

Prayers for Sister Daisy ... and pedestrians everywhere

By RORY SCHULER

Look both ways and say a Hail Mary. Crossing the street in the Ocean State can be tricky, at best — and deadly, at worst.

Last week, a teacher (and nun) was seriously injured while crossing Atwood Avenue in Johnston, inside a crosswalk, outside St. Rocco Church and School.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) has confirmed that a flashing “pedestrian crossing signal” for the dangerous state road crossing has been in the works since last year, and was expected to go out to bid next summer.

That’s too late for Sister Daisy, but her pain may lead to safer crossings for students, staff and parishioners in the future.

Deadly Data

“Each year Rhode Island observes about 40,000 crashes,” according to RIDOT spokesman Charles St. Martin III. “Of that, about 1 percent, are crashes involving pedestrians.”

And Rhode Island’s roads are deadlier than ever. “We are seeing a significant increase in traffic fatalities,” St. Martin wrote Tuesday. “At this same point in time last year, we had 44 traffic fatalities. This year, that number stands at a staggering 67. That’s higher than we were for all of last year and the highest we’ve seen since 2017.”

Ocean State residents don’t fare much better on-foot. “Of the 67 (road fatalities), 9 have involved pedestrians,” St. Martin said. “At this same point in 2022, we observed 7 pedestrian fatalities.”



CLOSE CALL: Pedestrians attempt to cross Atwood Avenue outside St. Rocco Church on Friday. A driver narrowly missed several people in the crosswalk after failing to yield. Johnston Police cited the driver, based on video captured by the Johnston Sun Rise. (Still from Sun Rise video by Rory Schuler)

CROSSING - PAGE 5

Solar lawyer: ‘It’s my hearing’

Solar saga drags on to Dec. 14

By RORY SCHULER

Editor’s Note: This is the fourth installment of a series looking at the newest iteration of the proposed Winsor Avenue solar farm. The public hearing is expected to continue on Dec. 14, with a public input session and possibly a vote on a special-use permit to build an industrial-scale 19 Megawatt (MW) solar field, with nearly 50,000 solar panels at 118 Winsor Ave. in northwest Johnston.

When attendees recall the Zoning Board hearing of Nov. 2, 2023, they’ll tell the story backward.

Attorney John O. Mancini effectively terminated the hearing prior to adjournment, when he packed his papers and stormed out of the Johnston Senior Center.

Green Development’s lawyer left the Johnston Zoning Board visibly puzzled, uncertain whether they’d set the next hearing date or not.

SOLAR - PAGE 8



PROMOTED: Former part-time Town Planner Thomas Deller listens to testimony during the Nov. 2 public hearing on a new solar field in town. Deller was promoted earlier this year to full-time employment with the town and now serves as both Town Planner and Director of the town’s Development & Public Services Department. His new annual salary is \$95,000. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

VETERANS DAY AT ST. ROCCO



MOMENTS OF SILENCE: More photos from St. Rocco’s annual Veterans Day Prayer Service, inside on Pages 12 & 13. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)

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JHS Panther of the Week



POTW: This week's "Panther of the Week" is Ryan Oliver. Ryan is a sophomore at Johnston High School. Ms. Jen Simoneau nominated Ryan. Ms. Simoneau said, "Shout out to Ryan! Ryan is caring and respectful to his classmates and teachers. He asks great questions, taking advantage of opportunities for success in his education and relationships. Keep up the good work, Ryan!" (Photo submitted by Matt Velino, Johnston High School Principal)

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

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Say you saw it in the
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Cliff brought the firepower

'Nothing came easy in life, and now I am blessed'

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

The Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" this week shines on Clifford Esposito.

Cliff, who when asked how long he has been coming here, quickly stated "at least 50 years," very reminiscent of the many members who point out they celebrated significant life events here at the former El Morrocco.

As for visiting us here at the Johnston Senior Center, Cliff responds about three years. In an effort to support a close family friend who had recently lost her husband, Cliff, his wife, and some other friends decided to look into joining the Johnston Senior Center.

As COVID restrictions began to be lifted, they found their way back to the Center and now enjoy all the happenings here, including lunch with friends, exercise classes, and day trips sponsored by the Center.

Cliff was originally from Federal Hill in Providence, and at 18 years old, was drafted into the U.S. Navy. He

proudly served during the Vietnam War, aboard the battleship USS Long Beach CGN 9, one of the first nuclear powered ships in the U.S. Navy.

He says he traveled all over the world, in "wartime cruising" providing firepower for the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise. His time in the Navy was from 1961-1967. When he came back to Rhode Island, he needed some time to focus on his future. He says he balanced the benefits of being a Providence Police Officer versus a Postal worker. He chose the postal service where he completed a 37-year career.

