theatre

By DON FOWLER

## ZAC BROWN TRIBUTE BAND

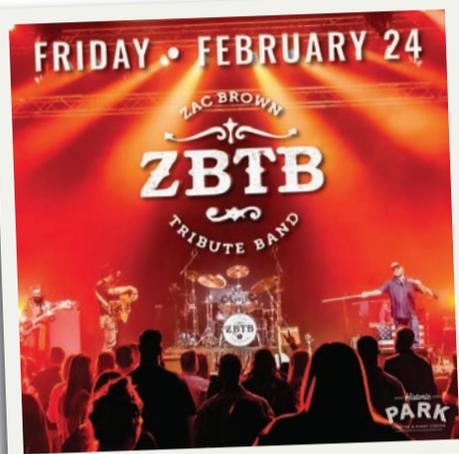
From a country music concert to a character breakfast for kids, there is something for everyone at Cranston's Park Theatre.

One of country's top tribute bands, the Zac Brown Tribute Band, is at the Park this Friday, Feb. 24, from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

The band is made up of top-level musicians with credentials that guarantee years of experience with top country bands around the United States.

They have a lot to work with as Zac Brown has registered 12 number one singles, three Grammys and a host of country music awards, beginning in 2008 with "Chicken Fry" and continuing today with "Homegrown." They just keep coming.

The tribute band has played everywhere, from backyard BBQs to NASCAR, cramped pubs and sold-out concert sites. Tickets are \$25-\$42.



## CHARACTER BREAKFAST

On Sunday, Feb. 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the Park will hold a character breakfast with guests such as Cinderella, Spiderman and Marshall from the Paw Patrol to meet their many fans in the Comedy Club.

Tickets for everyone are \$22.

# Week-long celebration of craft beers on tap March 3-12

The second annual RI Craft Beer Week will be from March 3rd to March 12th.

This celebration of RI's beer manufacturers will feature happenings at Rhode Island breweries as well as events featuring Rhody beers at bars, restaurants, liquor stores and more. Events in the planning include a "Saugy Showdown" hot dog eating contest at Linesider Brewing; "Name Your Beer" Trivia at Narragansett Brewing with the winning team getting to name a new beer; Musical Bingo at Smug Brewing and a "Rhode Map Challenge" contest happening all week long.

Visiting all the breweries this week could win you beer festival tickets!

There are now 36 breweries in the RI Brewers Guild, compared to only five a decade ago. At least two more are set to open in 2023. Each of these small businesses employs Rhode Islanders, adds local culture, and boosts tourism in the Ocean State.

Kyle Toste, Assistant Brewer at Linesider Brewing in East Greenwich is enthusiastic about the week. "I got into the professional craft brewing industry here in Rhode Island about three years ago and have always loved the camaraderie among all the breweries. RI Craft Beer Week is a celebration of breweries in our state and an opportunity for us to celebrate with our patrons in fun and



unique ways. I love RI Craft Beer Week because it gives us a chance to create events that show a different side of us than just being 'brewers' like our Saugy Eating Contest at Linesider or an Industry Karaoke Contest at Narragansett and so many more."

One of the more unique features of RI Craft Beer Week is the "Rhode Map Challenge". Utilizing the RI Brewers Guild Passport App on your smartphone, craft beer enthusiasts can check into and post photos of their beer from as many RI Breweries as they can that week. The RI Brewers Guild wants to be clear that this should only be attempted with the help of a designated

driver. Prizes will be awarded to the top five fans including two tickets to the Newport Beer Festival, two tickets to the Ocean State Beer Festival, two entries to the Craft Brew Races Newport, and more! Last year more than a thousand people checked in at RI Breweries during RI Craft Beer Week.

RI Craft Beer Week stickers and coasters will be available at some locations during this week and all events will be listed on the RI Brewers Guild website by February 24th. For more information about RI Craft Beer Week and to find events near you visit: <https://ribrewersguild.org/ri-craft-beer-week/>



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