

Columbus lands on Johnston

By RORY SCHULER

Columbus has landed in Johnston's War Memorial Park. On Monday, Oct. 9, he'll be welcomed with food trucks and a re-introduction to the public.

Earlier this week, the explorer's likeness was hoisted into place, lowered by a crane onto a cement pedestal on the island in the center of the park's pond.

According to a message on the Johnston Recreation Department website, the island has been closed to visitors since Sept. 11, while the statue's base was poured and prepared.

"I'm glad Johnston was able to step up and provide a home for the statue," said Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. "The possibility of it being melted was disturbing. It's a part of history."

The 130-year-old bronze Columbus was uninstalled from its Providence pedestal in 2020 and locked away in storage for years. During its final years in the city the memorial commemorating the Italian explorer became a lightning rod for protest and vandalism.

Former Providence Mayor Joseph R. Paolino Jr. bought the sculpture, stored it, and eventually offered it to Johnston, a community with deep and sturdy Italian American roots. (According to the US Census Bureau, at 49.5 percent, Johnston ranks second nationally for a municipality with the highest population percentage reporting Italian ancestry.)

Johnston's a smaller town, bordering Providence, and Polisena said months ago that he doesn't expect the same security threat at the statue site. The town's agreement to provide Columbus a home requires a certain level of protection.

Polisena hopes security cameras and fences will keep vandals and protesters off the statue. He promised not to spend tax dollars on the project.

"The security feed is direct to the police station with 24-hour monitoring," Polisena wrote via email Tuesday. "This was all done at no cost. The security, fencing, transport and install was all pro bono. That's a testament to all of the people who didn't want to see this statue destroyed."

Of course, the Johnston Police Department is funded by taxpayers.

In the meantime, Polisena assures park-goers they'll still have full use of the small plot of land in the center of the park's pond.

"United fence is donating a small fence to put around statue," Polisena explained. "Other than that, the public will have full access to island. The benches and trees will all remain as is too."

The Columbus Day unveiling event on Monday, Oct. 9, will include food trucks and begin at 11 a.m.

More photos on Page 12.

COLUMBUS BY CRANE: The Christopher Columbus statue that stood in Providence for 130 years has been erected on a cement pedestal on the island in the center of Johnston's War Memorial Park pond. The mayor has planned a Columbus Day unveiling event. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



Did Johnston miss out on millions for education?

By RORY SCHULER

The governor offered millions for schools, but the mayor refused, insisting he saw too many strings attached.

Can the town afford to leave any money on the table?

Did the administration miss a key grant application deadline or did they save millions down the line?

"As you might remember, in his 2023 State of the State address, Governor McKee announced a goal of reaching Massachusetts education levels by 2030," explained Matt Sheaff, Senior Communications Advisor for Rhode Island Gov. Dan Daniel J. McKee. "In order to achieve this, the Governor launched Learn365RI. As the first part of the initiative, municipal leaders sign onto a Learn365RI Municipal Compact with the state, publicly making a commitment that they will make education

a priority in their community. As a former mayor, the Governor knows firsthand how important it is to have municipal leaders engaged in education in their community."

The Cash

At stake was Johnston's \$2.2 million share of \$81 million in federal funds for the community learning center program.

To apply, and receive the funds, municipalities were required to check a box, committing to McKee's Learn365RI initiative.

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. refused to check the box.

"While looking into this grant, it came to my attention you could not submit the grant unless you joined Learn365 and two other government spending programs, Health365 and Work365," Polisena wrote via email last

week. "Applicants literally cannot electronically submit the grant unless that box to join Learn365 is checked off — therefore Johnston was never eligible."

Too late?

Did the town miss the grant deadline?

"Yes, the town did miss the deadline by about 3 weeks," Sheaff contends. "Additionally, in order to apply for the \$81M, a community must first sign the Learn365RI Municipal compact which Johnston has not done."

Polisena disagrees.

"I'm not sure why the Governor is talking about deadlines for a grant Johnston isn't eligible for," he argued. "That's like saying you missed a flight when you never even had a plane ticket to begin with."

McKee's office "launched a federally-funded \$81M program to support mu-

nicipalities in opening community learning centers to foster more learning opportunities for students," according to Sheaff. "This program is still in progress and the state is working with communities on crafting their proposals."

Reminder Unheeded

Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti mentioned the grant during August's regular monthly meeting. He asked the town administration whether they'd be applying (the deadline was the day of the meeting).

"I knew through my work that it became available and we had a very short time frame," Civetti said last week. He works as an accountant with several municipal clients.

"Why wouldn't we have participated in that from the get go?" Civetti asked last week. "We're talking about build-

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SUSAN SAYS HI: Susan Stahowiak, a Warwick transplant to Johnston, balances a full schedule of events with her time at the Johnston Senior Center. (Photo courtesy Richard J. Delfino Jr.)

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Desperately seeking more Susans

Despite booming attendance, the JSC's always looking for a few more good members

By **RICHARD J. DELFINO JR.**
Special to the Sun Rise

The Johnston Senior Center Spotlight this week shines on Susan Stahowiak. Susan began visiting the Center three years ago, when she joined a group of members who meet five mornings a week to “walk away the pounds.” Susan moved to Johnston from Warwick six years ago. She enjoys many other activities here at the Center, and is a familiar smiling face, participating in daytrips, book club, wine and paint, and just about every other activity of interest. Susan says she has developed some of her very best friendships here at the Center. When not participating in an activity, she can be seen volunteering in some capacity, like “working the bingo” on Thursdays and Fridays. Further, she enjoys the meals here at the Center.

Outside of the Center, Susan is known to help anyone in need in her residential community with rides, pickups, and errands. She also volunteers at St. Robert Bel-larmine Church.

Most important to Susan is her time spent with family — her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter, and six siblings.

She enjoys traveling, and belongs to two travel groups. In fact, she just returned from what has become an annual family trip, this time to Utah and Nevada, and claims the daily exercise program here “helped her up those mountain trails.”

Susan stressed the fact that she sees so many acts of kindness, and experiences so much kindness herself as a member here. Susan is the “perfect example” that giving and receiving kindness leads to a happy and rewarding life.

If you know someone who has some kindness to share, bring them by the JSC. If you know someone that could benefit by a kind and warm welcome, we would like to introduce you to Susan.

Editor's Note: Richard J. Delfino Jr. serves as Executive Director of the Johnston Senior Center, at 1291 Hartford Ave., Johnston. The Johnston Sun Rise regularly publishes a senior profile, called “Senior Spotlight,” submitted by the senior center.

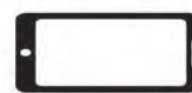
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In a small town, a big issue about the First Amendment

Legal ads bring a lot of revenue to little local newspapers. What happens when local politicians pull them?

By **AMANDA MILKOVITS**
Globe Staff

Editor's Note: This article was first published by Boston Globe Rhode Island and has been republished by the Johnston Sun Rise with permission. Visit Globe.com/RI for a free trial digital subscription to the Globe.

JOHNSTON, R.I. — As small local newspapers struggle with dwindling circulation and shrinking revenue, public officials unhappy with critical news stories are hitting where it hurts — yanking away their contracts to advertise legal notices.

It's a problem that has been playing out for small dailies and weeklies in New York, New Jersey, Colorado, and other states — including Rhode Island. And, besides hurting the papers' bottom lines, some experts note it could infringe on First Amendment rights.

Days after his inauguration in January, the new mayor of this suburban town bordering Providence pulled the legal ads from the Johnston Sun Rise, the free weekly publication with a circulation of 4,500 and a single full-time editor/reporter, and switched to the Providence Journal, the statewide daily newspaper owned by Gannett.

Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr. told the Globe that he wanted to use the Journal's bigger circulation to attract a broader audience for bids — and that the move had nothing to do with the coverage in the Sun Rise.

"I made the move immediately upon taking office," Polisena said. "It's not like there were months of perceived negative stories, and then I made the switch."

But Polisena was candid about his irritation with the questions coming from the Sun Rise's editor/reporter, Rory Schuler. In an interview with the Globe, Polisena rattled off a list of stories that he thought were unfair, including some from when Polisena was vice chairman of the town council, before he was elected mayor.

Among the stories that rankled were ones about the firing of a senior center director; a state senator who runs an HVAC company getting a full-time, on-call

town job paying more than \$80,000 as an inspector for construction of the Amazon facility; the budget missing a deadline under the town charter; and campaign contributions that Polisena Sr. — received from employees of solar companies that are proposing large solar field developments and facing pushback from furious residents.

John Howell is the publisher of Beacon Communications, which includes the Johnston Sun Rise, the Warwick Beacon, and the Cranston Herald weeklies. He told the Globe that, after the younger Polisena was elected in 2022, he made it clear in private meetings with Howell that he was unhappy with Schuler's coverage and said he was going to switch the town's legal ads from the Sun Rise to the Journal.

"The mayor said, 'I'm not going to support somebody who is working against me,' and that as long as Rory's with the paper he's not going to advertise," Howell said. He has been down this road twice before: In 1970 and in 2019, Warwick mayors who were unhappy with the Warwick Beacon for various reasons pulled their legal ads.

Both the current and the previous mayor have accused Schuler of "gotcha journalism" in the past, Howell said, but the elder Polisena continued to run the town's public notices in the Sun Rise, instead of the Journal, because the weekly is local and the ad rates are cheaper.

In an interview with the Globe, the current mayor denied telling Howell to fire Schuler or he'd lose the legal ads. Polisena said that he spoke to Howell in late 2022 about "the feel of the paper" and said that he was going to switch to advertising with the Journal. He acknowledged, however, that he was upset that Schuler had published information, after confirming it with other sources, that Polisena had also told him off the record.

In January, the new mayor made the switch. The loss of the advertising contract cut the Sun Rise's revenue by more than \$12,000 a year — a serious hit to the tiny, free weekly publication.



THE STACKS: Johnston Sun Rise publisher John Howell looked over a layout of the front page of the Warwick Beacon newspaper near stacks of the newspapers in the office. (John Tlumacki/Globe Staff)

"They're not happy that I pulled the advertising," Polisena said. "I'm not in this to make a newspaper money. I'm in this to protect the taxpayers."

But the Providence Journal, which had a daily circulation of about 27,000 in 2022, charges far more — as much as 10 times more — than the Sun Rise to print public notices and legal ads.

