

Schools vow to fight 'takeover'

LaFazia: 'Let me be clear, under no circumstances will we agree to allow the Mayor to take over the District'

By RORY SCHULER

The mayor predicted his takeover of the school department would go smoothly.

On Thursday night, June 22, the School Committee declared the path would be bumpy.

"Last week, Mayor Polisena Jr. announced a misguided effort to take over the Johnston School Department," John-

ston School Committee Robert LaFazia said, reading a prepared statement into the public record. "Let me be clear: under no circumstances will we agree to allow the Mayor to 'take over' the District."

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. was seated in the audience — silent during public session. After the meeting, he spoke to reporters.

"I had a meeting with the superinten-

dent and the chairman of the school department and we had a conversation that in order for the town to appropriate this large sum of money, that there was going to have to be oversight," Polisena said. "It's not financially prudent for me to keep writing them checks."

Polisena flagged consecutive school department deficits as a signal decisive action was required.



TAKING A STAND: School Committee Chairman Robert LaFazia and member Susan Mansolillo confer during one of last week's charged meetings. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

■ SCHOOLS - PAGE 10

Burned once, but not twice

Residents displaced by Simmons Village fire feared second round of homelessness

By RORY SCHULER

They almost lost their homes twice in one month.

Midday Tuesday, a Rhode Island Housing official, U.S. Sen. Jack Reed and Rep. Seth Magaziner confirmed that state and federal housing officials finally struck a deal to cover temporary housing for 20-30 Johnston residents displaced by the May 28 Simmons Village fire.

As the end of June approached, some of the residents, many living in temporary housing in Warwick, were starting to panic.

Displaced Simmons Village resident Evelyn Englehardt called the Johnston Sun Rise Monday morning. She hadn't heard back from numerous phone calls placed to state and federal agencies and Johnston's Washington delegation.

"I don't know what to do," she said. "I may lose my home again. I could be homeless on Saturday."

Englehardt needed answers no one seemed willing to provide.

Constituent Services

"This is an extremely difficult situa-

tion," Reed said Tuesday afternoon. "Every one of these residents must have a stable, decent place to live until property rehab is completed. No displaced family should be forced out on the street or have to shoulder these increased costs alone."

Reed, a member of both the Appropriations Committee and the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, which oversees federal housing programs, had previously helped secure \$1.1 billion in flexible State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

According to Reed's office, the state is committing more than \$320 million in SFRF funds for housing related programs.

"I am working with both federal and in-state entities to identify all available federal funding options," Reed said. "I led successful efforts to secure millions of dollars in federal housing funds and pandemic aid for Rhode Island and have worked to ensure the state has the flexibility it needs to effectively allocate this assistance. I am hopeful there is a way

■ FIRE - PAGE 5



'Deadly Force Incident' footage released

CPD posts BWC video files from Johnston murder suspect's fatal shooting by police

By RORY SCHULER

GUNFIRE ERUPTS:

Police from multiple departments converged on a shooting suspect's car along Plainfield Pike, on the Johnston/Cranston border, on May 24. The suspect was shot dead, and Cranston Police have now released body-worn camera footage from the deadly force incident. (Publicly released Cranston Police Video screenshot)

Cranston Police have released their officers' body-worn camera footage from the May 24 officer-shooting of Johnston murder suspect James Harrison.

Rhode Island State Police and Cranston Police officers opened fire on Harrison, 52, of 4 Ligan Court, underneath the Interstate 295 overpass along Plainfield Pike, along the Cranston/Johnston border.

Earlier that morning, police responded to Ligan Court to discover two deceased shooting victims and a 15-year-old Johnston girl suffering from a gunshot wound.

■ SHOOTING - PAGE 4



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PERFECT POSTING: Johnston Police Maj. Thomas Dolan and Lt. Steve Guilmette had the honor of posting the colors for the JSC's Flag Day 2023.



LINKED LEADERS: Among those people who played key roles in the JSC's Flag Day ceremony are Mark Gilmore, Mike Donahue, Rick Swanson and Richard Del-Fino. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)

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Friday, June 30th by Noon

CLASSIFIED ADS
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Have a Happy & Safe 4th of July



WARM WELCOME: Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisenia Jr. is joined by opera singer Shoshana Feinstein who sang the national anthem for the JSC's Flag Day ceremony.

ELKS FLAG DAY RITUAL

'I've been ripped, kicked, torn & even burned'

By PETE FONTAINE

Old Glory was everywhere on a recent Wednesday at 1291 Hartford Ave. in Johnston.

Her stars and stripes seemed to have a special sparkle and were prominently displayed everywhere from around the perimeter of the Johnston Senior Center entrance to across the famed bingo board inside the multi-purpose dining room.

There was a sea of American flags which were also displayed on tabletops, affixed to walls and even displayed in impressive red, white and blue centerpieces.

Likewise, the decorations included red, white and blue placemats and napkins for the JSC's star-spangled celebration-salute for Flag Day 2023.

The late morning ceremony was highlighted by a pomp and circumstance ceremony presented by 16 members of the Warwick-based Tri-City Elks Lodge No. 14 and specially selected patriotic music played by Johnston native Mark Gilmore who has made many countless contributions to the town including his time as co-leader of the famed Johnston Community Center.

Although the Elks have presented their impressive and mandatory ritual ceremony at the JSC in past years, the 2023 edition may have been the best heart-warming and emotional presentation in recent memory.

There were many reasons — from Maj. Thomas Dolan and Lt. Steve Guilmette — led Johnston Police Color Guard presenting and posting the colors to a thank lunch for the Elks as well as a special "Welcome to Johnston" by Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr.

"I've been ripped, kicked, torn and even burned," Polisena and other speakers said while speaking about Old Glory. "But you cannot but hurt me."

Shoshana Feinstein, an Opera singer from North Scituate delivered a beautiful and moving rendition of The National Anthem that was followed by the history of eight versions of Old Glory including the famed black-and-white POW-MIA flag and an awesome 40-minute ceremony which was coordinated by JSC Executive Director Richard J. DelFino Jr. and Michael Donahue, Tri City's new Americanism chairman.

DelFino, who has initiated many impressive programs in his short tenure as Executive Director, began the ceremony welcoming participants and members reminding them that "today we commemorate the adoption of the United States flag on June 14th, 1777, a symbol of our liberty and freedom."

He also added: "Thank you to Lodge 14 — and each member of the Elks — for selecting the Center to present this classic ceremony about our beautiful American flag. We look forward to seeing you again in 2024."

Meanwhile, Donahue said: "I want to thank Richard DelFino and his team at the Johnston Senior Center for hosting the Tri-City Elks Lodge 14 Flag Day Ritual. It was an amazing and emotional experience that all should see. The American Flag and the United States has an amazing history that some people may have forgotten."

But during the heart-warming ceremony which was led by Lode 14's Leading Knight Rick Swanson and featured many mighty moments.

Elks like Chaplin and Inner Guard Berth Marsh read from an extraordinary seven-page ritual program prepared by the Grand Lodge clearly defined the history of our American flag and speaks volumes such as "I stand for peace, honor, truth and justice; I am confident; My name is 'Old Glory' ... long may I wave dear God in Heaven ... Long may I wave!"

Tri-City Elks participating in the Flag Day ritual were: Mike Donahue, Mike Marsh, Beth Marsh, Debbie Mangina, Ann Licciardi, Noel Petisce, Debbie Petisce, Carol Delory, Michael Paquette, Margaret Petisce Serra, Donna Warner, Maryjane Larned, Linda Ayers, Randy Ayers, Neal Carpenter and Rick Swanson.



HISTORIC HAPPENING: Eight members of the Tri-city Elks carried these flag into the JSC's all-purpose room during the Flag Day ceremony. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



TEAM TRI-CITY: Members of the Tri-City Elks who put on a beautiful Flag Day Ritual enjoy a lighter moment after the impressive ceremony at the JSC.

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SUSPECT NEUTRALIZED: Above and below, images from the BWC's worn by police from multiple departments when they converged on a shooting suspect's car along Plainfield Pike, on the Johnston/Cranston border, on May 24. The suspect was shot dead, and Cranston Police have now released body-worn camera (BWC) footage from the deadly force incident. (Publicly released Cranston Police Video screenshots)

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Shooting
(Continued from page 1)

Harrison was spotted, lost and ultimately tracked down in a Cranston cemetery. The region's police pursued him through several municipalities prior the shooting later that morning.

Witnesses say more than 50 gunshots were fired at Harrison, who was believed to be armed.

Multiple Cranston Police officers can be seen holding a variety of firearms in the 15 video files posted to the department's website Tuesday.

"The videos are on our website under the body camera tab," Cranston Police spokesman Maj. Todd Patalano said Wednesday morning. "Also, we will not be commenting due to an ongoing multi-agency investigation by the RI State Police, Cranston Police and RI Attorney General's (Office). No other information can be provided at this time and the videos were released as part of a requirement of a statewide body worn camera policy for transparency."

In a disclaimer on their website, Cranston Police said they are releasing "all Body Worn Camera (BWC) footage" from the incident, however "certain portions of the BWC footage have been redacted in accordance" with the state's BWC legislation.

"The Body Worn Camera (BWC) recordings and other recordings, images, photographs pertaining to this matter are part of an ongoing investigation for which criminal charges may be pending," Cranston Police warn the public before they view the videos. "Any statements accompanying the video are limited to a factual recitation describing the context of the BWC Recording (e.g., source, date, time, place); The Body Worn Camera (BWC) Recording may not depict all of the circumstances relevant to the event in question and the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty; and Body Worn Camera (BWC) Recordings provide a limited view of the event, may capture sights and sounds that officers did not personally hear or observe, and should be considered with all other available evidence."

Cranston Police also warn viewers that the footage "contains graphic and disturbing images, along with foul language" and "viewer discretion is strongly advised."

Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr. wouldn't discuss the ongoing investigations, but weighed in early Wednesday morning after viewing the footage.

"I cannot speak to the specifics of the case as the Attorney General is still in the middle of their investigation," Polisena said. "However, I did see the body camera video and I'm incredibly proud and grateful to the men and women of the Johnston, Cranston and Providence police departments for their quick and decisive action on

that day."

A body-worn camera program has also been approved for Johnston Police, but it remains in its earliest phases of implementation.

"Regarding updates to the Johnston Police Department itself, we have just started the body camera program and it's currently in its pilot stages," Polisena explained. "We anticipate that to evolve to the entire department in the near future. Also, the Town is implementing Flock cameras at various locations throughout Johnston to not only better protect the public but to also better protect our police officers. I am in full support of both these initiatives and I also anticipate they will not be the last when it comes to modernizing the Johnston Police Department."

Johnston Town Council approved the placement of three Flock cameras on major thoroughfares in Johnston earlier this month. The cameras can help law enforcement locate vehicles bearing registration plates from a police "Hot List."

Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Neronha's Office is leading a multi-agency investigation into the police-shooting of Harrison.

"This investigation is still ongoing," said Brian Hodge, a spokesman for Neronha's office, who responded to a request for comment Wednesday morning.

On the morning of May 24, police arriving on the initial Ligian Court crime scene spotted the first victim — May's daughter. After additional officers arrived on the scene, they found , Thomas May, age 44, a Johnston Little League coach, dead in the garage of the residence, "from a fatal gunshot wound to his head," according to police.

"The juvenile identified Harrison as the shooter," Vieira said via press release following the shooting. "Officers were unable to locate Harrison and a BOLO (Be On the Lookout) was issued to surrounding law enforcement agencies regarding Harrison and the vehicle he was operating. The juvenile was immediately transported by Johnston Fire Department rescue personnel to Hasbro Children's Hospital where she received treatment for her injuries that were serious, however, not life-threatening."

Police entered Harrison's home at 4 Ligian Court and found a third victim, whom police identified as the suspect's mother, Janet Harrison, 83. Police confirmed she "was also deceased from a fatal gunshot wound to the head."

For the next few hours, law enforcement watched out for signs of Harrison's Buick Encore and he was eventually spotted by an off-duty Cranston dispatcher hiding out at St. Ann Cemetery. He was followed and eventually died from gunshot wounds after crashing his vehicle on Plainfield Pike.

View the Cranston Police BWC footage at cranstonpolice.com. (Or follow the link on the Johnston Sun Rise website, johnstonsunrise.net.)

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COVERED THROUGH 2025: A 45-unit building, at 343 Simonsville Ave. destroyed by fire on Sunday, May 28. Residents in need of assistance have been awaiting confirmation they would continue receiving assistance following June 30. They received good news on Tuesday. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

■ **Fire**

(Continued from page 1)

federal funds can help cover these costs.” Reed recognized the ticking clock. “Time is of the essence and my office continues to monitor the situation and ensure federal funds are wisely used to help those in need,” he assured constituents.

The building at 343 Simonsville Ave. was evacuated on Sunday, May 28, after flames fully engulfed the façade, creeping up to the building from burning mulch.

A carelessly discarded cigarette has been the only possible cause suggested by residents and publicly discussed by fire investigators. The building complex has strict rules for residents who smoke, but some residents say the rules are rarely followed, and the mulch has not been sprayed with fire retardant.

Late Tuesday morning, Magaziner’s spokesman, James Kwon, released a statement on behalf of the congressman:

“We have worked with HUD to ensure that the displaced tenants of Simmons Village will continue to have access to federal housing support, and have received a commitment from HUD that they will continue to make payments for the residents’ housing.”

Expired Response

On June 21, Picerne released a statement on the Simmons Village website.

“The initial response included partnership between agencies such as The Red Cross, The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Atwood Pharmacy and others,” they posted. “In the first days, Picerne management helped to obtain and fund extended stay hotel reservations for the month of June for those households who were in need of immediate housing.”

The end of June quickly approached.

“The secondary phase of response has been multi-faceted,” the property group informed residents. “Picerne management has been busy working closely with the residents as folks determine how they wish to handle their salvageable contents. At this time, the removal of personal belongings from the building is complete, so that the restoration work can escalate at a faster pace.”

Englehardt said she and other residents have still not recovered all of their belongings.

“Picerne management has also been engaged in ongoing and frequent communication with Rhode Island Housing, The Department of Housing and Urban Development as well as other local/state agencies in the hopes of procuring additional funding so that those who wish to, might remain housed in the extended stay hotel beyond June 30,” they announced last week. “At this time, funding has not yet been committed, but those efforts are ongoing.”

Picerne assured residents that “the rebuilding process is already well underway and brighter days are ahead” and the company “is committed to expediting the renovation of the apartment building so that all residents who wish to return to their homes may do so, as quickly as possible.”

Neighborhood Disaster

On Monday, Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. argued for the resolution of the housing crisis facing the Simmons Village residents.

“I’ve talked to several residents both

the day of the fire, both when I was on site during the fire and in my office since the incident and both times referred them all to Congressman Magaziner’s office,” Polisena explained. “I don’t have the legal authority to move them because unlike Aime J. Forand and other units run by the Johnston Housing Authority, Simmons Village is a privately managed complex owned by Picerne Realty and the funding for their low-income housing is from the federal government through HUD.”

Polisena sympathized, but his hands were tied.

“The residents I’ve spoken to have told me Picerne is currently paying for their lodging,” Polisena said prior to learning of the ultimate resolution. “The fact that Picerne will only pay to house them up until June 30th, while their original homes are inhabitable, is sad and very telling about the company Picerne really is. They should pay to house their residents until their units are habitable.”

Then, following the brokered deal was confirmed, Polisena expressed relief.

“I was on the phone with individuals from Rhode Island Housing earlier and also spoke to Secretary Pryor,” Polisena said. “He informed me RI Housing is going to provide the funds for the residents to remain in their hotels. I am grateful to the State and Secretary Pryor for using their funds to help these residents.”

Christine Hunsinger, Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer for Rhode Island Housing, confirmed that representatives from her agency, including state Department of Housing Secretary Stefan Pryor, met Tuesday morning “at the urging of Gov. Dan McKee’s office.”

“We have identified federal funds,” Hunsinger said Tuesday. The property managers helped state officials gather the “necessary documentation” to ensure the “folks who are currently in the hotel, and in need of hotel assistance, should be able to stay in that hotel until they are able to return home or Sept. 30, 2025 (whichever comes first).”

According to Hunsinger, Picerne plans to have the units ready prior to that date, and “between 20 and 30 (Simmons Village residents), we anticipate needing assistance long-term.”

The rest have been able to stay with family, or make other accommodations.

Hunsinger said conversations regarding the near-future temporary housing needs of the fire victims have been ongoing throughout the past week, but the agency still “needed to dot some i’s and cross some t’s.”

She estimated the agency will pay around \$175,000 to \$250,000 to help cover the temporary rentals.

Englehardt, feeling “relieved” Tuesday afternoon, had a long list of people she wanted to thank for their help finalizing the temporary solution.

“I want to thank everyone for their help and support,” she said. “Especially to Sen. Reed and Seth Magaziner’s office and to our local newspaper that went above and beyond our expectations ... Add to that all the state organizations like Legal Aid, Elderly Affairs and RI Housing.”

One woman was hospitalized for weeks following the fire at 343 Simonsville Ave. According to friends, she’s fighting to recover at a Greenville rehabilitation center, experiencing a range of complications.

“She’s feeling like we did,” Englehardt said. “Depressed and scared.”



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Opinion

EDITORIAL

A post-pandemic search for experiences

Nothing reminds you of the joys of interacting with the world more than being forced to spend time by yourself.

Such is a lesson that people, and developers, have taken to heart in the time since Covid restrictions have eased and fear about spreading the disease has faded into the background — thanks in large part to the availability of treatments and vaccines to curb large-scale outbreaks that framed 2020 and large parts of 2021.