Cliff and his wife have lived most of their life in Cranston, where they currently reside. Outside of the Center, he is a member of the St. Rocco's Holy Name Society and Feast Committee, as well as a number of VFW Halls.

He has owned a mobile home, enjoyed camping, as well as boating.

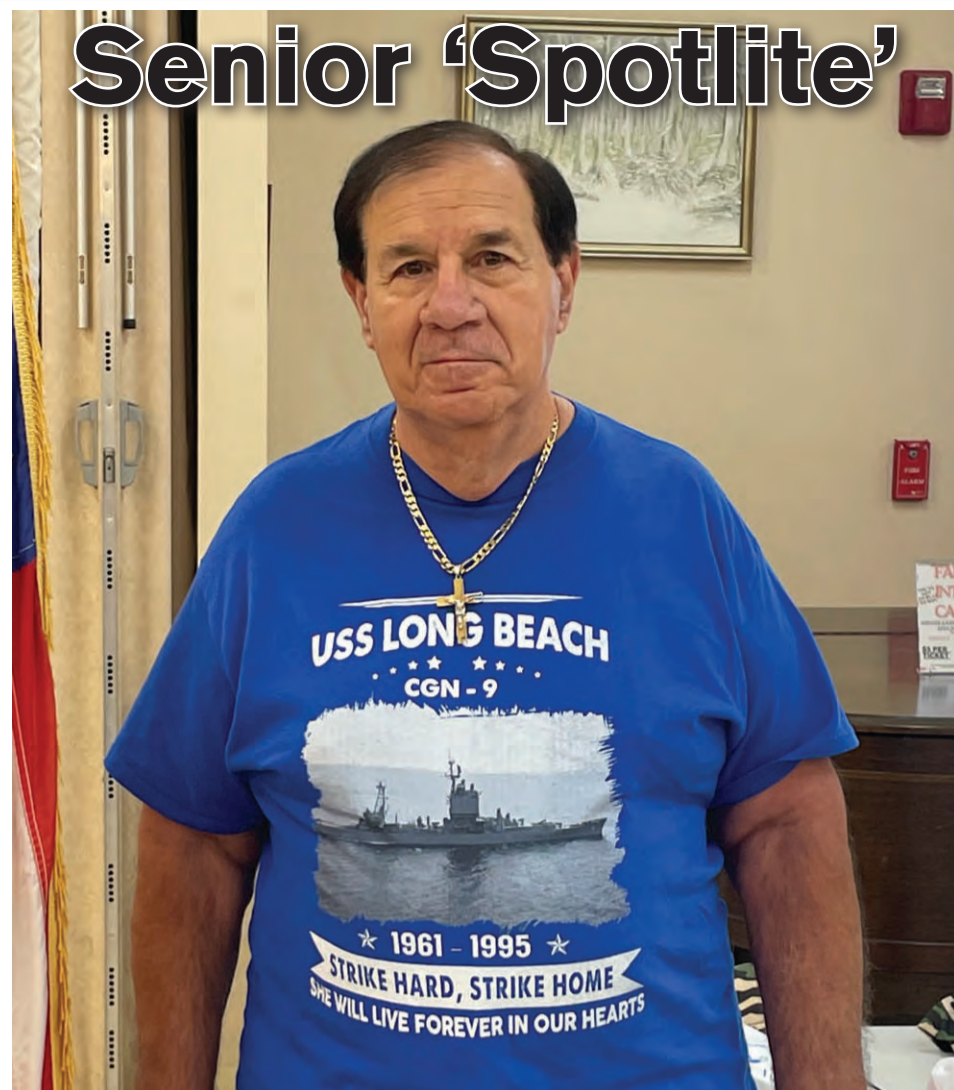
Cliff loves seeing the people around him happy. Cliff proudly wears shirts commemorating his Navy experience, including one displaying a replica photo of the ship upon which he served.

According to Cliff,

"nothing came easy in life, and now I am blessed."

Being surrounded here at the Center by people who appreciate life's precious moments is an uplifting and invigorating experience. If you know someone who could use a "lift," bring them by the JSC for a visit and tour.

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.



STRIKE HARD, STRIKE HOME: The Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" this week shines on Clifford Esposito, who served in the U.S. Navy from 1961-1967 and traveled all over the world "wartime cruising" aboard the battleship USS Long Beach CGN 9, while providing firepower for the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise. Check out his shirt. (Photo courtesy Richard J. DelFino Jr.)

Johnston Senior Center Highlights

From the 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 Ravenelle 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:

Events

The Johnston Senior Center and the Johnston Recreation Department have co-sponsored an 8-week "HI-LO" Jack League, on Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m., to benefit the Senior Center and Johnston Youth Sports. It's almost over. Deadline to register was Sept. 22 and play runs thru Nov. 22. Prize money will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. For more details contact Mike at 401-272-3460.