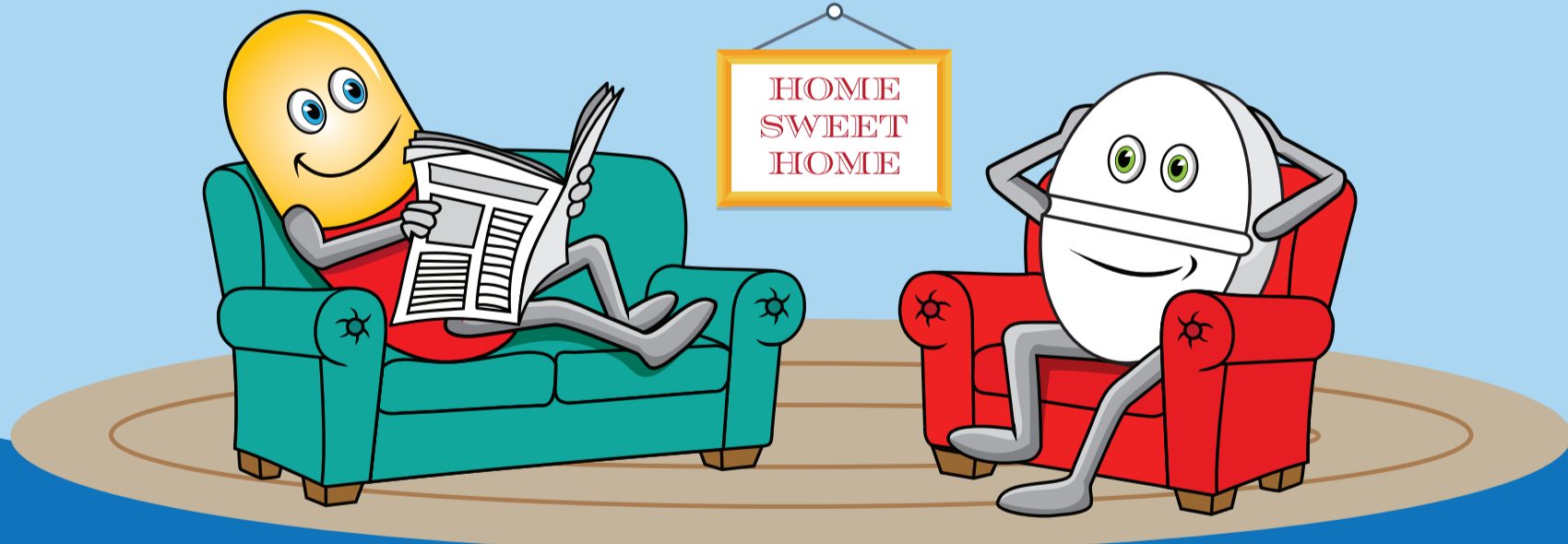
The Sun Rise charged \$165 for liquor license renewal notices and \$39 to \$102 for board agendas, and the Providence Journal charged more than \$600 for liquor license renewal notices and \$800 to \$1,300 for planning board agendas, according to receipts provided by the town. A legal notice for an April planning board meeting cost nearly \$8,000 to run for two weeks in the Journal.

That has increased costs for the town, which runs notices about ordinances and requests for purchases, as well as for the petitioners, such as vendors and developers, who are required to take out the notices to inform the public about hearings on licenses, zoning, and planning. The town collects the fees from the petitioners, then pays the newspapers for the notices.

Some residents and political leaders note that the change has also affected the public.

Democratic Town Councilman Robert Civetti, who has led the charge against solar array sites in the resi-

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HOT OFF THE PRESS:
Three editions of the Sun Rise that Schuler pointed out, in which Mayor Polisen was featured prominently. (John Tlumacki/Globe Staff)



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Legals
(Continued from page 3)

dential neighborhoods in his ward, said that advertising in the statewide newspaper has made it difficult for people to find out about local meetings and proposed changes in Johnston.

At a council meeting on March 13, Civetti asked for information about whether the ads in the Providence Journal are cost effective. In August, he told the Globe that he's still waiting for answers.

"If they felt they are getting more bids by advertising in the Journal, then continue to do so, but I think the public meetings and things going on in town should be in the Sun Rise," he told the Globe. "That's where people can see them."

The Johnston Republican Town Committee also said it would be in the town's best interest to have the notices of town meetings in the Sun Rise.

"We are so fortunate to have this free newspaper," committee chairwoman Sandra Taylor told the Globe. "The Sun Rise is printed every Thursday and we can count on its timing. We appreciate transparency. It makes sense to keep business local."

People are now relying on word of mouth to find out about upcoming meetings, because they don't subscribe to the Journal, said Lynn Grissom, a Johnston native.

But they do read the Sun Rise. "It's where local people go for local information about the community," she said.

Grissom defended Schuler's reporting in the Sun Rise. "He reports it like it is," she said. "Good for the freedom of the press that Rory is still doing his job."

The Polisenas are both Democrats. The chairman of the Johnston Democratic Town Committee, lawyer Joseph Ballirano, who is also solicitor for the town Zoning Board, didn't respond to the Globe's requests for comment.

Public notices are not only critical to small newspapers, they are one of the pillars of government transparency, said Richard Karpel, the executive director of the Public Notice Resource Center, a nonprofit that promotes government and corporate transparency through public notices in newspapers.

Laws in all 50 states require that notices informing the public about town meetings, hearings, elections, probate court matters, tax sales, changes in ordinances – even something as small as when the town is considering abandoning a road – must be published in a newspaper.

Pulling contracts to publish legal notices as punishment "is happening more often," he said. "If they have a choice to publish notices in more than one paper, they can exercise that option, but the question is, is it good for the community or not?"

Polisen said he's willing to pay more to advertise in the Providence Journal, even if most of Johnston's nearly 30,000 residents don't subscribe to it and the paper has no dedicated coverage of the town. The town has gotten more responses to its requests for bids from ads in the Providence Journal than the Sun Rise, he said. Town Clerk Vincent Baccari Jr. confirmed the increase in responses.

Howell met with Polisen and the mayor's chief of staff and deputy chief of staff in March and appealed to him to change his mind. He said he told Polisen about the importance of transparency in local government and said more residents were likely to see the ads in the local weekly.

In response, Polisen offered to pay the Sun Rise a token \$1 to publish the notices. Howell declined.

Polisen said that meant "their argument on trans-

parency doesn't hold up."

The question is whether pulling the ads – and the revenue they generate for the Sun Rise – amounts to a violation of the First Amendment, which serves, among other things, to protect journalists from being punished for exercising their constitutional rights and publishing the news.

Justin Silverman, the executive director of the New England First Amendment Coalition, said he sees "red flags" in the Johnston case. However, he said, it can be difficult to prove a violation of the First Amendment.

"The First Amendment only comes into play when it's a retaliatory measure, and not for other reasons that may make sense, such as moving ads to another publication for a broader audience or better rates. That's where it gets tricky," Silverman said. "It's difficult to prove without someone making an explicit threat."

The American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island has offered to review the matter.

"The local media serve as an important check on government misconduct and threats against them for doing their job should be a concern of every resident," said ACLU executive director Steve Brown. "I'm not in a position to say that this happened, but it's concerning to have these allegations raised by a reputable member of the media."

Since Schuler became the Sun Rise's editor in May 2021, he has won awards for his coverage, including the Distinguished Journalist Award from the Rhode Island Press Association.

"I like to tell both sides of the story," he told the Globe. "My goal was to provide a solid news product in a town that was getting minimal media attention, except for maybe a sensational story that popped up."

When asked if Schuler's reporting was objective, Polisen paused before answering. "I think he does what he's supposed to do, which is be a check on the administration," he responded.

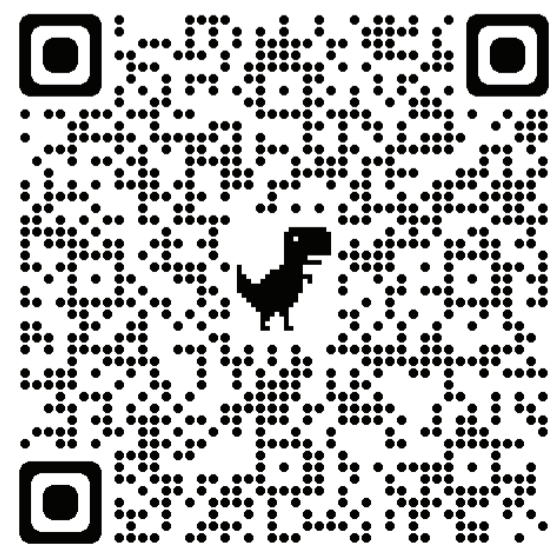
"It's not their job to paint me in a positive or negative light. It's the media's job to identify the facts of the story," Polisen added.

And yet.

The mayor said he has no intentions of switching the public notices back to the Sun Rise, even if Schuler stops working there. Schuler said he has no intentions of changing the way he covers the town.

"No matter what these public officials say," Schuler said, "they can give their opinions, but they do not get to control what the local newspaper writes."

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JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

NO LICENSE

Around 9:30 a.m., July 28, Johnston Police Patrolman Aaron Blanco was on a fixed post at 1074 Plainfield St., when he spotted a black Mercedes traveling approximately 10 miles over the speed limit. He initiated a traffic stop and identified the driver as Jonathan T. Obrien, 28, of 1635 Cranston St., Cranston. DMV files revealed the vehicle's registration was expired and Obrien's driver's license was suspended. He was cited for Speeding 1 to 10 MPH in Excess of Posted Speed Limit, Driving with Expired Registration and Driving with Suspended License (fourth or subsequent offense). The vehicle was towed from the scene.

DUI

Around 10:50 p.m., Aug. 20, Johnston Police Patrolman Matthew D. Murphy was on a detail in the area of 2200 Hartford Ave., while another Johnston officer attempted a traffic stop on a black Chevy Silverado with Massachusetts plates.

"The vehicle initially refused to stop," Murphy wrote in the arrest report.

Less than 10 minutes later, police located the truck and driver, who they later identified as Floyd A. Lackey, 55, of 3 Wade Road, Plainville, Massachusetts.

"I detected a strong odor of alcohol emitting from Mr. Lackey's breath, and immediately noticed his slurred speech," Murphy wrote. "I also observed Mr. Lackey to have bloodshot and watery eyes, and his facial skin was blush-red. I noticed Mr. Lackey to have difficulty standing on his own, as he was leaning on the side of his truck."

Lackey allegedly told police he had been drinking at home and decided to go for a ride, according to the report. Police asked him to consent to a series of standardized field sobriety tests. He refused and was arrested, read his rights, his truck was searched and towed from the scene.

At headquarters, Lackey also refused to take a "chemical test."

Lackey was criminal charged with Driving Under the Influence of Liquor or Drugs (first offense, BAC unknown). He was also issued a citation for Refusal to Submit to a Chemical Test.

DRUG POSSESSION

Around 4:45 p.m., June 18, Johnston Police Patrolman Patrick Gendreau took a fixed post "in order to attempt to conduct a pretext motor vehicle stop of an individual who has two active warrants.

Police identified the suspect as Thomas A. Orlando, 30, of 15 Manuel Ave., Johnston.

Gendreau spotted Orlando driving south on Killingly Street and initiated a traffic stop. He eventually stopped for police on King Street.

The driver told police he didn't have a license on him, and gave police a different name and address.

Police ran a background check on Orlando and confirmed an active bench warrant out of North Providence for the violation of a No Contact Order. He was placed under arrest and charged for Driving with Expired License or Without a License (second offense).

Police advised Orlando that there were active warrants for his arrest. He was taken into custody and searched. Police then searched his vehicle.

"An inventory of Mr. Orlando's motor vehicle was conducted, at which time I located what appeared to be a crack pipe under the driver's seat, which had a white powdery like residue on the end of the pipe," Gendreau wrote in the arrest report. "While searching the general area in which the pipe was located in under the driver's side seat, I then located a partial plastic bag with a white powdery substance with solid white rocks accompanied inside of the bag."