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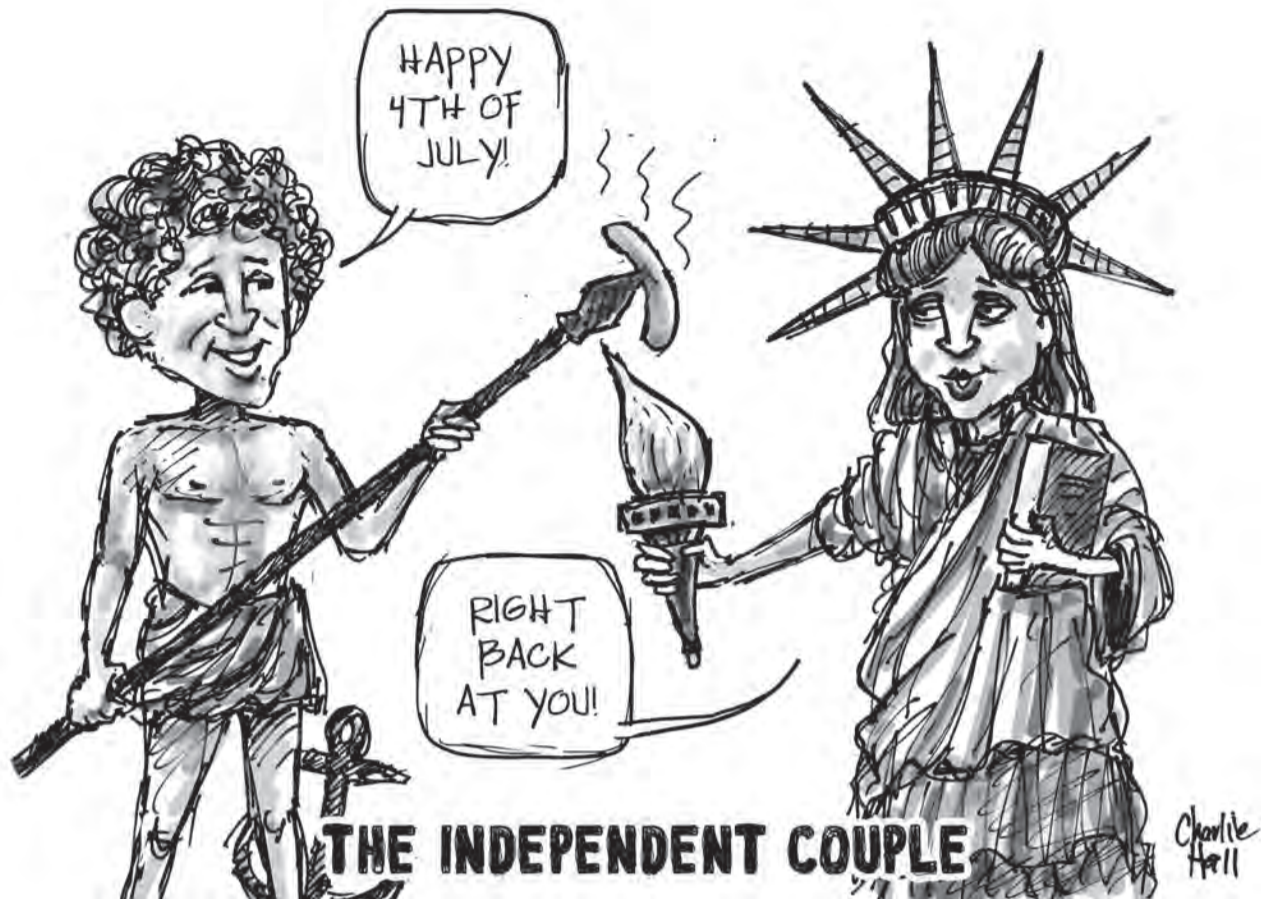
when something as rudimentary as going out to the grocery store seemed to be a risky endeavor, people have flocked towards opportunities to gather once again and enjoy everything from massive live artistic performances (any Taylor Swift fan can attest to that), to small and medium sized gatherings among family and friends at backyard barbecues.

And this nationwide craving for a return to getting back together with our fellow humans isn't just smoke and mirrors — it's something that local developers are banking on.

A shining example locally is the new Top Golf that is rapidly approaching an opening date near Garden City in Cranston. There is no denying the potential benefits of such a complex in the area — which already attracts many thousands of shoppers and window-browsers each week to a variety of high- and lower-brow establishments selling everything from boutique baby clothing to wood-fired pizzas.

The concept driving the gamble for Top Golf and the \$40 million development price it brings with it is the notion that people will be excited at the opportunity for a new kind of experience, whether that comes from the thrill of the virtual golf experience offered or any ancillary businesses and entertainment experiences that crop up to supplement that anchor tenant.

We can certainly say we're rooting for their success, as the state and tax base surely benefits from creating more unique and attractive places to shop, play, and bring your friends to do the same.



GUEST OP

Talk to your teens about their social media use

With summer upon us and the end of another school year behind us, parents and guardians are encouraged to provide enhanced guidance for their children about internet safety and their use of social media. An Advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health, issued this year from the U.S. General Surgeon highlights the impact and growing concerns about the effects of social media on our youth's mental health.

The Advisory notes that "social media use by youth is nearly universal. Up to 95% of youth ages 13-17 report using a social media platform, with more than a third saying they use social media "almost constantly. Although age 13 is commonly the required minimum age used by social media platforms in the U.S. nearly 40% of children ages 8-12 use social media."

The report cites several ways in which social media may cause harm to youth mental health, noting that the adolescent years are a particularly vulnerable time for brain development. It details studies that found correlations between social media use and depression and anxiety, as well as poor sleep, online harassment and low self-esteem.

Although research shows that Social Media can offer benefits like connecting and staying up-to-date with friends and family, promoting creativity and sharing similar interests, there is definitely a downside. Claude Mellins, a Professor of medical psychology in the De-

partments of Psychiatry and Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia University, states "... social media can also provide platforms for bullying and exclusion, unrealistic expectations about body image and sources of popularity, normalization of risk-taking behaviors, and can be detrimental to mental health."

While parents and caregivers are reminding their children about water safety, using sunscreen and keeping hydrated this summer, it is also a good time to talk to your children about his/her social media use. Remind them to beware that not all information online is accurate and that misinformation and disinformation spread easily online. The Surgeon General suggests parental monitoring, setting time limits on its use and engaging in ongoing conversations on how to use social media in a safe, responsible and respectful manner. Additionally, parents and guardians are urged to set standards through their example.

The growth of social media platforms will continue to present challenges for parents and caregivers. Speaking to your children and teens about their social media presence should be as important as discussing any other mental, physical or health issue.

Patricia Sweet Regional Director
Southern Providence County Regional Coalition

LETTER

Independence Day: Celebrate & Remember

Independence Day is a day to reflect on how much our country has overcome. Many associate the Fourth of July with going to the beach, barbecues, fireworks, and spending time with family and friends. However, this day is dedicated to honoring our nation's history.

As a country, we have endured many trials and tribulations. We the People have seen significant growth over our nation's history. As a state, we have always been a forerunner for change. Rhode Island was the first of the colonies to declare independence from England, two months before the Declaration of Independence was signed. Our forefathers fought against taxation

without representation because they didn't want to be underrepresented. As we reflect on the achievements of our founders, the Johnston Republican Town Committee aims to honor their legacy by remembering their sacrifices and leading the change for good.

The Johnston Republican Town Committee wants to wish you a happy and safe Fourth of July. As an organization committed to seeing Johnston prosper so everyone prospers, the Johnston Republican Town Committee is dedicated to unifying and supporting residents. We offer a safe place to share thoughts, passions, and ideas while building a sense of community. If you would like to learn more,

please visit www.johnstonri.gop.
Happy July Fourth from

The Johnston Republican Town
Committee



JOHNSTON Sun Rise

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FOODLOOSE

Food Trucks unleashed at Memorial Park

By RORY SCHULER

Tasty returned to town on Tuesday. Johnston used to be like the town in Footloose, but instead of dancing, food trucks were forbidden.

On Tuesday evening, fulfilling a campaign promise, Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr. toured Johnston's War Memorial Park with his wife and young son, watching hungry constituents fill the parking lot and then their bellies.

The new mayor smiled, standing in line, waiting on a grilled cheese for his little boy who sat hungry in his stroller.

Polisena brought the food trucks back.

The food truck initiative was promised by then-candidate Polisena Jr., last year. He vowed to roll back the ban on edible-mobiles. And earlier this year, Town Council obliged.

Food trucks parked in a circle around the circumference of Johnston's crown jewel.

Partnering with PVD Food Truck events, Tuesday's inaugural event will be followed by another two scheduled for Tuesday, July 25, and Tuesday, Aug. 29. The fun starts at 5 p.m. and runs through sunset.

The night's entertainment featured Super Chief Duo. The pair played to a packed lawn following an event introduction by Eric Weiner, founder of PVD Food Truck Events.

Vendors peddling cuisine-on-the-go included A Mano Pizza, BBQ y Mas, Big Dog Eats, Blount Clam Shack Food Truck, Chicked Out Nuggz, Cultro, Friskie Fries, Gonzalez Food Truck, La Guaguita Del Sabor, Mac N Cheese Please, Pit Stop, The Grub Guru, Del's, Jerry's Food Concessions, Kona Ice, Poppin Minis RI, and the night's featured truck, Shishkaberrys of New England.

"The final headcount from Eric from PVD Food Trucks was 835 people," Polisena said Wednesday morning, following the town's successful first Food Truck Tuesday.

Maybe Footloose star Kevin Bacon will make an appearance at next month's event. Probably not, but you may be able to add some bacon to your order at Big Dog Eats and Mac N Cheese Please.



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Johnston Sun Rise



MAYOR BREAKS THE NEWS: Over the shoulder of Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr., Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. gets ready for last Wednesday night's School Committee budget workshop. The mayor broke the news, for the first time addressing it in public session, that he has proposed a takeover of the school department finances. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

Schools
(Continued from page 1)

"They can talk about a lack of aid for the past 10 years but the reality is they've only been running deficits for the past two years, and this with an increase in aid," Polisena said.

Audit Pending
The school department has struggled to balance its budget. They're requesting 10 percent more funding from the town over last year's request.

Earlier this year, Polisena hired a Pennsylvania-based auditing firm to look at school finances.

The School Committee insists they've been historically under-funded, and budget woes are tied directly to unfunded state mandates.

"The members of the School Committee and I believe the Mayor's ill-advised attempt to supersede this Committee's authority granted by state law will not improve educational outcomes for Johnston students and may even make the situation worse," LaFazia read to the audience gathered in the middle school library. "The reality is, the challenges the district is facing have been caused by financial mismanagement, not by the District or the School Department, but by the town."

The School Committee presented data compiled, showing Johnston's increase in town appropriation over the past decade, and comparing it to other, similar Ocean State municipi-

palities.
"For over 10 years, our teachers and administrators have done an exceptional job with considerably fewer resources than our peer districts in Rhode Island because the Town has failed to appropriately fund Johnston Public Schools," LaFazia said. "The difficulties the District has faced are multifaceted. Johnston like most other public school districts across Rhode Island has faced drastically higher costs due to increasing numbers of special needs students and multilingual learners in addition to soaring operating and facilities costs as a lingering result of the pandemic."

Quorum & Majority
Polisena attended both Wednesday and Thursday night's School Committee meetings with three of five Town Council members — District 1, 2 and 3 representatives Linda L. Folcarelli, Lauren Garzone and Alfred T. Carnevale.

The three council members represented both a quorum and a majority of Town Council, strongly signaling to the School Committee that Polisena had the votes should a resolution come before the governing body. All three Town Council members refused to comment at the meeting and did not speak during public session.

"Ask the mayor," Carnevale replied when asked to comment on the situation with the schools.

Following Wednesday night's meeting, Polisena met Folcarelli, Garzone, Carnevale and the town's Finance Director

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MONTHLY LOCAL NEWS REGARDING THE HOMELESS, POOR, AND THOSE IN NEED

CHURCH AND VETERAN DONATIONS GO TO SOH

June 1st, is here now and Spirit of Hope is on the move. The organization has just received one of their biggest donations from **Holy Apostles Church** in Cranston. How nice it is to see a Catholic church give a grant to a religious organization in the word of God. We were granted funding to help those in need following the word of God.

Secondly, we received another grant from the **Vietnam Veterans of Rhode Island** to support local veterans. The problem here is getting directly to the veterans to meet grant guidelines. Many organizations want to take donations and distribute themselves.

Thirdly, we were able to support 50 families from the **Simmons Village fire**. All the residents received rescue kits within the same day. We worked directly with the Red Cross. Because of this event we will probably be partnering with them on some disasters.

One thing you can be sure of, we will never give up the word of God in our work. We feel very bad that we cannot help some people, because the road to support is cut-off, due to us being a religious organization.

Funding is not a problem anymore, we can now focus on helping people. If you know of any special circumstances that fall in the areas we support, please give us a call.

Now as far as sponsors, we have taken on two new sponsors, **Chelo's Bar and Grill** and the singer **Steve Palumbo**. Both come highly recommended and support for what we do. Now all our sponsors can be happy to see us support our own Johnston residents with some materials well needed. We still make our rescue kit deliveries to the homeless and are concerned about how we hear the same problems every month. There is only so much we can do. When we ask around we get no answers.

Our rescue kit committee is now getting support from some boy scouts in the area and will be assisting in the entire process. We will plan to keep a good inventory of kits in case of immediate needs like a fire. Remember we invite more businesses and individuals to get involved!

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Johnston Public School District vs. Other Similar-Sized Districts in Rhode Island 2012-2021¹

District	2012 ADM	2021 ADM	ADM Difference	FY2012 Local Appropriation	FY2021 Local Appropriation	Local Appropriation Change \$	Local Appropriation Change %
Barrington	3,301	3,361	60	\$40,554,328	\$48,208,708	\$7,654,380	18.87%
Lincoln	3,237	3,194	-43	\$39,746,732	\$42,454,172	\$2,707,440	6.81%
Chariho	3,422	3,092	-330	\$37,561,308	\$40,821,436	\$3,260,128	8.68%
Bristol-Warren	3,390	3,084	-306	\$32,652,684	\$39,685,000	\$7,032,316	21.54%
Johnston	2,918	3,032	114	\$37,129,015	\$37,613,888	\$484,873	1.31%
South Kingstown	3,393	2,704	-689	\$48,216,336	\$55,994,773	\$7,778,437	16.13%
Westerly	3,030	2,441	-589	\$43,100,729	\$48,459,463	\$5,358,734	12.43%
Portsmouth	2,590	2,292	-298	\$29,398,093	\$34,570,876	\$5,172,783	17.60%
Burrillville	2,418	2,088	-330	\$14,983,472	\$20,533,112	\$5,549,640	37.04%

ADM = Average Daily Membership (Enrollment)

THE DATA: School Committee Chairman Robert LaFazia distributed this graphic, showing data comparing town spending on education in Johnston compared to other similarly-sized towns in the Ocean State. (Graphic courtesy Johnston School Committee)

¹ UCOA Data Dashboards – LEA Financial Profiles FY21 <https://ride.ri.gov/funding-finance/school-district-financial-data/uniform-chart-accounts>

Schools

(Continued from page 10)

Joseph Chiodo on the sidewalk outside Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School. They spoke for several minutes and then parted ways.

The three town council members sat silently through Thursday night’s meeting, as well.

Johnston Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti, who represents District 5, said “the mayor’s actions were very premature.”

Earlier Wednesday, prior to the meeting, Town Council President Robert V. Russo was cautiously optimistic.

Neither Civetti nor Russo attended last week’s School Committee meetings.

“I am hopeful the town and school administration can build a consensus as to the financial solution to this problem,” Russo wrote via email before the meetings. “I prefer to keep the resolution internal within the town and not have state or court intervention as that would not be in the best interest of the taxpayer’s and students.”

After the School Committee released its statement vowing to resist the “takeover,” Russo remained optimistic and encouraged cooperation.

“As to the School Committee’s statement — I understand the frustrations, but I fully support funding where necessary once an objective evaluation is done to determine any financial weaknesses that need to be repaired prior to adding more money to the mix — that does not solve any underlying problem,” Russo wrote via email on Tuesday. “I always believe the town and all its departments should work together to identify problems and work together in a constructive manner to resolve them. I have done this in the past on much more serious issues and the town has flourished by everyone rowing in the right direction. Constructive not destructive is always the path to follow.”

Apples to Apples

Over the past two years, as the town finalized the budgeting process, the school department has blamed sky-rocketing required funding for out-of-district tuition for special education and vocational programs.

“Mayor Polisena Jr. says we cannot afford to invest more, but the reality is we cannot afford not to support

our students,” LaFazia told the audience. “Despite higher costs associated with providing high quality education services to our children, the local appropriation to the District has flatlined.”

LaFazia referenced school funding in towns like Barrington, Westerly, Portsmouth, Burrilville, Lincoln and South Kingstown. LaFazia estimated that despite increasing enrollment in Johnston Schools (up 114 students total from 2012 to 2021; about 4 percent), the school department’s local appropriation has only grown by 1.31 percent over the same period.

“Nearly all of our peers across Rhode Island have greatly increased the local appropriation to their similarly sized school districts, and in many cases, despite declining enrollment,” LaFazia explained. “The local appropriation to the Johnston Public School District increased by just \$484,873 between Fiscal Year 2012 and 2021, while enrollment increased by 114 students during that time.”

In Barrington, between 2012 and 2021, for example, enrollment only climbed by 60 students (less than 2 percent), but the school department saw its local appropriation grow by 18.87 percent, according to LaFazia.

“In Fiscal Year 2022 the Johnston Public School District did receive an additional \$1 million in its local appropriation,” he admitted. “In total, the two increases in 13 years amount to less than 4 percent.”

Westerly’s enrollment dropped by 689 students (20 percent), but the town still boosted its local funding by more than 12 percent, according to LaFazia.

Proposed Budget

The School Committee decided to present its budget as-drafted Thursday night. Johnston Schools Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. read off the key line-items and totals.

The total expenses proposed in the FY 2024 school department budget amount to \$65,466,300, as compared to the FY 2023 budget’s \$60,434,216.

That’s a \$5,032,084 difference year-over-year, or more than 8 percent increase in expenses.

The School Department is requesting a town appropriation of \$42,610,281, \$4,081,266 more than the town contributed last year, a more than 10 percent increase.

Polisena has committed to providing \$2.1 million more to the district, over last year, but called it an “ex-

orbitant amount of money.” The nearly \$2 million gap between the mayor’s promised funding increase and the school department’s request may lead to “major cuts” across Johnston schools, according to concerns expressed by the LaFazia and School Committee member Susan Mansolillo.

Out of District Tuition is projected to cost the district \$3,600,500 next year, an increase of \$398,000 (more than 12 percent). The estimate for that category, however, often proves unpredictable.

Major increases have been proposed for Special Services (\$761,298 higher in the proposed budget, a 19 percent increase), Salaries (\$1,869,229, 6 percent) and Benefits (\$1,409,441, 10 percent).

Incentives Lacking


In the past year, DiLullo has reported great difficulty hiring and retaining educators. Johnston schools have been forced to rely heavily on a severely depleted substitute pool to meet minimum classroom staffing requirements.

“Prior to a new collective bargaining agreement last year, Johnston teachers had not received a wage increase in six years,” LaFazia explained. “We welcome the Mayor’s interest in the dire challenges facing Johnston Public Schools and have already committed to fully supporting the audit of the District’s finances. The members of the School Committee and I are hopeful that we will be able to work together to identify sustainable solutions that will help the Johnston Public School District continue to provide high-quality educational outcomes to students and adequately support school staff.”

Thursday night’s meeting began with an executive session to discuss collective bargaining or litigation linked to the “Town takeover of school department” and the “job performance or administrator’s contract.”

After LaFazia finished reading his prepared remarks Polisena said he was “disappointed.”


“They received the highest annual increase in town aid ever, the \$2.1 million that I’ve given them, and they still can’t balance the budget,” Polisena said. “So the town is willing to work with the school district collaboratively, but it sounds like they don’t want to work with the town.”




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Schools

(Continued from page 11)

The School Committee met twice last week. They held a special meeting on Wednesday, June 21, and an Emergency Meeting on Thursday night, June 22.

On Wednesday, the night's agenda called for a budget workshop, discussion and vote.

However, Polisena addressed the School Committee publicly for the first time since announcing his "takeover" plans. Prior to Thursday's meeting, Polisena had anticipated support for his "takeover" plans.

"I think we're going to go back to the table," Polisena said. "And this is all about the kids. The district has to come out of this stronger at the end of it ... I'm willing to do that, it's just a matter of whether or not the School Committee is willing to do that."

LaFazia insists that he and the School Committee regularly requested school department audits, to ensure finances were sound. According to LaFazia, the previous mayor (Joseph M. Polisena, father of the current mayor), rejected those requests.