The vehicle was towed from the scene. Orlando was transported back to Johnston Police Headquarters.

"Due to the discoveries made on scene, an unclothed search of Mr. Orlando was conducted ... which was met with negative results," Gendreau wrote.

A further search through Rhode Island Court Connect revealed Orlando was a bail violator. He was also charged with two additional misdemeanors: Possession of Schedule I, II, III, IV, V, and Obstructing Officer in Execution of Duty.

Orlando was remanded to the ACI Men's Intake Center as a bail violator.

FORGERY

Around 1:15 p.m., May 2, Johnston police responded to headquarters to speak to a possible victim of check fraud. The victim told police that he checked his bank statement and found a check cashed that he believed to be fraudulent. The check for \$925.35 was cashed on April 19.

The bank provided police with surveillance images of the man who cashed the check.

Police identified the man who allegedly cashed the check as Richard Y. Hiraldo, 24, of 23 Kinfield St., Providence. He had provided the bank with an ID while cashing the check.

The bank also told police that Hiraldo also attempted to cash another check on

April 26 for \$900, but the date on the check was made out for 2003, so they contacted the owner. The account owner told the bank that she never wrote the check. Since the check was not cashed, the bank did not file a complaint, according to an incident report filed by Johnston Police Detective Derek Parasandolo.

The bank agreed to file a criminal complaint against Hiraldo for the previous check he successfully cashed.

Police detectives reviewed the surveillance footage for a description of the suspect. They also noted that in the footage, Hiraldo "can be seen utilizing his phone."

A cross agency check revealed the suspect had previously been arrested by Rhode Island State Police in 2021 on a charge of Receiving Stolen Goods, and he "is also a suspect in another incident" connected to a cashed fraudulent check.

An arrest warrant and affidavit was prepared for Hiraldo on charges of Fraudulent Checks (under \$1,000), Forgery and Counterfeiting in General, and Obtaining Money Under False Pretenses or Personation (less than \$1,500).

Around 4:30 p.m., Aug. 8, Johnston Police learned that Hiraldo was taken into custody by State Police on the active JPD warrants.

ROAD RAGE

Around 12:45 p.m., Aug. 2, Johnston

Police responded to a reported road rage incident that resulted in damage to a vehicle. The caller told police she was traveling east on Greenville Avenue when another vehicle made an abrupt U-turn from the westbound lane into the eastbound lane, cutting her off.

She gave police a description of the vehicle, the driver and the plate number. The caller told police she "followed the vehicle back to a residence where the operator exited the vehicle and challenged (the victim) to get out of her vehicle and fight."

The caller told police she left and phoned police.

Police noted minor damage to the vehicle's rear driver's side panel allegedly caused by "the objects being thrown." Police identified the alleged road rage driver as Jennifer Duran, 25, of 7 Golini Drive, Johnston.

The victim told police she wished to pursue criminal charges. Police issued warrants against Duran for two misdemeanor charges: Throwing Article at Moving Vehicle and Disorderly Conduct.

Around 2 a.m., Aug. 27, Johnston Police responded to the RISP barracks at 1575 Old Louisquisset Pike in Lincoln to take custody of Duran, who had been picked up on the Johnston Police warrants. She was transported to Johnston Police Headquarters without incident.

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Johnston High SRO assaulted; two students arrested

By RORY SCHULER

Two Johnston High School students were arrested last week following an assault on the school's police department-assigned Resource Officer.

Around 10 a.m., Thursday, Johnston Police responded to the school.

According to Johnston Police Chief Mark A. Vieira, "two disorderly students were placed under arrest."

Johnston Schools Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. refused to comment on the incident.

"Our policy is not to disclose information regarding students in the district," DiLullo wrote via email Wednesday morning. "Thank you for reaching out."

The two students taken into custody are facing different charges, according to police.

"One juvenile was charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest," Vieira wrote via email. "A second juvenile was charged with simple assault and disorderly conduct. The victim of the simple assault was a school resource officer (SRO) for the high school. The second juvenile assaulted the SRO."

No injuries were reported and the Resource Officer was never off the JHS beat.

"The school resource officer and the involved juveniles did not sustain any injuries," according to Vieira. "The SRO was never out of work due to this incident."

best OF RHODE ISLAND
COMEDY LUNCH or DINNER SHOWS

AGING DISGRACEFULLY
STARRING DOREEN COLLINS & CHARLIE HALL

Twin Oaks
Sunday October 1 - 12:30pm

ANGELO'S PALACE PIZZA
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 11
5pm arrival Cumberland

the blue room
Friday Oct. 13
Show only- 6:30 pm
Pawtuxet Village, Cranston

ISLANDER RESTAURANT
Saturday October 14
All-You-Can-Eat Buffet @ 6:15 pm

Reservations/Info/More dates at
AGINGDISGRACEFULLY.NET/288-1188

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Johnston Sun Rise

SUN RISE SCOOPS

Sun Rise Staff Reports

Sept. 30 RISPCA Paws in the Park

The Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will hold its 21st Annual Dog Walk on Sat., Sept. 30, at Rocky Point Park, 1 Rocky Point Ave., Warwick from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Rain or shine. All proceeds benefit community programs and services including adoption, humane education and affordable veterinary care. Register and FUND-raise today. For more information: rispca.org.

Oct. 1 Fall Harvest Craft Fair

On Sunday, Oct. 1, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Our Lady of Grace Church, at 15 George Waterman Road, in Johnston (entrance on Sheridan Street), will hold its annual Fall Harvest Craft Fair. The organizers expect more than 30 local artisans, who will be offering handmade arts and crafts. The fair will also feature Italian food, sweet treats, a penny social, raffles and more.

Oct. 1 Cranston Fall Festival Rescheduled

The Cranston Fall Festival has been rescheduled because of the weather forecast, and has moved to Sun., Oct. 1, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Itri Square, Knightsville, Cranston. We Be Jammin Events and Ocean State Food Truck Festivals present: Vendors, Local Businesses, Entertainment, Demonstrations, Food Trucks, Beer Garden, Kids Activities and more! For more information: webejamminevents.com

Oct. 3 Photographic Society of RI

The Photographic Society of RI will hold its meeting on Tues., Oct. 3, at 6:30 p.m., as a social time and the meeting will start at 7 p.m. It will be held at Lakewood Baptist Church, 255 Atlantic Ave., Warwick. It will be the 1st Open Competition of the new year. The competition will include black & white prints, color prints, digital images and slides. Future meetings will include live demos, competitions, set-

ups for photo ops, image studies and presentations from experts on a vast array of topics for a wide range of skill levels. Whether a member or not, please come and enjoy the program and to see what the club is all about

Oct. 7 Author Talk and Book Signing

The Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library, 1 Memorial Dr., Johnston, will host author Alexia Williams, author of the children's book, "Livvoo's Quiet Morning" who will present a book talk and signing. The event will be on Sat., Oct. 7, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. All are welcome.

Oct. 7 Johnston Historical Society Yard Sale

The Johnston Historical Society will be hosting their annual Yard Sale on Saturday, Oct. 7, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the society's Museum, 101 Putnam Pike (Route 44) in Johnston. A Sunday, Oct. 8 rain date has been set (same times). The historical society is also offering spots at the sale for a \$25 donation (one 6-foot table; bring your own). Those interested in "renting" must contact Anthony Ursillo at 401-764-5901 or aursillo401@gmail.com. The Johnston Historical Society is a 501 (3C) non-profit organization.

Oct 14 Walk to End Domestic Violence

The Walk to End Domestic Violence for the Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center will be held on Sat., Oct. 14, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. starting at Rocky Point State Park, 1 Rocky Point Ave., Warwick. The walk brings awareness to domestic violence and raises money for services which directly impact victims and survivors in the community. The Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center provides free, confidential services to over 3,500 victims of domestic violence and sexual assault each year throughout RI. For more information: ebc-center.org/walk.

Oct. 14 Hope Historical Society October Open Forum "Rhode Island Memorabilia"

The Hope Historical Society invites the community to participate in our October 2023 Open Forum meeting "Rhode Island Memorabilia". Our September meeting focused on HHS sharing artifacts and memorabilia acquired during 2022-2023 and proved such a success that HHS decided to continue the fun by encouraging HHS members and guests to display, discuss, and share their own memorabilia from Hope and its sur-

rounding areas and Rhode Island. HHS will show a short movie "Report from Rhode Island" produced during World War II to keep up morale in 48 states. The meeting will be held on Sat., Oct. 14, at 2 p.m. at the Howland Barn, 35 Ryefield Road, Hope. All are welcome!

The "Rhode Island Memorabilia" topic is an Open Forum meeting. Open Forum is an interactive meeting where members and attendees become a living history by sharing pictures, artifacts, stories, etc. related to the program topic. What qualifies as memorabilia? Objects valued for their connection with historical events, persons, culture, or entertainment as well as sentimental value are considered memorabilia. The value of memorabilia is not on the objects themselves but in the memories, the tales and experiences associated with it. So, bring your treasured memorabilia to the meeting for a lively discussion and reminiscence of times gone by.

Intrigued by the topic but cannot attend "Rhode Island Memorabilia"? No worries! You can still share in being part of the living history by posting a picture and/or story on our Facebook page "Hope Historical Society, Hope, RI". Pictures and stories must be posted at least 72 hours before the meeting to be included at the Open Forum. Not a Facebook user? Pictures or stories can be emailed to the HHS at hopehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.

Please consider a membership to the Hope Historical Society. Membership dues support the many and varied programs offered by Hope Historical Society as well as maintaining our archives. To learn more about the Hope Historical Society please visit our active Facebook page, to see postings, pictures, videos, event information, and shared appreciation for all things historic to Hope and surrounding areas!

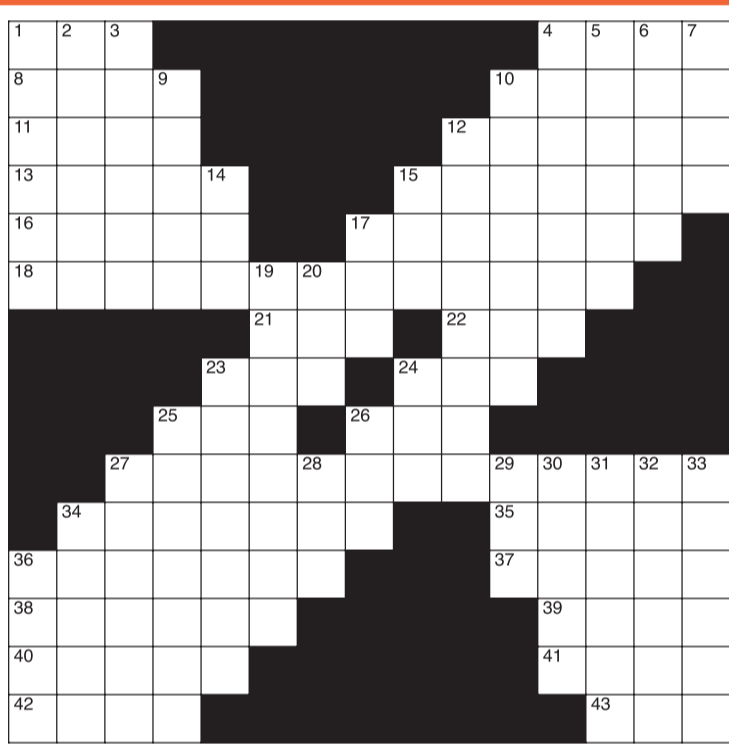
Oct. 25 Johnston Blood Drive

Johnston plans to host a community Blood Drive, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 25, at the Johnston Senior Center Dining Hall, 1291 Hartford Ave., Johnston.