"I can't speak to that," Polisena Jr. said last Thursday night. "If there was an aid issue earlier, the school department has the responsibility to speak up, both to the town, whether they do it informally in discussions, or they could file a 'Caruolo' against the town. They never did that. So that was a dereliction of their duty as School Committee members to pass budgets in the past, knowing that the budget that they passed was not enough to fund the school department."

Polisena referenced the Caruolo Act, which was named after legislative sponsor, former state representative George Caruolo. The Rhode Island law established a mechanism to resolve budget disputes between school committees and municipal governments and provided a legal route allowing School Committees to sue towns for under-funding basic education needs.

The Town Council and School Committee share the same solicitor, attorney William J. Conley Jr. His seat was empty at Thursday night's emergency School Committee meeting.

The inherent conflict, should the "takeover" attempt lead to litigation, has necessitated the hiring of separate outside counsel for both the town and the school department.

"I have no comment regarding this matter," Conley wrote via email Tuesday, refusing to answer questions about the conflict.

Polisena has enlisted attorney and former Cranston Mayor Allan W. Fung, a partner at Johnston law firm Pannone Lopes Devereaux & O'Gara, at \$275 an hour. Fung confirmed the pay rate Tuesday afternoon.

"That is my rate for this engagement," Fung said via email.

Fung attended Thursday's School Committee meeting and stood next to Polisena as the mayor answered questions from reporters.

'Caruolo Irony'

In April 2010, then-Cranston Mayor Fung supported a failed City Council resolution to petition the General Assembly to repeal the Caruolo Act. Cranston's city government and school department had been to court repeatedly to argue school funding disputes.

At the time, Fung's director of administration Robin Muksian-Schutt said that Fung supported repealing the Act because the legislation led to exorbitant legal fees for both the city and the school.

"[The Act] has cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees," she said in 2010, according to reporting in the Cranston Herald. "We have spent \$400,000 on this Caruolo alone."

On Thursday, the School Committee hired its own legal counsel, voting unanimously to enlist former Johnston school employee, now lawyer, Mary Ann Carroll, a partner with the Providence law firm, Henneous Carroll Lombardo. Carroll did not reply to requests for comment by press-time. Her pay rate, working for the School Committee will be \$250 an hour, according to DiLullo.

Last week's pair of School Committee meetings were the first time the proposed school takeover was discussed in public session.

"I don't think any action should have been taken until ... that study came in and it was reviewed between the administration the Town Council the school committee (and) school officials," Civetti said on Monday. He was previously in favor of auditing the school department's books, but he also urged his fellow council members to take a look at the town's finances.

"Once we see that report (the school audit) we could at least identify what the professionals thought the issues may be and

try to deal with it from there," Civetti explained. "In any event, although I am not an attorney, it is my understanding that the Town Council (and) the mayor's office has no control over the school department. That control lies within the School Committee. I am all-for providing additional funding for the school department, while also meeting with the school department and reviewing the report which is due later this summer."

Not Just Johnston

Johnston native and current Cranston Mayor Kenneth Hopkins was reluctant to offer an opinion on the funding controversy brewing in his former hometown.

"I let the Superintendent take care of school business," Hopkins said of his approach dealing with the Cranston school department. "We have a solid relationship and if we have concerns throughout the year, we have periodic meetings for discussion."

Former Cranston mayor and current Cranston School Committee Chairman Michael A. Traficante said he wouldn't comment directly on the Johnston situation, but agreed to discuss the complicated relationships between Ocean State municipalities and their school districts.

"State law makes it very clear that the school committee has total care and control and custody of school business in all respects," he explained. "It is the duty of the school committee to work with the school administration to, basically, tabulate policy, to balance budgets and to select personnel for a variety of positions. If, I'm saying if a school committee runs into a situation where they run into something delicate then it's their fiduciary responsibility to balance that budget and make the proper corrections to make sure they end up with a balanced budget."

Apart from being against state law and warning Polisena that controlling school finances is intensely complicated because of state and federal regulations, Timothy Duffy, executive director of the Rhode Island Association of School Committees, suggests that the mayor focus on the number of Johnston students sent out of district.

Duffy said Johnston pays about \$2.9 million annually to send students out of district.

"That is almost \$3 million that goes out the window every year that Johnston taxpayers are paying (to other districts and charter schools)," he said.

Warwick City Council President Steve McAllister had a sympathetic ear for Polisena.

"I do think it's reasonable for a Mayor or city council to put conditions on additional funding when school departments continue to come back year after year looking for more funding," he wrote in an email. "I know here in Warwick over 50 percent of the taxes goes to schools and it sounds like it is the same in Johnston ... Nobody wants to be surprised with a huge bill. So being open and talking about budgets year round is important. We all have the same constituents so in the end all of the different branches of government need to work together."

Warwick School Committee Chairman David Testa has followed the tug and pull over school budgets for years. While he doesn't have all the background to the Johnston situation, he applauded Polisena for tackling the issue but also offered a warning.

"I can understand a deficit in one year, but not significant deficits for two or three years in a row," Testa wrote via email. "But in the end, municipalities taking over school departments is just not a good idea, in my view, because it mixes politics and education."

He said he agrees with Polisena that schools should have the power to tax to retain the power to make financial decisions.

"I was happy to hear a Mayor come out and affirm what I've been saying for years — that this model is highly flawed and that, like that which occurs in most of the country, school districts should have the power to tax so they can control their own destiny," Testa wrote.

Outstanding Audits

At least one elected official saw the latest deficit coming, a year in advance. Last July, during the former mayor's final budget presentation, Civetti addressed the School Committee before voting.

"I asked the school committee members and the school officials on several occasions if they were okay with what the administration was appropriating to them," Civetti recalled. "On each occasion the answer was 'yes.' Although I believe I ended the discussion last year stating that I think the fiscal 2023 budget was very optimistic on both the town and school side and I had predicted that both departments would run a deficit for (Fiscal Year 2023)."

According to Civetti, Johnston's falling woefully behind on state-mandated auditing requirements. The past two years'



OPENLY MEETING: Polisena attended both Wednesday and Thursday night's School Committee meetings with three of five Town Council members — District 1, 2 and 3 representatives Linda L. Folcarelli, Lauren Garzone and Alfred T. Carnevale. Following Wednesday night's meeting, Polisena met the three council members and the town's Finance Director Joseph Chiodo on the sidewalk outside Ferri Middle School. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)

audits have yet to be finalized. "We're waiting on the School Department to give us their figures," Polisena said Thursday.

Johnston Town Council will hold a budget hearing at 5:30 p.m. on June 29 at the Johnston Municipal Court, 1600 Atwood Ave. Town Council is expected to vote on a \$129,081,852 town budget, according to the agenda.

Council will also consider a resolution "authorizing the Mayor town oversight, on an interim basis, of the financial and business operations of the Johnston School Department."

Now that both the schools and the town have hired attorneys, both entities appear poised to battle it out in court.

"I would hope not," Polisena said. "I don't think anybody wins if this goes to court."

Editor's Note: Beacon Communications reporters John Howell and Ed Kdonian contributed to this story.



ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGE: Polisena has enlisted attorney and former Cranston Mayor Allan W. Fung to represent the town in the matter. The school committee has also hired a lawyer.

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For many people, this process can be daunting and overwhelming. While some recipients will be automatically renewed, others must be prepared to show their ongoing eligibility.

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When it comes time to renew your Medicaid benefits, you will receive an official letter in the mail – it will be a recognizable yellow or green letter. From the time of this letter, you will have only thirty days to provide the State of Rhode Island with important documentation of your economic status (questions may include ones of your income, employment status, health information, etc.) You will be sent two reminder letters, making the total time allotted for action to be 90 days. If you miss this deadline, you risk the loss of your benefits. This is urgent and non-negotiable.

This is where the “Navigators” at Tri-County CAA can help. They are specifically trained to help people figure out how to get this important information gathered and

submitted. They can help you:

- Access HealthSource RI or download the HealthyRhode mobile app to your smart phone
- Scan documents right to your confidential online portal
- Find out when your renewal date is
- Provide general information about the process and how to respond to your renewal letters.

This process does not have to be complicated. The professionals at Tri-County CAA are standing at the ready to help you bypass endless hours on the phone or wade your way through the web. There is NO cost involved, this is a FREE and accessible service that can be done

in person at the Tri-County CAA office in Johnston or over the phone.

You do not have to wait until you get your letter, call the experts today and they can equip you with invaluable assistance. Furthermore, if you are part of an organization that supports Medicaid recipients, you can schedule a mobile unit to come to your facility.

Help is out there. Contact your “Navigators”, Marcia or Jim, at Tri-County Community Action Agency at 401-519-1959 or 401-330-5575. Tri-County CAA is located at 1126 Hartford Avenue in Johnston. Visit them at www.TriCountyRI.org today.

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Above image courtesy of Jeopardy! Facebook page

WHAT IS I'M ON JEOPARDY:

Cranston resident, Dan Meuse is ready to play on the Thursday, June 22 episode. (Photo courtesy of Dan Meuse)



Cranston resident faces Final Jeopardy

By PAM SCHIFF

All someone needs to say is the word "Jeopardy" and people either think they are very smart or a little on the dumber side.

For Cranston resident, Dan Meuse, he faced the Jeopardy rounds, final Jeopardy and the infamous theme music on last Thursday's episode; June 22.

Dan Meuse moved to Cranston in 2005 and have lived in the same house in Oak Hill Terrace since then. He lives with his wife; Kristen, daughter Abby, who is a junior at LaSalle and son Jack a 7th grader at Providence Country Day.

Meuse is a Lecturer in Public Affairs at Princeton University. He travels down one day a week for class in the fall. He has a Bachelors from Brown and an MBA from Providence College.

"I took the online test a few times, but after taking it in the spring of 2021, I got a follow-up email inviting me to take a second test on Zoom, probably to make sure that you aren't cheating. Shortly after the Zoom test, I was invited to a game-play audition over Zoom," Meuse said.

The online games were a good practice for the real thing.

"There were 10 or so other folks and the producers from the show, and we played some mock games and talked about ourselves. At the end of the Zoom, the producer said that we were all in the contestant pool for the next 18 months. Well, 18 months went by and I hadn't heard anything and I was getting ready to take the test again, when I got a text message asking if I was still interested in Jeopardy. Of course I said yes," he said.

Jeopardy contestants pay their own travel, hotel and meal expenses when they go out to Los Angeles to be on the show.

All contestants must bring three different outfits with them to the studio, but only the host and returning champion will need to change their outfits for the next episode.

Contestants and family members are all required to sign NDAs (non-disclosure agreements), and the audience is strongly reminded not to leak any information of the shows outcome. Each episode is taped several months in advance of actually being aired.

"Taping was on April 13 and five episodes are taped in one day. My family came with me, but did not come to the studio, because you don't know when you will be selected to play and it would be a long day for my kids," Meuse said.

Meuse talked about the challenges facing contestants.

"Filming Jeopardy is a mentally exhausting experience. Since I taped a Thursday show, I was able to watch the three shows before me and some of the questions were really difficult. That made all of us in the contestant group pretty nervous. Once I got on stage, though, I feel like I found my groove and I'm very happy with my performance," he said.

Jeopardy contestants are a one-and-done breed. They are not allowed to try out again.

Summer heats up with music festivals happening around Rhode Island

By **ROB DUGUAY**

It might not have felt like it recently, but June 21 was the official first day of summer this year. With this fact apparent, what does summer spark in one's mind when it gets brought up? Obviously there's the beach, the sun and perhaps even a cup of Del's frozen lemonade, or one of the many varieties of Mr. Lemon if you live near Admiral Street in Providence. For music fans around these parts, it means that the height of the music festival season is about to get underway. It's a time where each weekend always has something fun going on with some live music accompanying it in one way or another. To give you a brief summary of where to see some talented bands, musicians and performing artists this summer, here are four festivals happening around Rhode Island that you should check out.

Newport Folk Festival
July 28-30
Fort Adams State Park
Newport
NewportFolk.org



JON BATISTE
NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL
(Photo by Vittoria Nina Westervelt)

One of a couple legendary festivals on this condensed list, the Newport Folk Festival has been hallowed ground for songwriters with the likes of Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, John Lee Hooker and Peter, Paul and Mary along with many others performing there since its first inception back in 1959. This year's edition brings another stacked lineup to Fort Adams that includes Aimee Mann, Billy Strings, Jonathan Richman, Maggie Rogers, Lana Del Rey and Jason Isbell just to name a few. After each day of the festival, make sure to stick around "The City By The Sea" during the evening to catch the afterparties at the Newport Blues Cafe on 286 Thames Street, the Casino Theatre on 9 Freebody Street and the JPT Film & Event Center on 49 Touro Street.

weekend after the Folk Festival at the same location. The history of the festival is incredible, ranging from classic performers such as Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday and Louis Armstrong to modern genre-defying acts like Living Colour, Parliament Funkadelic and The Roots. It's considered the "Granddaddy of American Music Festivals" with its origination starting in 1954 and this year's lineup is chock full is amazing with Joe Russo's Almost Dead with Kamasi Washington, Herbie Hancock, Jon Batiste, Thundercat, Diana Krall, Samara Joy and The Soul Rebels with Rakim & Talib Kweli taking part along with an abundance of others.



DUSTBOWL REVIVAL - RHYTHM & ROOTS FESTIVAL
(Photo by Jake Jacobson)

Rhythm & Roots Festival
September 1-3
Ninigret Park Charlestown
RhythmAndRoots.com

Labor Day Weekend is always a bit different in Rhode Island when the Rhythm & Roots Festival comes around. Along with a ton of great music, including a tent that has bands playing zydeco and cajun music all day and night, it's also an ideal festival to bring the family to with tons of things available to keep the kids occupied. It's another festival with a killer lineup this year with Greensky Bluegrass, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Robert Cray, Donna The Buffalo, Dustbowl Revival and The Infamous Stringdusters being a few of the performing acts.



THE ROOTS NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL
(Photo by Brian Lima)

Newport Jazz Festival
August 4-6
Fort Adams State Park Newport
NewportJazz.org

The other legendary festival on this list is the Newport Jazz Festival, which takes place on the following

PVDFest
September 8-10
Michael S. Van Leesten Memorial Bridge Providence
PVDFest.com

Closing out the festival season around Rhode Island will be an updated and changed version of PVDFest. While it still will be free to the public, it's shifting from being a block party all over downtown to being in a more centralized location around the area where the Michael S. Van Leesten Memorial Bridge is. Soul legend Mavis Staples will be one of the headliners this year and there's bound to be a bunch of local bands and musicians taking part, make sure to keep tabs on the festival's website as announcements pertaining to the lineup will be announced.

Jeopardy

(Continued from page 14)

Meuse explained what he did to get ready for his episode.

"To prepare, I watched four or five episodes a day. I stood while I watched and answered clues in the form of a question. I even fashioned myself a buzzer and used a computer program to work on my buzzer reaction time. Once you get to the Jeopardy stage, everyone knows their stuff. Buzzer reaction time and managing stress and emotions are just as important on the stage. That said, I made flashcards about Shakespeare plays and art history," Meuse said.

Meuse has advice for people thinking about trying out for Jeopardy.

"First of all - Take the Online Test. You can't be a contestant if you don't take the test. If you do get the call, I found three

books incredibly helpful: Secrets of the Buzzer by Fritz Holznagel, Get Ready by Buzzy Cohen, and Answers in the Form of a Question by Claire McNear," he offered.

Meuse spilled the tea about what goes on during the commercial break times.

"So during the commercial break, we don't talk too much. Maybe a word of encouragement after a tough miss or a Daily Double. However, five shows

are taped in one day, and so the contestants who aren't playing comment on everything and end up becoming very close. In fact, we have all stayed in touch and shared pictures of our watch parties," he said.

Contestants actually do stay in touch with one another.

"The group of us that taped this week's shows have stayed in touch via email and we are sharing the pictures of our watch parties. My watch party

is at East Greenwich Yacht Club tomorrow evening with family and friends," he said.

For Meuse, watching Jeopardy these days varies from before his experience onstage.

"I definitely watch Jeopardy a little differently. I can tell when someone is struggling with the buzzer or the pressure. I can tell when someone makes a bad wager on a Daily Double or Final Jeopardy immediately. And I'm always looking out for those stumper clues and grateful they weren't mine," he said.

Meuse is confident and hopeful his son will want to take the test as soon as he is old enough.

While Meuse lost in Final Jeopardy by only five dollars, it was an exciting ending to a close game.

To try out for Jeopardy, go to <https://www.jeopardy.com/be-on-j/anytime-test>



I KNOW SOMEONE FAMOUS: Dan Meuse alongside Jeopardy host, Mayim Bialick on the famous stage. *(Photo courtesy of Dan Meuse)*

ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian
 Local Adoptable Loveable



Magnolia

Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

Magnolia has it all, big beautiful green eyes, whiskers for days and a "purr-fect" temperament! She is just over a year old so very playful and loving! Magnolia is a Domestic Shorthair with a gorgeous white and Tabby coat. If you'd like to meet her please visit EGAPL The Heart of RI at 44 Worthington Road Cranston, RI during their open adoption hours: Wednesday 3:00-7:00, Thursday & Friday 12:00-2:00 and Saturday 10:00-2:00. Let's not keep this beautiful girl waiting a day longer to find love, please call now 401-467-3670 for more information.

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



Biscotti

Photo credit: Karen Kalunian-Animal Talk

Everyone loves Biscottis right...especially when they are in the form of a yummy puppy! This little nugget is just four months old so very much a playful pup! He has been raised in a loving foster home and is very smart! Biscotti is a mixed breed pup and he is thought to be medium size when fully grown. If you've fallen in love with his photo please visit their website <http://www.fohari.org> or contact his foster from Friends of Homeless Animals RI via email: reginasfosterdogs@gmail.com

Sports

Town Champs



Yankees top Braves to win JLL title

The Yankees won the Johnston Little League Town Championship last week. Members of the team included: Max Castro, Joe Broccoli Jr., Eric Barboza, Jordan Diclo, Jaxson Diclo, Gavin Polofsky, Michael DeAngelis, Johnny Gosselin, Jeffrey Cadieux, Mason Paquin and Brody Staplins. Coaches were manager Ralph DeAngelis, Jeff Cadieux, Joe Broccoli and Joey Tamelleo. (Submitted photo)



PERFECT POSE: Christina Rondeau, who owns and operates Rondeau's Kickboxing and Fitness in Johnston, has advanced to the finals of a contest in hopes of having her picture on the cover of the highly acclaimed cover. (Submitted photo)

Rondeau seeks votes for spot on HERS Magazine

By PETE FONTAINE

Christina Rondeau needs your vote! Rondeau, the popular owner of Rondeau's Kickboxing and Fitness on Atwood Avenue in Johnston, is competing to land a spot on the cover of Muscle and Fitness HERS Magazine.

VOTES - PAGE 19

RWA's Spectacle raises over \$3k for Special Olympics

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Renegade Wrestling Alliance teamed up with the Icebreakers and held their much-anticipated Spectacle event last weekend at the Johnston Indoor Recreation Center to raise funds for the Special Olympics.

The show was a success both in and out of the ring as pro wrestlers from all over the region participated in front of a crowd of 200 people and went on to raise over \$3,000 toward the cause. The Icebreakers is a group of local individuals that raise funds for the Special Olympics each year.