All presenting donors will receive a \$5 Target gift card. Donations by appointment (walk-ins will be welcomed if availability permits at time of arrival). Go to www.ribc.org/drives to book an appointment (sponsor code 3776).

Blood donations will help stock the Rhode Island Blood Center (RIBC).

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



CLUES ACROSS

1. Outsourcing (abbr.)
4. Post
8. German city on edge of Black Forest
10. "___, but goodie"
11. Spiced stew
12. Passionately
13. Monetary units
15. Group of living organisms
16. Organic compound derived from ammonia
17. High honors
18. 5-year-olds' classes
21. Swiss river
22. Old woman
23. Cash machine
24. A way to soak
25. Hair product
26. Deride
27. "The Blonde Bombshell"

CLUES DOWN

1. Native of Slovakia
2. Deli meat
3. Fibrous substance in fungi
4. Cutting
5. Vedder and Van Halen
6. Horror comic novelist
7. Rulers of Tunis
9. Shaped like a circle

10. Make a pig of oneself
12. Aphorism
14. Witness
15. Single Lens Reflex
17. Freshwater North American fish
19. Nautical ropes
20. Leg (slang)
23. Pokes holes in
24. Moved quickly on foot
25. Fix-it shops
26. Type of bread
27. Repaired
28. Synthetic diamond (abbr.)
29. Type of drug (abbr.)
30. German city along the Rhine
31. Animal disease
32. Martini necessities
33. Get away from
34. Village in Mali
36. Djibouti franc

Cultivate Kindness



cherry hill manor nursing & rehabilitation center



LEGAL NOTICES

Public Auction Legal Notice

To: WESTLAKE FINANCIAL PO BOX 76809 LOS ANGELES, CA. WENDY ROBERTSON PO BOX 83 NORTH SCITUATE RI 02857 A public auction will be held at 775 Hartford Ave Johnston RI on SEPTEMBER 30 2023 at 900 am. The vehicle a 2015 NISSAN KNMAT-2MVOFP573901 belonging to the above. the auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Changing perspective on Covid vaccines

National and local government health agencies are in the midst of a renewed campaign to emphasize the importance of getting the newest batch of vaccines developed to protect individuals against the harshest possible consequences from the Covid-19 virus.

And while this message will fall on deaf ears for those who have completely checked out mentally of any talk regarding this persistent disease's influence in our lives, those who are still vulnerable to the potential consequences of Covid would be doing themselves a great service to try and change their thought process on how we interact with the release of new vaccines for Covid now, and moving forward. Each year, a new shot aimed to prevent the worst outcomes

• WHERE TO WRITE:
1944 Warwick Avenue
Warwick, RI 02889
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from the common flu is developed and given out to millions of Americans without consequence or controversy. We have now entered a world where the same is beginning to happen with the Covid virus.

Viruses mutate and change, and therefore so must our approach to safeguarding against them. These aren't "boosters" anymore, they are updated, new vaccines specifically developed to target the current variants of the virus causing the most illnesses at the current time period.

Incorporating a new Covid vaccine into our regular healthcare regimen is also pretty easy to accomplish. Covid vaccines are safe to receive at the same time as the seasonal flu vaccine, so there is no logical reason not to simply immunize yourself to both sicknesses at the same time, and then forget about it until it's time to do it again.

The conspiracy that Covid vaccines harbor some kind of unseen or unreported danger — while admittedly fueled in some cases by healthy skepticism over the speed at which they were developed, and due to conflicting information communicated by governments during a rollout period of utter chaos — have been shown through unbiased, time-tested evidence to be nothing but fear-based fantasies drummed up and parroted by those already distrusting of government institutions.

The risk of getting a serious bout of Covid and suffering its effects, or passing it along to an immunocompromised friend or family member, so wholly outweighs the risk of getting a simple vaccination that it isn't even worth arguing over anymore. The research is concluded, and a nearly-three-year trial period featuring multiple billions (with a 'B') of consequence-free injections around the world has proven it so.

With fall and winter coming up, we'll be back in the thick of sickness season soon. Do yourself and your loved ones a favor and get the shot.

The latest way to promote Rhode Island tourism is to put giant stuffies at select airports around the country.



LETTER

Confined to the first circle of hell?

To the Editor,

After reading Mark Patinkin's excellent Providence Journal column complimenting the Rhode Island Airport Corporation's outstanding ad that disparages Boston's Logan Airport with advice to air travelers to "forget about all the B.S @ BOS" (Ouch! T.F. Green ad takes a bite out of Boston, 9/24, 2A), I felt compelled to revisit Dante's Inferno referenced by Patinkin.

Lo and Behold! Who did I find in Dante's 8th Circle of Hell? None other than Donald Trump.

Dante's Inferno has nine rings. Within the eighth ring, the Mlebolge (Evil Pockets), are ten bolgie, or ditches of stone. Within these bolgie are the fraudulent, those guilty of deliberate, knowing evil.

There in the fourth bolgia, reserved for sorcerers and false prophets, I found the future Donald Trump. He wallows there with his head twisted backward, crying so many tears that he cannot see. He and his fellow fourth bolgia residents suffer retribution for the delusions they concocted that led their followers to their own peril.

Patinkin posits that if Dante could try flying out of Logan Airport, he would add a tenth circle of hell to include the "B.S. @ BOS." Good, moderate conservatives, on the other hand, believe that Donald Trump has so egregiously deceived his followers--deceit that will once again cause conservatives to lose Congress in 2024--he will one day occupy a prominent place in Dante's eighth circle of hell.

Many of Trump's more ardent advocates will be in the eighth circle beside him. The rest of us will continue to suffer in the first circle of hell (Limbo) reserved for the non-believing but virtuous who forever grieve the hopelessness that our country will ever find reconciliation.

Lonnie Barham
Warwick

Editor's Note: Barham, a retired Army Colonel, has voted Republican most of his adult life.

A FEDERAL JUDGE HAS TOLD BEACHFRONT PROPERTY OWNERS WHO WERE CHALLENGING THE NEW 10 FT. RULE IN COURT, TO "TAKE A WALK"WHICH IS IRONIC SINCE THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT STOPPED ON THEIR LAND



JOHNSTON Sun Rise

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Millions

(Continued from page 1)

ing new schools and we don't want to be part of Learn365? That doesn't make any sense. I hate to see why we're the minority."

The mayor had left the meeting, and no members of his administration were in attendance at the meeting to answer Civetti's questions.

"Did they fall asleep at the wheel and no one followed up on it?" Civetti asked last week. "I can't explain their reasoning. It's very possible they looked into it and decided (not to proceed)."

In the Minority

As of last week, according to Sheaff, 35 Rhode Island communities (or nearly 90%) have signed the compact, "because they understand the importance of uniting our state as one team around the idea of improving educational outcomes for our students."

At their last regular meeting, School Committee Member Susan Mansolillo raised concerns that the schools are short-staffed, since this year's school department budget request was slashed by the town (the schools requested more than \$5 million more over last year, but received around \$2 million more from the town).

"I said almost two months ago, the superintendent and myself were both in agreement, Johnston will not be joining Learn365," Polisen said last week.

Johnston Schools Superintendent Dr. Bernard DiLullo Jr. backed up the mayor.

"The Mayor and I entered into a discussion with the Governor's Learn 365 Coordinator," DiLullo explained. "During that discussion we were not able to ascertain whether there would be funding to continue programs that were started with these available funds. Our goal is to become more cost effective in our delivery of high quality instruction and to be able to sustain that investment."

The schools have been tasked with cutting tasks, while simultaneously planning a massive school building project. (The project was pitched to voters as a town wide school system overhaul, however major portions — including middle and high school renovations — have been significantly altered or dropped altogether.)

"I believe our focus has to be on instruction during the school day," DiLullo argued. "I don't believe a longer school day will necessarily enhance student outcomes without a strong curriculum and highly effective

teachers. The plan as described to us contained neither."

Municipal Compacts

The town and its school system have decided to take their own path toward school improvement.

"We have purchased high quality curriculum materials in both English Language Arts and Mathematics," DiLullo explained. "This year we are piloting a high quality science program at our middle school. All our teachers will be trained in research based reading instruction whether they teach reading or other content areas. We also have purchased the services of Throughline Learning to coach teachers in their instruction in real time."

Sheaff further explained the Learn365RI Municipal Compacts.

"The compacts are public statements by municipal leaders that send an important message to residents that their community is committed to improving educational outcomes for students and that this will be a priority for everyone going forward," he wrote via email.

He insists the town would not have faced ongoing program costs down the road, and Polisen and DiLullo's fears are unfounded.

"Once a community signs onto Learn365RI, they become eligible for various sources of funding and other support to help expand learning opportunities so we can reach that goal," Sheaff explained. "The community can choose which programs they want to participate in. All programs are opt-in."

Sheaff said that "a community can sign onto Learn365RI at any time."

"Programs under the Learn365RI initiative have their own application deadlines," he said. "Signing the compact does not commit any municipality to any financial expenditures — signing the compact says that you're committed to improving educational outcomes in your community."

Strings Attached?

Despite assurances from the governor's office, Polisen had the town's new lawyer look into the matter.

"Our solicitor, Allan Fung, called the Governor's office three weeks after the deadline and asked to see documentation submitted to the US Treasury by the state, because he and I both had a question as to whether the Governor could legally withhold federal funds from municipalities who opt not to join his pet project spending programs," Polisen wrote last week.

Polisen, a former governor's office employee (he says he resigned from his position prior to running for mayor), doubts the initial funds come with no fiscal strings.

"I'm not taking the instant gratification of \$2.2 million while committing Johnston to three additional government spending programs (Learn365, Work365, Health365), especially when the future revenue to fund these programs isn't even identified, as it will end up costing taxpayers more in the long haul," he wrote. "You can't always make decisions for the here and now, you have to look at how those decisions will impact you in the future. Federal funds should be used for one time capital expenditure projects, not to create government programs with a recurring annual expense."

Federal well running dry?

Other federal funding initiatives in town are also in doubt. The town's former mayor, Polisen Jr.'s father Joseph M. Polisen, had announced three major garage projects in town, funded by approximately 9 million federal dollars from the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Several sources have disclosed that those projects have experienced similar cost overruns to the school building project, and the status of at least two of three municipal garages may be in doubt (the town had originally planned garages to shelter Johnston's Police, Fire and Department of Public Works vehicle fleets).

"At some point, all of this federal money is going to run out and there's going to be a reckoning for those who are using these funds for recurring expenses," Polisen warned. "When that happens, there's only two options: cut the programs or absorb them into the existing budget. I'm not signing up Johnston to join that list."

Civetti questions the reasoning behind the mayor's move.

"Why not sign on initially?" He asked. "That's what has me baffled. We want to increase the test scores. I was hoping that Johnston, especially since we were allocated over \$2 million ... I was hoping we would sign on to it ... We haven't seen things like this in the past; through the governors office. I don't know why any of my colleagues wouldn't be in favor of participating in this."

Sheaff made a final point in his explanation of the Learn365RI initiative.

"It's important to underscore the fact that Learn365RI is not one single program or one single source of funding," he explained. "The term 'Learn365RI' refers to the overarching effort to improve education outcomes for our students."



We want to hear from you!

Johnston has lots of stories and we want to help you share them

Send your stories and photos to

Rory Schuler, Editor

RoryS@rhodybeat.com

johnstonsunrise.net



submissions are not guaranteed to be published



LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT: Through the years, long-time Johnston State Rep. Deborah Fellela has been helping many school and civic groups in the town. Above, Fellela presents a check to Charles Curci, 2022-23, JHS Student Council President, for the grant, which was submitted by Faculty Member Greg Russo (right). Also taking part in the ceremony were Class of 2023 President Ayomide Olagundoye, current Student Council President Alexia DiLorenzo and Vice President Lucas Anderson. The money helped defray costs of a trip to New York to see the famed Broadway Production Wicked, visit Madame Toussaud's Wax Museum, and eat lunch at Ellen's Stardust Diner. (Submitted photo)

■ Scoops
(Continued from page 6)

Oct. 28
Annual Free Coat & Blanket Distribution
St. John & St. James Church will hold its Annual Coat and Blanket Distribution on Sat., Oct. 28, at St. John & St. James Church, School Cafeteria, 17 St. John Street, West Warwick, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Other clothing will be available such as scarves, gloves, mittens, etc.

NAMI-RI Offers Family Support Groups
The RI chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-RI) offers free support groups for families and friends of loved ones who are struggling with their mental health. The groups are led by trained facilitators who also have lived experience as family members themselves. The group meetings last about 1.5 hours, and everyone who participates in the meeting gets a chance to share. The other members of the group try to offer help and resources, when appropriate, based on their own experiences. More information and full schedule can be found at namirhodeisland.org or call 401-331-3060. No pre-registration for these monthly groups is necessary.
First Thursday at 6 p.m. IN PERSON ONLY at the Rochambeau Library in the Community Room, Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope Street, Providence (NEW-starts Aug.)

Second Tuesday at 5 p.m. IN PERSON ONLY at the Middletown Public Library in the Community Room. Middletown Library, 700 West Main Road, Middletown.
Third Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. MEETS VIA ZOOM ONLY. Please call 401-331-3060 or email info@namirhodeisland.org for the Zoom link.
Fourth Wednesday at 6 p.m. IN PERSON ONLY at the Hope Valley Grange,

#71116 Main St, Hope Valley.

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

Help OSDRI restock their pantry!
Operation Stand Down Rhode Island needs your help. Their food pantry needs a major restocking. See a list of needed nonperishable items in the photo.
Like many people, OSDRI's clients have been faced with some real obstacles these past couple of years. With your help, they pledge to always be there to give a hand up for veterans and their families in need.

Items can be dropped off Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at OSDRI's main office, 1010 Hartford Ave., Johnston. If you have any questions or would like more information, call the OSDRI office at 401-383-4730.

Editor's Note: Send submissions to Sun Rise Editor Rory Schuler at rorys@rhodybeat.com or Front Desk Coordinator Ida Zecco at idaz@rhodybeat.com. Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Johnston Sun Rise. Please include a daytime telephone number in case we require any further information.

Johnston Senior Center Highlights

From the JSC staff ...

The Johnston Senior Center is better than ever. We are offering more exercise programs and trips every week. We also have a book Club on the last Tuesday once a month. A Social worker/Medicare Counselor/Ship Counselor is also provided 5 days a week. Contact Madeline Ravelle at 944-3343 Please come for a tour of the facility.

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

A Notary (Algeria Vaughn-Bayley) will be on the premises, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday through Thursday, free of charge.

Weekly Events

- Monday — Arts and Crafts
- Monday & Wednesday — Hi Lo Jack
- Tuesday — Quilting
- Wednesday — Poker
- Thursday — Mar Jong
- Thursday & Friday — Bingo

Offering more programs and trips every week:

Soecuaq Events

The Johnston Senior Center and the Johnston Recreation Department are co-sponsoring an 8-week "HI-LO" Jack League, on Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m., to benefit the Senior Center and Johnston Youth Sports.

Deadline to register was Sept. 22 and play began on Sept. 27 thru Nov. 22. Each team of two will pay \$20 per team per night. Prize money will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. For more details contact Mike at 401-272-3460.

Trips

- Thursday, Oct. 5: "Aidan Keene Tribute Legends," 10:30 a.m., \$79 pp
- Monday, Oct. 16: Maine (Portland) \$429pp DO. See Beautiful Historic Waterfront, Lighthouse, Quaint Kennebunkport. 2 nights lodging, 4 Meals \$95 pp
- Tuesday, Oct. 17: Newport Playhouse, "Ghost of a Chance" Lobster Fest, 10:30 a.m. (no price)
- Tuesday-Thursday, Nov. 7-9: "Turning Stone Resort Casino" \$339 pp DO (single \$479) \$80 Casino Free Play or Bingo Bucks \$30 Meal Credits

SCOOP OF THE WEEK

Oct. 6 Faith & Blue Weekend

Join the Johnston Police Department's for another National Faith & Blue Weekend celebration.
"The Johnston Police Department is excited to invite you to one of the largest police-community outreach efforts - Faith & Blue," according to post on the town's social media accounts. "This nationwide initiative brings together law enforcement and faith-based organizations to build safer and stronger communities."
Mark your calendars for Oct. 6. The police plan to be on-hand from 5 to 7:00 p.m. at the Johnston Senior Center at 1291 Hartford Ave.
"During Faith & Blue Weekend, activities and initiatives are organized to engage law enforcement officers and community members, such as 'Meet and Greet' sessions, discussions, and other community-building events," according to the JPD. "These activities aim to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve, fostering mutual understanding and support. Join us and meet with officers during congregational gatherings that will be hosted by local Johnston churches and organizations."

You're invited to
NATIONAL FAITH & BLUE WEEKEND

Join your local law enforcement and members of your community for a weekend of resolution and reconciliation. National Faith & Blue Weekend is a collaborative effort to build bridges and break biases.

<i>Hosted By:</i>	<i>When & Where:</i>
OUR LADY OF GRACE, ST. ROCCO'S, ST. ROBERT BELLARMINE, TRINITY ASSEMBLY OF GOD, THE KING'S TABERNACLE & JOHNSTON POLICE	FRIDAY OCTOBER 6 2023 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM JOHNSTON SENIOR CENTER 1291 HARTFORD AVE.

Learn More: WWW.FAITHANDBLUE.ORG

FIRSTNET. Built with AT&T

MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS FOUNDATION

Obituaries

In Memoriam

Remember your late loved ones with an In Memoriam ad

Simply provide your loved one's picture, your verse or pick a verse from our selection. We will be happy to assist you. We have many sizes and to accommodate your budget.

For more information, call Ida at **732-3100**

1 Year Remembrance
ROBERT A. ARENA
August 25, 1950 - September 28, 2022

In the hearts of those who love you, You will always be there.

Loving wife, Karen; sister, Carol; children, Heidi and Kevin; cherished grandchildren, Reese, Peyton, Kendall and Nicholas; Paiano and Arena families

Obituaries

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

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

- Thank you

ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Frenchie & Hunter

Photo credit: Karen Kalunian-Animal Talk

BONDED PAIR!! This adorable duo is thought to be Mother & Son or Grandmother & Grandson, either way they are both beautiful! Frenchie (left) female is about 7-8 years young and Hunter (right) male is about 2-3 years young. They are both very shy because they came from a hoarding situation and were never properly socialized. They need lots of love, time and patience! You will need to visit with them multiple times at the shelter to be sure that you are their perfect match. For more information, please contact Warwick Animal Shelter at 401-468-4377. They are hoping that someone sees their photo and falls in love with them also that they will give them a quiet, loving home!

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



PANTHER LEADERS: Student Council officers kick off the annual Spirit Week at Johnston High School. From left to right: Lucas Anderson, vice president; Alexia DiLorenzo, president; Matthew Clements, corresponding secretary; and Cameron Veitch, sophomore class president. (Submitted photo)

JHS preps for 2023 Homecoming celebration

By PETE FONTAINE

Homecoming! That's a word used for many events, however, in Johnston — especially the Senior High School — it's the title of perhaps the most important social event of the academic year.

Moreover, it's also a tradition unmatched in any town and/or city in the state — or public or private school — that people through the years have called "Johnston's special edition of the famed Rose Bowl celebration."

It's also a week-long list of awesome activities that begins tonight with "Movie Night" inside the Joseph M. Polisena Stadium and kicks into high gear Monday with Spirit Week. The week is highlighted by the annual Homecoming Parade featuring handmade floats by students in all four JHS classes, youth groups and the JHS Marching Panthers Band, leading up to the Saturday, Oct. 7 afternoon football game.

But prior to the Panthers kicking off vs. Mount Hope, the Johnston Lions Club will prepare and serve its annual Alumni Breakfast that's sure to again fill the spacious JHS cafeteria.

Perhaps even more impressive is that Homecoming is an all-Student Council production under the skilled and innovative leadership of long-time advisor/faculty member Greg Russo who is well-known for his development of many unique and highly successful student activities during his storied tenure on Cherry Hill.

Student Council President Alexia DiLorenzo, Vice President Lucas Anderson, Corresponding Secretary Matt Clements and President of the Sophomore Class Cameron Veitch, as well as the entire JHS student body, are geared up and hope to make Homecoming 2023 one best in JHS history.

"Excitement is everywhere," Russo offered while announcing the five theme days that will begin with Neon Day Monday. "They've decorated the school with colorful and clever posters; this is always a special time for all our students."

To which Russo added before announcing the entire schedule: "Panther Pride will be everywhere in town. We're hoping for great weather as well as crowning this year's Homecoming King and Queen!"

The complete Homecoming Day schedule for Saturday, Oct. 7: 8:30 a.m., floats begin arriving at JHS; 10 a.m. the parade will step off; 11 a.m. Alumni Breakfast; 1 p.m. football game kickoff. The King and Queen will be crowned during halftime. The Homecoming Dance will be at 7:30 p.m.

Russo issued a reminder that the Annual Battle of the Classes is set for Oct. 18 at 6 p.m. at Polisena Stadium. The rain date is Oct. 25.

SIGN OF THE TIME: In keeping with tradition, this banner is affixed to the entrance at Johnston High School and announces the Panthers' annual Rite of Fall. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)



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COLORFUL CREATIONS:
 These are some of the many handmade student posters for Spirit Week that begins Monday at Johnston High School.