"We were extremely happy, especially going into this as our first time doing it. It surpassed our hopes. To get over \$3,000 for the Special Olympics was huge for us. Our goal for the year is \$10,000 so to get this chunk of change was huge," said Henry Fellela, who helped promote the event and raises funds annually with the Ice-



SPECTACLE - PAGE 17 LENDING A HAND: The Icebreakers after the RWA event. (Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)

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ON THE TOP ROPE: Denzel Jordan shows off his belt after winning the RWA Ocean State title last weekend (above). Devin Blaze and Kellan Thomas grapple (below).



PUTTING ON A SHOW: Danger Boy Alfredo enters the ring.

■ Spectacle

(Continued from page 17)

breakers.

In attendance were local lifelong wrestling fans as well as youngsters who were seeing their first live pro wrestling event. There were members of the Special Olympics community as well as state politicians.

Many wrestlers took the ring to perform and RWA crowned a new Ocean State champion in Denzel Jordan.

"Everybody had a great time. The energy and vibe in the building was great, everyone was laughing and entertained, they were into the matches. It fed off both ways. The kids loved the wrestlers, we gained some new wrestling fans, that's for sure. RWA went well beyond what we expected and put on a great show," Fellela said.

RWA will next be hosting an event on July 30 in Providence at the Co-

lumbus Theater. Fellela and the Icebreakers will also be helping organize fundraising events later this year including the Penguin Plunge and its annual Christmas party with proceeds continuing to go toward the Special Olympics. RWA and the Icebreakers plan on making this wrestling event an annual show and are excited to start preparing for next year.

Fellela was thrilled to see Spectacle come together and things trending in a positive direction for the Icebreakers' fundraising efforts.

"Special Olympics runs on fundraising like this and during COVID, they took a big hit. Even getting back to it, they weren't getting the numbers that they were getting (before the pandemic). It's all about the (Special Olympics) athletes, and to help these guys be able to participate for free and to raise funds for them through sports, that's what it's all about," Fellela said.

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Saltwater Anglers appoint new executive director

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Scott Travers of Coventry, RI has been appointed executive director of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA). He replaces Greg Vespe who took the helm to bolster the organization after Steven Medeiros, founding executive director, died suddenly in 2021.

RISAA represents over 7,500 recreational anglers and 29 affiliate clubs in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Travers moved to Rhode Island after graduating from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. He is a retired member of the Portsmouth Police Department and served as their harbor-master. Most recently he was a technical assistant to the Aquatic Resource Education and Hunter Education Program of the RI Department of Environmental Management. He is an avid fly tyer and fisher. Prior to joining the police department, he sailed all over the globe as a commercial sailor.

"I enjoy all aspects of being outdoors on the water and in the field. I think we should all do more to protect our wild spaces and the environment which gives life to literally everything. It's all about the wise use of renewable resources," said Scott Travers. "As executive director it is my responsibility to sit at the helm of the organization, steer it, manage operations, and carry out its mission."

The RI Saltwater Anglers Association mission is to provide education to members concerning fishing techniques, improved catches, and overall enjoyment of fishing; to foster sportsmanship; to support marine conservation and sound management of fisheries resources; and provide a unified voice to preserve and protect the rights, traditions and the future of recreational fishing in Rhode Island.

Where's the bite?

Striped bass and bluefish. "The bass bite slowed greatly in the Bay and Providence River. Not many pogies (Atlantic menhaden) around in the Bay," said John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, Riverside.

Harrison Gatch of Watch Hill Outfitters, Westerly, said, "Striped bass fishing on the reefs has been pretty good with customers taking fish to 48 inches using live eels at night. And during the day top water lures are working well with bluefish mixed in."

"The striped bass bite has been OK from the surf, but anglers are fishing from Narragansett to Watch Hill to find the fish. Block Island's Southeast Light and the Southwest Ledge are producing for anglers trolling with



ANGLERS APPOINT NEW CHIEF: Scott Travers has been appointed executive director of the RI Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA). (Submitted photo)

wire," said Elisa Cahill of Snug Harbor Marina, South Kingstown.

"The pogies disappeared for a couple of days, so anglers must move to find the fish in the Bay. The best bite is off Newport where kayak anglers continue to do well trolling tube & worm," said Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence.

Ed Lombardo, fly fishing expert and guide, said, "Last week we fished both the Narrow River and the Charlestown Breachway. For the first time this season we have started to see very good numbers of sand eels in both locations. The incoming tide has been better than the outgoing, I believe because the water is much colder, coming in from the ocean. Sand eel patterns work well in colors of dark olive over white buck tail or craft fur. My

hot pink and burgundy shrimp pattern worked very well also. Hickory Shad and striped Bass are taking our offerings. One Bass was close to keeping size from the Breachway."

Declan O'Donnell of Breachway Bait & Tackle, Charlestown, said, "Striped bass fishing has been very good with fish being caught locally and out around Block Island. Many of the bigger fish are being caught on live bait while many of the slot fish are falling for jigs or being caught on the troll. Still a lot of sand-eels around, some lures that have been good to match them include the Joe Baggs Sand Eel, green Deadly Dicks, and the chartreuse Colt Snipper."

East End Eddie Doherty, Cape Cod Canal fishing expert and author said, "Striped bass up to 44 inches were

caught last week in the Canal. Rods were bent all around as schools entered the Big Ditch from Buzzards Bay on the breaking tides caused by the new moon last week. I caught a 36 inch the previous morning on a three ounce white Guppy JoBo Jr. and a 38 inch fish with a fish oil infused white Hurley Canal Killer."

Fluke (summer flounder), scup and black sea bass fishing have been improving. Elisa Cahill of Snug Harbor Marina, said, "Fluke fishing is picking up. Last Monday we saw better fishing and bigger fluke being caught in 50 to 60 feet of water from Matunuck to Green Hill, at the East Fishing Grounds and in the Block Island Wind Farm. However, the black sea bass bite has been slow with anglers catching frisee size scup all along the coastal shore."

"We have had a good bite along the southern coastal shore to Fishers Island, NY with the best bite at Block Island. Customers are not hooking up with many keeper black sea bass but south of Block Island and Fishers Island, NY the bite is good," said Gatch of Watch Hill Outfitters.

Henault of Ocean State Tackle said, "Anglers from shore are catching large scup all the way up the Providence River to Sabin Point, Rocky Point, and Conimicut Point. Fluke are being caught commercially on the channel pads from the T-Wharf at Prudence Island and south as well as off Newport and the Sakonnet River."

"Giant bluefin tuna fishing kicked off last week with one customer bringing in a 465 pound fish fully dressed (likely a 500 plus pound tuna). The bite was east of Block Island and Cox Ledge," said Cahill of Snug Harbor.

"Freshwater fishing continues to be good for largemouth bass with shiners still being the bait of choice for anglers. Ponds producing for customer include Olney Pond at Lincoln Woods, Turner Reservoir in Rumford and Stump Pond in Smithfield," said Henault of Ocean State Tackle.

"Anglers are buying a lot of shiners, so I know they are fishing for largemouth bass, and believe it or not, trout fishing is still good in ponds that have been restocked recently like Willet Avenue Pond, Riverside," said Littlefield of Archie's.

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@verison.net or visit www.noflufishing.com.

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Worry about score, not whistle

On Monday night, just before climbing into bed, I decided to wrap up my day by revisiting the 2020 ESPN Docuseries "The Last Dance" which chronicles the career of Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls during that era. I was impressed by the series when it was first released so figured I would unwind and tune in for a second viewing.

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

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There was a nugget in one of the episodes that I found tremendous and was shocked that I had not remembered it three years later.

If you look at my previous columns, you'll see plenty of takes regarding the treatment of referees from the youth level to the pros. I try my best to support referees because they take a beating every time they are out there. People wonder why we are in a crisis when it comes to shortages of officials throughout the country. The abuse they are subjected to has grown out of control in the past decade or so.

Now, back to the documentary.

There was one episode that centered on forward Dennis Rodman. He is one of the most recognizable players from that generation and it was quite compelling seeing the behind-the-scenes happenings of his life both on and off the court. What a character.

One thing about Rodman was that he was brash. He was an agitator on the court which worked to his advantage and led to his multiple championships and eventual hall of fame induction. He was perhaps the fiercest defender in the history of the league with multiple Defensive Player of the Year Awards. Although his physicality and aggression worked wonders on the court, it did come with plenty of controversy as he often pushed the envelope or crossed the line altogether.

There was a wonderful exchange between Rod-

man and a referee that was caught on camera and was mic'd up that was included in the series.

Rodman was getting on the ref about a missed call. It did not cover what exactly happened, but Rodman argued that an opposing player got away with something. The ref's response to his complaining was brilliant.

He said, "I don't see everything. Usually what I see is the (you know what) you do."

Rodman just shrugged it off, knowing he was beat and walked away. I loved the ref's response and I think it serves as a great reminder that players are expected to hold themselves accountable while playing.

One of my biggest pet peeves in sports is flopping and whining. Players that would rather draw a foul than just play the game, or players that are more concerned about the whistle being blown than the points being scored. That is another problem that has become far too prevalent.

Referees may not see everything, but they are aware of everything that is going on, if that makes sense. Their job is to understand who is doing what at all times. Sure, they may not witness each and every penalty that occurs, but they know which players are the frequent fliers. They know where their attention needs to be. It is similar to parents and their children. They may not see how each and every fight starts, but they know who caused it.

In the same episode, Jordan spoke about toughness. The Bulls were eliminated by the Detroit Pistons in consecutive postseasons and Jordan said it was because they were the tougher team. Chicago had more talent, but the Pistons dominated on the floor because they were meaner and wanted it more.

Jordan said that he would get on his teammates about complaining to the refs. He told them that if the opposition sees you frustrated and whining, then they know that they have gotten in your head.

He was exactly right, and things like that are why he's the greatest of all time.