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EXPLORER REDISCOVERED:
At right, the Christopher Columbus statue that stood in Providence for 130 years has been erected on a cement pedestal (at left) on the island in the center of Johnston's War Memorial Park pond. The mayor has planned a Columbus Day unveiling event. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



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Black Lodge Collectibles has lots for fans of comics, music, video games & more

By **ROBERT DUGUAY**

On the outskirts of Pawtuxet Village, there's a shop that's a true outlier when it comes to collectibles, vintage objects and underground culture. When you walk in, you'll see a vast array of records, comics, old school video games and one of a kind items that you won't be able to find anywhere else. It's a place that's truly unique and if you're an enthusiast of anything pertaining to what I just mentioned, then you should most definitely stop by. It's called Black Lodge Collectibles and it's located on 1986 Broad Street in Cranston. The shop has been in business for a little over a month with co-owners Derek Wood, Josh Marsie and Ian Fitzpatrick got together to start it up on August 19.

I recently had a talk with Wood and Marsie at Black Lodge Collectibles about what gave them the idea to start the establishment, how they've amassed their huge collection and what makes the place stand out from the competition.

Rob Duguay: How did you guys start Black Lodge Collectibles? Each of you were doing different things beforehand with Ian working for the United States Post Office, Derek being a chef and Josh working at the Rhode Island Antiques Mall in Pawtucket, running a record label at Riotous Outburst Records and a bunch of other music related things.

Josh Marsie: Yeah, I've worked at a few restaurants and bars as well. We talked about trying to find a spot before, but nothing was within our budget. I kind of accidentally found this place while driving by it. I was actually leaving our friend's record store down the street at Doomed Records and there was a big for rent sign in the window. There wasn't anything covering the window so I could see inside and whatnot, so I figured that it was a pretty sizable, awe-

some spot for a location and budget wise it worked out.

Derek Wood: I've been collecting for a number of years and Josh and I did a podcast together called "Absurd and Report". Pretty much during that time, both of us would talk about comics, records, music and stuff and we always said that it would be nice to have our own space. Like Josh just said, the price had to be right and match up to our budget.

JM: It was a little more than right, actually. It was the right place at the right time. I've also been doing the record distro with my label for over 20 years and it's just nice not to have all this stuff in my house.

RD: I totally understand. Before this place became your shop, I'm pretty sure that it was a hair salon of some sort. What was the experience like going into this space and setting up everything you have when you started moving in?

JM: There was actually nothing in here. They had stripped it down pretty well, I think there was something in between our place and the hair salon, it was another vintage place.

DW: Vintage clothes.

JM: Yeah, a vintage clothing store. The only thing we really had to do was there was a bunch of stuff zip tied around, so we had to climb around the wall, cut things down and take out some bizarre woodworking in a few places. Other than that, it was already good to go.

DW: The high ceilings are our friend because of the limited space we can shelf things up on the walls and it's 200 square feet.

JM: With the wall space, it's definitely more than that when you have a 15 foot high ceiling.

RD: Yeah, it definitely helps.

JM: We're going to start having an art



gallery here, so there's plenty of space where we can have artists set up. The ceiling lends an extra 20 to 25 feet of space for that alone.

RD: Very cool. You guys have all sorts of stuff here, you have video games, you have comics, you have records and you even have replica WWE championship belts. How have you guys gone about amassing all these things? Is it all from your personal collections? Have you guys gotten some of your inventory in other ways online or through word of mouth?

JM: I would say all of those things you just mentioned.

DW: Estate sales, yard sales, just scouring the internet for any deals. We've hit up friends and family to see if anyone is willing to let go of comics, records or toys. I've spent a decent amount on just bolstering my collection to get things that I've thought people would be seeking out.

JM: That's a lot of it.

DW: All of these boxes we have aren't filler, it's almost all killer. If you go through our comics, you'll find key issues, you'll find rare books and hard to find stuff. We don't have this space just to put in junk, we want it all to be good stuff.

JM: We want to curate stuff, essentially.

DW: Yeah, we want to curate our collection. It's from each of our personal collections, scouring the internet and blind luck.

JM: I also wholesale stuff as far as records go. A lot of my records are newer,

I obviously have my used records from the '60s, '70s and '80s but I also wholesale from a few punk, hardcore and hip hop distributors.

RD: Speaking of curating, you've mentioned the art gallery you guys are looking to have. Do you plan on having it be a monthly showcase?

JM: That's exactly what's going to happen. We'll have a different artist showing their work for a month, it'll be sold here on commission and there will be a gallery event during the third week of every month for each artist as well.

DW: All the paintings will hang up here for a month.

RD: That's great. There's a lot of collectible and vintage shops all around Rhode Island, so what makes Black Lodge Collectibles stick out? What makes it different?

JM: I'd say that there's a lot of things. Our focus on horror and action movies is a big one and the same can be said for vintage games, which is a little more than a lot of shops. We have a big selection of VHS tapes along with punk, hardcore and harsher music, I would say. We also have a lot more harsher and rare comics than a lot of places would normally have.

DW: It's all out on the floor. We're also priced competitively.

JW: That's something people have really liked. I've heard a lot of customers say how they were looking for a specific thing, it was too expensive at another shop but when they came here they bought it for a reasonable price.

LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Briarcliffe Gardens

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By JENNIFER COATES

The early autumn sun pours through the skylights of the spacious common areas at Briarcliffe Gardens, casting a warm glow on the residents below. The residents of this busy memory-care Assisted Living Residence have gathered here for a day of socialization, activity and routines that are a part of their daily lives. This room, with a large stone fireplace as its centerpiece, is where they come to pass the time surrounded by attentive caregivers and staff who have devoted themselves to the care and nurturing of those for whom memories of days gone by have faded, and life has taken on a new meaning.

Beyond this casual and welcoming gathering space, there are many other features of this state-of-the-art memory care residence in Johnston that have been implemented to make life more comfortable for its many residents. One such thing includes upholstered "rocking" armchairs! Residents can sink into these chairs and gently rock or swivel, creating soothing and calming effects. Research has shown that these "rocking chairs" have many significant health-promoting benefits, especially for individuals with dementia, Alzheimer's and other memory-related conditions.

According to a study conducted at the University of Rochester, "Rocking Chair Therapy" reveals an increase in the "psychological well-being of nursing home residents with severe forms of dementia." The study suggests that rocking causes a "release of endorphins that elevate the mood of these patients, in addition to relieving pain." The author of the study affirms that rocking has long been known to soothe infants, and it seems to provide the same therapeutic benefit for adults.

Some of the other known benefits of rocking include the reduction of anxiety and depression in seniors. The University of Rochester explains that this reduction also "reduces the



Residents of Briarcliffe Gardens, an Assisted Living Memory-Care Residence in Johnston, will find a comfortable place to visit with loved ones and neighbors in this sunlit, warm and welcoming gathering spot.

need for medications that treat anxiety and depression, thus mitigating any of their debilitating side effects." The motion of rocking has also been shown to stimulate the body to maintain balance which is useful for older individuals who face the increased risk of injury by falling.

These chairs, which are designed to be wider-than-average for safety reasons, and brightly-colored for easier recognition, represent Briarcliffe's ongoing commitment to improving the lives of its residents and to enriching, nurturing and fostering the highest quality of life. This philosophy is, and always has been, what sets the Briarcliffe "family" above the rest.

If you or a family member are considering a possible long-term stay for a loved one who suffers from health concerns like Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia, Briarcliffe Gardens offers so much more than exceptional care. It exemplifies everything that a memory-care residence should be ~and can be ~ in this modern age.

Schedule your personal tour of Briarcliffe Gardens, located on a quiet and wooded campus on Old Pocasset Road in Johnston. Call the Admission's office at 401-944-2450, ext. 202. For more information, you can many questions answered by visiting them at www.briarclifferi.com.

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The Rhode Island Press Association will present an exclusive first-time Rhode Island screening of the critically-acclaimed documentary "Storm Lake," on Thursday, Oct. 12, 7 p.m. at The Gamm Theatre, 1245 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick. There will be a virtual Q&A with members of the production company immediately following the screening.

The critically-acclaimed documentary tells the story of the Storm Lake Times, a small-town biweekly newspaper with a Pulitzer Prize to its credit, and its efforts to thrive amidst the changing and challenging times confronting the journalism industry. For more information, including a trailer, visit <https://rocofilms.com/films/storm-lake/>.

Tickets are \$5, available at <https://ci.ovationtix.com/28195/production/>

1177700, For more ticket information, call The Gamm at 401-723-4266, or email info@gammtheatre.org.

Founded in 1886, the Rhode Island Press Association is a nonprofit organization that promotes the interests of newspapers, magazines and other publications, and advances journalism standards and educational opportunities. For more information, visit <https://www.ripressassociation.org/>.

The Gamm Theatre is proud to tell stories that entertain, provoke, and engage seriously with the most important issues of our time. The Gamm further serves the public with educational programming that enriches the cultural and civic life of our community. For more information, visit <https://www.gammtheatre.org/>.

Asia Grille for upscale Chinese fare

Restaurant Review by DON FOWLER

Where better to find a comfortable upscale Chinese restaurant than in Garden City's upscale shopping center.

Located at 140 Hillside Ave. in the heart of Garden City, Asia Grille offers fine dining and take out at reasonable prices. Service is fast and friendly. Asia Grille offers traditional Chinese fare, including combination plates, chow mein, lo mein, pad thai, egg foo young, fried rice, seafood, beef, steak and chicken, plus a wide variety of combination plate.

On our first visit I decided to go for the "Special Entrees", while Joyce chose from the seafood entrees.

Joyce chose Shrimp Curry, perfectly cooked shrimp surrounded by onions, celery and peppers in a mildly spicy curry sauce (\$15.75). The sauce was exquisite and plentiful, with a good portion left in the dish with a few veggies. She asked for a small white rice (\$2.00) and a box, mixed the rice, veggies and curry sauce together, and brought it home for lunch the next day.

Asia Grille has a number of items I have not seen on Chinese restaurant menus before, and I chose one of them: Ju-Yim Pepper Shrimp and



Calamari.

Crispy shrimp and calamari were prepared in a pepper salt coating, topped with diced red and green peppers, surrounded by broccoli crowns (\$16.25), making for an interesting combination of tastes and textures. The portion was generous. I left nothing for the next day.

Kyle, our attentive and helpful waiter, said that the combination plates were very popular.

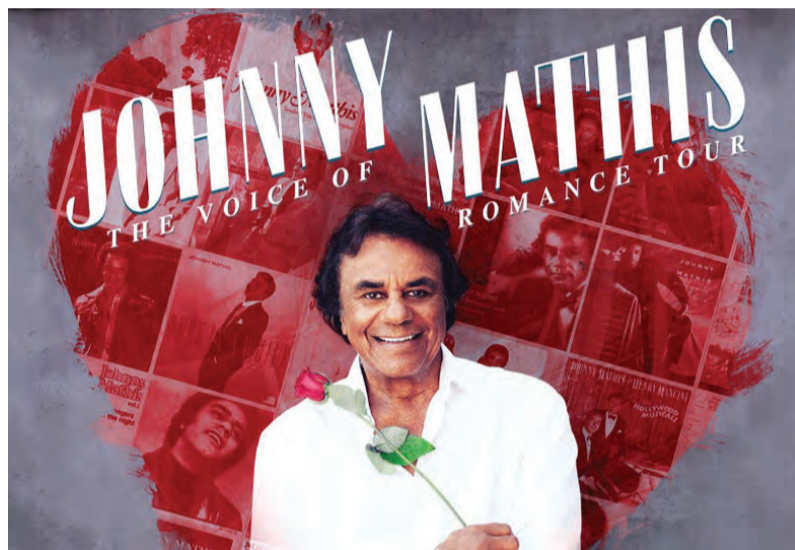
With over two dozen to choose from, we found a number we can't wait to try, including Peking Beef (\$13.) Mongolian Beef (\$13.50), and Sweet and Sour Shrimp (\$13.)

The meal is served with your choice of egg roll or spring roll and pork fried or white rice. I've found that most restaurants don't give you the choices.

We skipped the appetizers, but plan on trying the Peking dumplings and crab Rangoon next time, as the folks at the table across from us raved about them.

Asia Grille is open 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 11:30 to 9:00 Sunday, seven days a week. They have two take-out stations, and business was brisk on Saturday night.

For reservations and take-out call 298-8855.



Mathis brings memories to PPAC

By DON FOWLER

Eighty-eight year old Johnny Mathis walked onto the PPAC stage last Saturday night to a packed house, and there was a collective hush.

Was this the crooner from the fifties and sixties whose music Joyce and I listened to on the car radio while parking at West Hill Pond?

Was this the prolific singer who over the years has recorded close to 80 albums?

He sure didn't look like the Johnny Mathis I grew up with. Of course not. After all, he's two years older than I am, and we do change over the years.

But there he was, backed by a terrific full orchestra singing what seemed like a hundred songs he had recorded over these many years.

O.K. He couldn't always sustain or reach all those high notes

all the time, but there were moments when he did, and they were greeted with applause and cheers.

Mathis went smoothly from one song into the next, mixing the years with his favorites and ours, never looking at a playlist or stopping to take a drink during two hours of loving memories.

"Wonderful, Wonderful" was a strain on his vocal cords, but the audience didn't mind. They still cheered as he brought back memories of where they were and what they were doing when they put their nickel in the juke box.

"The Twelfth of Never", brought a tear to my eye as I grabbed the hand of the woman sitting next to me, the same person that sat next to me when I first heard the song.

Thank you, Johnny, for bringing back those wonderful, wonderful memories.



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Sports

Panthers heating up

JHS rolls to 2nd straight victory

By ALEX SPONSELLER

After dropping its season opener to Lincoln, the Johnston football team has turned things around and pieced together two straight wins, most recently handing Ponaganset a 44-6 defeat last week.

The Johnston offense sprinted out the gate and would toss four touchdown passes in the first half to mount a 37-6 lead. Quarterback Matt Clements accounted for three while Neari Vasquez tossed another, as the duo is starting to find its rhythm in the two-QB offense.

"We threw four touchdowns in the first half and then we started running at them. Matt Clements and Neari Vasquez have been competing and getting better each day. We're going to utilize two quarterbacks as much as we can since they both bring so much to the table. We're going to stick with what works," said Johnston head coach Joe Acciardo.

Dean Paris would haul in two touchdown passes while Michael Carlino and Jahaziel Rodriguez scored as well. Running back Steven Finegan rushed for 130 yards and scored a touchdown in the win.

Acciardo has also been pleased with the running back tandem of Finegan and Paris and feels that their best football is ahead of them as well.

"Dean does a little bit of everything. He's one of the smartest players that you could ever have and he's one of those guys that can take his instruc-



GETTING THE WIN: Neari Vasquez celebrates after the Panthers score. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

PANTHERS - PAGE 19

JMCE co-ed golf tourney raises \$10K for Hasbro

By PETE FONTAINE

Fun, food and ten thousand bucks!

In short, that pretty much sums up Sunday's Johnston Memorial Cancer Events Co-Ed Memorial Golf Tournament played at legendary Gloucester Country Club in Chepachet.

Although a blanket of fog covered the unique nine-hole lakeside layout but that didn't dampen anyone's spirits or prevent the JMCE from recording another mighty milestone for Hasbro Children's Hospital.

"We called the (scheduled 18-hole) tournament off after just nine holes," explained Co-Chair Linda LaFazia. "But no one seemed to mind; we all went back into the clubhouse and enjoy our many friendships as well as a pre-tee off lunch and later a wonderful meal for

JMCE - PAGE 17

OUTSTANDING

ORGANIZERS: The LaFazias - Vin and Linda - and the Graham's - Judy and David - are holding a sign for the Chad Sirois Wesco Oil wine sponsors. (Sun Rise photo by Pete Fontaine)



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NP soccer assault comes to soft resolution

A really ugly situation unfolded in North Providence last week when a boys soccer player hit two Ponaganset players in a violent confrontation.

I was not at the game but saw the video online through the league's streaming service. It was a chippy game and it all began when a Ponaganset player shoved one of the North Providence players. In retaliation, the NP player punched the kid in the throat, then as another Chieftain ran over to defend his teammate, he then hauled off and struck him in the face.

The Providence Journal reported that the player was suspended from the team for five games and the school for three days. He also received a social ban until the school's Winter Ball. I disagree strongly with the leniency that the school showed for this as-

sault. That's what it was. An assault. In a decade of covering high school sports, I can say that that was the ugliest situation I have seen within my coverage area. Again, I was not there live, but it was close to home with teams I have covered in the past. You see viral videos online all the time and this will probably be one of the latest examples of kids flying off the handle.

Kids will be kids and teenage boys do not have the impulse control of fully developed adults. In a competitive, physical environment, things can get testy and it's not uncommon for punches to be thrown. This was different, though. This was much more aggressive than a couple of punches. These punches were not intended to hurt, they were intended to injure.

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR
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This student should not be allowed to ever step foot on a high school athletics team again and should receive a very harsh punishment from the school itself. A three-day suspension is inadequate. Sure, it will be on his record, but kids get suspended for three days for much less.

Now, it is unclear if this student

had a history of such behavior. When determining punishment, that has to be taken into account. As for the first part, I stand by that regardless of history. That type of behavior should warrant a permanent ban from athletics.

When it comes to his place in the school, that is when it is a little bit tricky. If this was an isolated incident, then perhaps a typical suspension is fine. If this is a pattern, then it just is not safe to keep a student with that type of aggression in the classroom. He and the Ponaganset players are lucky that no one got seriously hurt.

The suspensions have been handed out, so it is what it is at this point. I'm just dumbfounded that not only will this student be allowed to participate in athletics moving forward, but he will be back by the end of the regular season. It was not self defense

and it was an act that was beyond reason. It was pure violence.

I like to think that I am not soft, either. I totally understand that tempers flare with testosterone-filled teenagers. You see aggression in every sport and I have seen plenty of fights break out over the years. This was not a fight. This was a kid totally losing his cool and assaulting two other players.

I will tip my cap to everyone that was involved in the game during the scuffle. The kids showed restraint in not engaging in an all-out brawl, the refs and coaches acted swiftly and kept the peace. The game resumed in a couple of minutes and never really escalated further. They two clubs peacefully finished the game, went through the post-game handshake line and went their separate ways.



TERRIFIC TEAM: Troy Hewes, Judy Dilorio, Mary Higgins, Jesse Higgins were the tournament's Gross winners. (Submitted photos)



BIG OUTING: Walter Geer, Michy Nanni, Tracy Uriati and Dewey Uriati were the Net winners

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JMCE

(Continued from page 16)

dinner prepared by our (GCC) Chef Nery of Js Catering."

The most important thing was, though, by way of special sponsorships, the work of volunteers and GCC members the 2023 Co-Ed Memorial Golf Tournament raised \$10,000 that will help children who have been stricken with cancer and are in Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence.

One reason for the Co-Ed Memorial's ongoing success is that the GCC membership has adopted Hasbro Children's Hospital as it designated charity and as LaFazia and her Co-Chair/friend Judi Graham said: "WE would like to extend our sincere and deepest appreciation to Gloucester Country Club, our special sponsors, friends and members for their special support."

David and Judi Graham, who own and operate Graham Builders of Smithfield were the day's major sponsors and gave

each of the 76 players a jacket that came in handy with the day's rain. Also, RELCO Electrical, WESCO Oil and The Martin Family were sponsors that helped make the Co-Ed Memorial an overwhelming success.

"This was another great day for the JMCE," many people concurred.

There was a great lunch consisting of meatball and sausage and pepper sandwiches prepared by Tom Morra and Paul Catougno and Brian Curley and Tom Bennett set up gas grills to Saugy hot dogs despite the rain while Don and Cynthia DiBlasi, Carolyn O'Keefe, Justine Turbitt and Peg Brown were among the volunteers.

"We would be remiss if we did not thank our pro Shane Drury and his staff for their dedication to our tournament," LaFazia. "We will hope to see everyone back here again in 2024."

Golf-wise, the foursomes of Troy Hewes Judy Dilorio, Mary Higgins and Jesse Higgins took gross score honors while Walter Geer, Michy Nanni, Tracy Uriati and Dewey Uriati were the Net winners.

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Bonito and false albacore hot, no catch limits in place

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

There is nothing like explosive surface action from Atlantic bonito and false albacore. Last week anglers fishing in the Pt. Judith area were treated to non-stop action on Thursday just a quarter mile off the Center Wall of the Harbor of Refuge, Narragansett.

Angler Dawn Martin, said, "What an amazing day for albies and bonito catching four false albacore and eight bonito. We fished a quarter mile from the Center Wall. Nonstop action all morning!"

"I made my way over on my jet ski, cast into one of the schools of rain bait and instantly hooked up and landed my first ever bonito," said angler Jon Kim. "From that point on, we all followed the schools of bait as they got pushed back towards the shore outside the West Wall. I landed twelve bonito, four false albacore, and a big chub mackerel. The entire time I used an Electric Chicken Exo jig and an original amber colored Albie Snax. The jig out fished the Albie Snax three to one,"

Jon posed the question about what bonito and false albacore regulations might be. Believe it or not we have no regulations in place in Rhode Island state waters currently.

Conor McManus, PhD, Chief, Division of Marine Fisheries of the RI Department of Environmental Management, said, "My understanding is that neither bonito or false albacore fall into NOAA HMS so I am not even sure you need that permit in state waters (unlike BFT, sharks, etc.)."

"We have been discussing through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) whether we want to bring these species in as managed fish through interstate practice. I am not sure there is enough interest coast-wide to do so. As such, there has been discussion from some states about maybe putting regs on the books state by state, but collaboratively and mirrored regs, outside the mandate of ASMFC (like MA and RI did for sand lance)," said McManus. "The largest issue I see is what those regs are, as we lack a bunch of biological data on them to inform things like minimum size."

Peter Jenkins, Chairman of the Board of the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA) and owner of the Saltwater Edge in Middletown, RI, said, "The ASGA has been engaged with the Albie Project for two years now. The aim is to garner some scientific data on the species (visit The Albie Project - Ameri-



BIG CATCH: Brian Abbott of Barrington, said, "Caught this striper (29 inches, 8 pounds) in 15 feet of water about 100 yards off Barrington Beach with a Yo-Zuri Crystal Minnow." (Submitted photo)

can Saltwater Guides Association). The Albie Project is an acoustic tagging study conducted by the New England Aquarium to acquire some scientific data on the species as they are being targeted recreationally and commercially for harvest (mostly a bait fishery) with no regulations in place."