NBA basketball has become tough to watch. This generation is totally on board with whining and trying to work the officials. It really has become that way in all sports, but basketball is the worst. Personally, I blame LeBron James for normalizing that soft behavior, but let's not go down that road.

I would encourage any athlete to watch "The Last Dance" and to take notes. Items such as these are so powerful in building a winning player, team, culture. Jordan was the ultimate winner and competitor and this series brilliantly followed his rise to stardom.

Athletes are responsible for their actions on the court or field. The refs are not there to impact the game one way or the other. They are there to enforce the rules, facilitate the gameplay and to earn a paycheck. Players far too often are happy to blame a loss on the officials if they miss a call, but not give them credit for a win if they make the right one. It's infuriating.

That exchange between Rodman and the referee was fantastic. I don't remember the last time such a simple dialogue gave me goosebumps.

■ Votes

(Continued from page 16)

"Christina is competing against tens of thousands of women from across North America in hopes of being on the cover," said Becky Rhodes, who serves as a staff member/community relations director at Rondeau's. "After many rounds featuring tough competition, she has made it to the semi-finals."

According to Rhodes, there are eight groups of eight women each competing in the semifinals that runs through tomorrow night (June 29) until 10 p.m. Pacific Time which translates to 1 a.m. EST.

"Many people here are hoping - as well as voting - for Christina to move onto the finals," Rhodes continued. "And that promises to be most competitive of all previous rounds of the competition."

Thus, Rhodes as well as everyone who was working at Rondeau's Kickboxing-Fitness earlier this week, were saying "Let's get out vote for Christina; she's done so much to help homeless and wounded veterans who will benefit from

this exciting competition."

Rhodes said the way to vote is online and all votes must be sent to <https://mshealthandfitness.com/2023/christina-11>.

When asked why Rondeau entered the contest, Rhodes replied with a wide smile on her face: "When Christina learned that the contest has been able to help so many military veterans, she wanted to do what she could for this amazing cause."

Over the last six years Ms. Health and Fitness Magazine has donated incredible amounts of money to Jared Allen's Home for Wounded Warriors.

Moreover, Rondeau is steeped with successful fundraisers that have helped everyone from veterans to seniors, so she wanted to help further that mission of providing financial assistance and support to injured United States military veterans by building and remodeling handicapped accessible homes to suite their individual needs one wounded veteran at a time.

Rhodes also said people can view the website daily to be part of the voting process and see Rondeau's progress.

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By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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In 1862, he was given a promotion to brigadier general but turned it down for unknown reasons. He then served as a major in the 20th Virginia Artillery Battalion along with his brother until he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and assigned as second in command of the Confederate Ordnance Service under Brigadier General Josiah Gorgas, inspecting Confederate arsenals, a position which he held until the end of the war. He was paroled in Greensborough, North Carolina on April 26, 1865.

After the war, he worked for the Pacific Steamship Service and in 1903 he sold his mansion on Prince Street in Alexandria to be used as a home for veterans. The United Daughters of the Confederacy own it today and run it as a museum. Julius died on June 3, 1912, at the age of 84. His coatee was passed down by a descendant until it was donated to a museum in 1945

along with his brother Johnston's Confederate officer's uniform.

As mentioned above, the coatee is stunning. It's made from indigo blue superfine broadcloth with scarlet broadcloth piping around the collar and cuff flaps and lined in the skirts with the same scarlet cloth with the upper body lined in red, glazed serge, and a strip of red Morocco around the waist. The cuffs and collar have two rows of gold metallic lace, and the pocket flaps are also piped with scarlet and have four gold metallic loops each. The tails of the skirts are long with embroidered bombs on the false turnbacks. The buttons are all eagle "A" with gilt wash and are in excellent condition.

It must have been quite a sight to see a company all decked out in their dress uniforms during that pre-war period, and this rare survivor is a wonderful view into the martial uniforms of our past.



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Financing option makes home improvement more attainable

For younger homeowners and first-time homebuyers in particular, money is likely to be tight. When most available cash is directed to the best possible down payment to secure a home in a desired neighborhood, there's often little left for improvements. According to a Profile of Buyers' Home Feature Preference Report from the National Association of Realtors, 53% of homebuyers took on a home improvement project within three months of buying with kitchen projects being a priority for 47% of those surveyed. However, when buyers finance a home renovation into their mortgage application, they can broaden their options of available properties to include fixer-uppers that can be upgraded prior to move-in.

A finance option like the Guaranteed Rate Home Renovation Loan allows homebuyers to visualize the home they want versus the one that's listed. By rolling renovation costs into their mortgage, buyers can enjoy a home tailored to their vision while paying a little extra each month for upgraded windows, siding, decks, kitchens, bathrooms or a walk-in closet. In many cases, the project can be completed after closing but prior to moving in with contractor commitments to stay within budget.

If cosmetic or structural improvements are needed when prospective homeowners find a property worth bidding on, they can work with a licensed loan officer to secure a home renovation loan. The borrower's choice of contractor that meets the lender criteria submits an estimate that's reviewed and validated by the lender. Once approved and the mortgage is closed, the renovation can begin with costs paid upfront, added to the loan and repaid as part of the mortgage.



Photos courtesy of Getty Images

Consider renovation projects like these:
Luxury Renovations are geared toward the enjoyment of a home. They might be as easy as updating an entertainment room or reworking existing landscaping or as complex as adding a swimming pool, hot tub, outdoor kitchen or fitness area.

Structural Renovations affect load-bearing elements like posts, beams or even the foundation or walls of the home. Some examples include adding a garage, raising a roof, converting rooms or adding square footage to the house.

Non-Structural Renovations do not affect load-bearing elements and are often more cosmetic, including remodeling kitchens or bathrooms, repainting, replacing siding and upgrading for accessibility.

Consider the out-of-pocket costs of similar non-structural renovation projects according to Remodeling Magazine's 2023 Cost vs. Value Report when compared with the monthly price of financing via a Guaranteed Rate Home Renovation Loan based a sample mortgage payment of \$2,525/month*.

- Bathroom remodel: \$24,606 out of pocket versus \$127 per month financed
- Hardwood flooring: \$4,900 out of pocket versus \$25 per month financed
- Finished basement: \$18,400 out of pocket versus \$95 per month financed
- Kitchen remodel: \$77,939 out of pocket versus \$402 per month financed
- Solar panels: \$20,000 out of pocket versus \$103 per month financed

Find more solutions to make the home renovation process easier at Rate.com.

*Example portions of payments allocated to renovation costs are based on a purchase price of \$388,800, down payment of 20%, 30-year [fixed] rate mortgage at a rate of 6.69%/7.364% annual percentage rate (APR) and 360 mortgage payments of \$2,525. FICO score and lock days based on 740 FICO and 45-day lock. Advertised rates and APR effective as of 05/25/23 and are subject to change without notice.



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5 Must-Haves for Outdoor Entertaining



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

FAMILY FEATURES

Gatherings and get-togethers may commonly take place inside, but giving your guests extra space takes nothing more than a little creativity and the right outdoor appliances. Open a new door – literally – and head outside to take advantage of unused deck, patio and yard space.

As a natural extension of your home, a few key pieces of lighting, heating and cooking equipment can turn your backyard into an entertaining oasis. Let your personal style shine and elevate your hosting skills with these ideas from the experts at the Propane Education & Research Council.

Lighting

Flame lighting may not be every homeowner's first consideration, but more hosts are relying on it to add upscale elegance to outdoor gatherings. Custom lanterns, modern chandeliers, pendants and tabletop units offer stylish additions to modern and classic designs alike.

No matter your tastes, propane flame lighting fixtures can be placed in multiple areas for aesthetic and practical purposes. While it's hard to top the soothing effect of a starry night while calming flames reflect off your windows and add a glow to your patio, flame lighting also can ward off intruders or animals and help prevent tripping in the dark.

Grills and Cooking Equipment

Propane can help you bring your dream kitchen to life outdoors. First establish a budget and identify a builder then build out the features of your high-performing kitchen in the peaceful setting nature offers. Often, the centerpiece of the space are grills, which are available in a variety of sizes and styles. Some offer features like side burners for sauces and roisseries.

Because they heat up fast and provide precise temperature control, propane-powered outdoor cooking appliances are a popular choice for homeowners who want to spend less time preparing food and more time enjoying it. With instant on-off convenience just like indoor gas ranges, outdoor propane grills, pizza ovens and ovens help home chefs create perfectly cooked meals with no coals, soot or ash to clean up. The appliances can also be built in to a straight, L-shape or U-shape bar to complete your outdoor cooking paradise.

Patio Heaters

If chilly weather brings on the blues in your region, make the most of your outdoor space with a propane-powered patio heater that allows for entertaining nearly year-round. Propane patio heaters can raise the outdoor air temperature up to 25 F while emitting a circle of radiant heat up to 25 feet in diameter. Next time you want to get outside before patio season arrives, start up a propane patio heater to enjoy cozy warmth in a clean, safe, reliable way.

Fireplaces and Fire Pits

Another option for bringing warmth to outdoor entertaining can happen with the push of a button in the form of a propane fireplace or fire pit. These smokeless solutions come without the maintenance of wood-burning fires, meaning you can enjoy the heat and ambiance of flames dancing in the night sky while skipping the fuss of soot, ash and burning logs. Plus, clean-energy propane delivers heat more efficiently with a lower carbon footprint than traditional energy sources like wood, which take a toll on the environment.

Pool Heaters

You can maximize your fun for as much of the year as possible and combat the elements with propane pool and spa heaters. Available for in-ground and above ground pools and spas, propane heaters operate at a higher efficiency than electric systems and

maintain heat better in cooler weather while also operating cleanly and taking up minimal space.

To find more outdoor entertaining inspiration, visit Propane.com.

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