The ASGA relates on the Albie Project website that false albacore have become an important recreational fish with over a half-million trips annually, so the species needs to be protected. False albacore are not harvested by anglers for food, most all of the recreational fishery is catch & release.

National recreational policy and regional plans

Last week NOAA released their national recreational fishing policy with regional plans to implement the policy. At press time the fishing community was analyzing plans that garnered broad input from the fishing community.

The 2015 national policy was no lon-

ger relevant. NOAA said, "Climate change, equity and environmental justice, as well as a greater focus on expanding offshore industries (such as aquaculture and wind energy) were the key additions to the goals and guiding principles of the policy update."

For information visit National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy | NOAA Fisheries.

Where's the bite?

Striped bass, bluefish, false albacore and bonito. Jeff Sullivan of Lucky Bait & Tackle, Warren, said, "This has been one of the best years for bass in years, I caught a 35-pound fish on the surface last week. So things are setting up nicely for a great fall run. The albies were here too, in Mt. Hope Bay, Bristol and Newport Harbors last week but they left when the storm blew in. The best bite is at dawn or dusk."

John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, Riverside, said, "Shore anglers are catching bluefish in the six pound range and slot size bass (28 to < 31

inches) from Kettle Point, Haines Park, Sabin Point and Barrington Beach. The East Passage at Rocky Point, Conimicut Point are producing too."

"Everything from the beaches and near shore is hot. Bonito, false albacore, bluefish and stiped bass fishing is hot from the Breachways all the way to Watch Hill Light. Anglers are hooking up with surface lures, pencil poppers and epoxy jigs," said Parker Mandes of Watch Hill Outfitters, Westerly.

"Striped bass have mainly been targeting mullet and peanut bunker in our area. Last week when had some favorable boat conditions. The Albie bite has been great and there are still some bonito around. As conditions improve after this weekend, the inshore fishing should pick right back up with bass and bluefish migrating along the beaches," said Declan O'Donnell of Breachway Bait & Tackle, Charlestown.

"Tautog fishing is good with anglers fishing off the breachways catching fish in shallow water with boat anglers doing well fishing reefs in shallow water too," said Parker Mandes of Watch Hill Outfitters. "Tautog fishing in the upper Bay has been slow as anglers are still targeting bass and bluefish," said John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, "Fishing has been improving. Most boats have been able to catch their limit but had to work to find bigger fish," said O'Donnell. "Tautog are being caught in 20 to 50 feet of water in the Bay on most rock piles. Asia crabs are the bait of choice for me and are working well," said Jeff Sullivan of Lucky Bait & Tackle.

Tuna. Parker Mandes of Watch Hill Outfitters, said, "The tuna bite is still very strong with anglers chucking with success catching 50 to 60 inch yellowfin tuna and 50 to 60-pound bluefin tuna."

"The offshore bite was good this past week with some nice size bluefin and yellowfin being caught," said O'Donnell.

"Freshwater fishing for largemouth bass has been good with frogs and top-water lures working well. Fish are in the shallows, on ledges with an early morning or dusk bite," said Sullivan of Lucky Bait.

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



FALSE ALBACORE: Dawn Martin, said, "Caught four false albacore and eight bonito last Thursday off the center wall of the Harbor of Refuge."

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HANDOFF: Matt Clements hands Steven Finegan the ball.

■ Panthers

(Continued from page 16)

tions and go out and do them. He's a tough kid, can play linebacker, running back, go out for passes, he can do it all. Then with a kid like Finegan, he runs so fast and that puts defenses in a bind," Acciaro

said.

Better execution and remembering the little things were key in the Panthers' turnaround from the first week.

"We were raw, undisciplined and that's one of the things that we worked on. We told them, 'here is the game plan and here's what you need to do to make it work,' they

just had to execute it," said Acciaro. "We narrowed some things down and we came out a different team against Rogers. Then we built off that and had an even more effective game against Ponaganset."

The Panthers have their toughest test to date this weekend when they hit the road to take on defending champion Moses Brown for a 1 p.m.



BACK ON TRACK: Johnston's Jacob Carr celebrates after a touchdown.

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I don't understand what you said

Like many other "older" people, my hearing has been diminishing.

Hearing aids were prescribed, but during COVID, I stopped wearing them because every time my mask came off, they would go flying in the air, inevitably landing on the floor, in the toilet, or in a puddle on the ground. They became too much of a responsibility, so I put them away safely.

Unfortunately, my hearing did not improve with age, so it has become mandatory that they once again find their way from my bureau back into my ear canals. Score one for making everything louder. However, even with speech being amplified, understanding what people are saying continues to be a challenge. This became painfully clear when I called the bank because of a payment problem with a new home equity loan.

Although I prefer to handle things on the computer, the

bank presented no option to be able to send an e-mail or to have a live written chat with a bank representative. I was forced to call and found myself on hold for forty-five minutes. This is especially annoying for me because my phone is my plaything, and I would normally be playing Solitaire or Words With Friends if I were waiting for something. Being on hold means that my entertainment is inaccessible. Although there is an option to put it on speaker and still access the apps on the phone, I am not clever enough to do this, and instead wait impatiently, tapping my foot and staring at the cobwebs around the room.

Finally, I was rewarded with the presence of a person who spoke so quickly and has some sort of accent that made it impossible to understand what she said. When I tried to explain that I could not understand her, she started shouting into the

Life Matters



with LINDA PETERSEN

phone. Making it louder did not help, and only made it sound like she was angry with me. She went on and on and on, and every now and then I could catch a word or two, but the meaning of what she was saying was beyond my comprehension. I asked if I could speak to her supervisor, at which point her voice raised another octave, and she hung up on me.

I called another two times, and each time a representative with an accent started the con-

versation. Frustrated beyond words, I ended each conversation with a rude "I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE SAYING!!" Unable to get my financial situation resolved, I wanted to cry.

I understand that banks want to save money by moving some of their operations offshore. The countries with the highest number of call centers are the Philippines and India. India is a well-known, popular location because it has the second largest English-speaking population in the world, supposedly making it "ideal" for companies that require strong language skills. The workers may have a great command of the English language, but if they speak with an accent so strong that I cannot understand the words they are saying, all that knowledge is for naught.

Outsourcing the calls allows the banks to reduce costs. Overseas countries often have lower

labor costs that helps banks increase their profitability which can then be reinvested in their banks, or possibly given to bank executives in the form of raises, much like the problem that is currently plaguing the auto manufacturers in Detroit. It costs the banks less to pay workers in India at \$2 an hour, or \$5,000 a year. A job in a call center is a prestigious job in a country where per-capita income is around \$900 a year, so they see no moral dilemma in this.

I should not be criticizing banks, or any industry for that matter, that chose to have services or goods outsourced when it allows their residents to earn a living wage. My problem is the services are not the same as if delivered by Americans...I cannot understand a word they are saying!

The stars align for Philharmonic's 79th season

By DON FOWLER

Guest conductors and artists are all in place for the 79th season of the Rhode Island Philharmonic as the orchestra searches for its next conductor following the untimely death of the beloved Bramwell Tovey.

The season includes the most diversified field of guest conductors in the history of the Philharmonic.

If Friday night's open rehearsal concert was any indication of the quality of the 2023-2024 season, we are in for one diverse, inspiring and magnificent year of music.

There are three more open rehearsals scheduled this season. The cost is only \$20 and there is open seating.

Executive Director David Beauchesne said that last year had been the saddest and most trying of his 23 plus years with the Philharmonic with the deaths of past conductor Larry Rachleff and current conductor Bramwell Tovey.

"It was a year of incredible grief as we lost not only two very talented people, but two very close friends as well," Beauchesne said. "But there was joy in knowing that the orchestra continued making music and fulfilling Bramwell's wishes, and solace as we all felt that both Bramwell and Larry were still with us."

Beauchesne discussed the extensive search to find the right candidate to lead the orchestra in the coming years.

"Many people are involved in the process, including the Artistic Committee, Search Committee, Board of Directors, staff and audience members," Beauchesne said. "Guest conductors from last year and this year and conductors recommended to us are all considered. Not everyone may be interested, and we may not be interested in everyone. The person may be a phenomenal conductor but not the right fit."

"There are so many factors to consider, including availability, chemistry with the orchestra, staff and audiences and experience. There is no set timetable. We will know when the stars align. It could be during or after the season. It is a very fluid process."

"We've been lucky in lining up this year's diverse season. Last year's "Messiah" was such an incredible event, with Bramwell and Christine Noel working together to carry on a legacy that keeps moving forward and growing. I'm looking forward to this year's concert."

David is pleased with the way the Philharmonic has progressed through and after the pandemic (The first orchestra to perform live).

He encourages those who have not been to a concert to attend the November program which will feature Morihiko Nakahara, the conductor of the South Carolina Philharmonic.

"We strive to reach a more diverse audience through our many outreach programs, Music School, and affordable Rush Hour concerts which are family friendly."

Tickets for all concerts may be purchased by calling 248-7000 or going on line at riphil.org.



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The Rise of 90's Toys



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

Regardless of which area of collecting you are involved in, whether it be toys, video games, furniture, decorative arts... you name it; collecting is cyclical. What makes something collectible is generational interest, something that someone grew up around that brings them a euphoric feeling of nostalgia. A return to a "happy place," for lack of a better term. There is also the academic angle to collecting; but it can be difficult to feel nostalgic about a 16th century old master painting or Louis XVI furniture, so for the purposes of this article we will keep the average, everyday collector in mind.

I hate to admit how fast time moves; it is mind boggling. When I first began working with vintage toys around 2007 all the rave was about 1960's through early 1980's toys. Kenner's *Six Million Dollar Man*, the 12" *G.I. Joe*, Mego's *World's Greatest Super-Heroes* and *Star Trek* were all prime-time highlights in the col-



lector world. Now in 2023, I see declining interest in these toys while witnessing a rapid shift to 1990's and even early 2000's toy lines.

But it only makes sense!

If you were born in 1990, you are 32 to 33 years old, the prime age at which a collector typically begins their journey (if not earlier). I'll admit it is a weird feeling seeing toys I once played with become collectibles. I suppose it is how the generation before me felt watching me track down their old toys. I was an "Indiana Jones" of the toy world you could say, looking for relics to preserve in museum-like cases for all to enjoy. Every weekend I sought out *Star Wars*, *He-*

Man, and *Transformers* toys as historical artifacts of the past. Now, the tables have turned, and my childhood playthings have become the nostalgia people collect to preserve.

So, what are coming of age collectors buying today?

Let me start by saying there are tons of great toy lines from the 1990's and early 2000's; trust me, I speak from hours of personal experience with them. But the following are the top contenders (in my perhaps biased opinion) dominating the market: Original *Jurassic Park*, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, *Mighty Max*, *Small Soldiers*, and *Tomagotchi*. I feel their popularity will continue to grow over the next five to ten years as their fan base approaches their forties. If you are a bit of a speculator and enjoy some g-rated gambling, start stocking up! It could be a very rewarding future as a new generation of collectors enters the market.

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