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<p>CRANSTON, RI Alpine Country Club 251 Pippen Orchard Road Fri. Nov. 17th @ 1:30PM</p>	<p>MIDDLETOWN, RI Middletown Public Library 700 W Main Road Tues. Nov. 21st 11AM -1PM</p>	<p>MIDDLETOWN, RI Howard Johnson by Wyndham 351 West Main Road Thurs. Nov. 16th @ 10AM & 2PM Mon. Nov. 27th @ 10AM & 2PM</p>
<p>CRANSTON, RI CME Credit Union 1615 Pontiac Avenue Call To Schedule by Appointment CME: 401-463-3010 UWM: 401-331-7600</p>	<p>NORTH PROVIDENCE, RI North Providence Mancini Center (Members Only) 2 Atlantic Boulevard Wed. Nov. 15th @ 1PM</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FOR ADDITIONAL IN PERSON OR VIRTUAL DATES AND LOCATIONS VISIT US AT: www.universalwm.com/events</p>

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SUN RISE SCOOPS

SCOOP OF THE WEEK



DON'T SAY HUMBUG: The cast of Trinity Rep's "A Christmas Carol" poses for a promo shot. The production runs through Dec. 31, at Trinity Repertory Company in Providence. The Rhode Island Foundation has pledged to match every donation public makes to the theater during its 2023 run of "A Christmas Carol" with an equal grant to the Food Bank, up to a total of \$60,000. (Photo by Mark Turek)

Grant aims to keep Johnston food pantries and soup kitchens stocked

The Rhode Island Foundation is partnering with Trinity Rep and the Rhode Island Community Food Bank to inspire a spirit of giving going into the holiday season. The Foundation will match every donation the public makes to the theater during its 2023 run of "A Christmas Carol" with an equal grant to the Food Bank, up to a total of \$60,000, according to a press release.

The goal is to help the Food Bank to keep its warehouse stocked for member agencies in Johnston like the Pentecostal Church Jesus Christ Fountain of Life Pantry at 1025 Plainfield St. and the St. Robert Food Closet at 1804 Atwood Ave.

"Nothing could be more appropriate at this time of the year than to kindle the giving spirit that glows in this timeless story and in the hearts of Rhode Islanders. Inspiring neighbors to help neighbors in need is the true core of our philanthropic work," said David N. Cicilline, the Foundation's president and CEO.

The public can trigger the matching grants by contributing to Trinity Rep online at trinityrep.com/match or by texting SCROOGE to 44-321. Through this philanthropic chal-

lenge, their donations will not only benefit Trinity Rep's artistic, education and community programs, but also food insecure Rhode Islanders who turn to the Food Bank's network of neighborhood food pantries and meal sites for help.

"Trinity Rep has been fortunate to partner with the Rhode Island Community Food Bank for years, raising funds for our neighbors during the holiday season. This collaboration with the Rhode Island Foundation gives our production of 'A Christmas Carol' a special kind of joy, knowing that the story of Scrooge's journey to joyous generosity will be multiplied many times over as people rise to the occasion," said Trinity Rep Artistic Director Curt Columbus. "We are all honored that this good work continues, and grateful to the Rhode Island Foundation for encouraging people to support work that feeds our souls and our neighbors in need."

The matching grant challenge comes at a time when a growing number of Rhode Islanders are facing food insecurity due to the high cost of food, housing, utilities and transportation. In the last six months,

the Food Bank's network of 143 member agencies has been serving more than 80,000 people every month, a 25% increase over last year.

"We are so grateful that the Rhode Island Foundation will once again match gifts to Trinity Rep with donations to the Food Bank during this year's run of 'A Christmas Carol,'" said Food Bank CEO Andrew Schiff. "This partnership between these essential nonprofits brings to life the values of kindness and generosity that are embodied in the show for the benefit of those in need in our community."

The partnership with the Rhode Island Foundation first launched in 2020, when Trinity Rep went dark due to COVID-19. Until then, the actor playing Ebenezer Scrooge had stepped forward at the end of every performance of "A Christmas Carol" and asked theater-goers to donate to the Food Bank. Audiences would then drop their contributions in collection buckets on their way out of the theater. In 2019 alone, the tradition raised more than \$60,000 from theater-goers.

■ CAROL - PAGE 6

Sun Rise Staff Reporters

Dec. 6

Nonfiction@Brown Lecture Series

Brown's Lecture Series presents: Georgia Wright. On Wed., Dec 6, at 6 p.m. as Nonfiction@Brown presents the audio storyteller and producer Georgia Wright. This event is free and open to the public! The reading will be held in Pembroke Hall Room 305, 172 Meeting Street Providence.

Dec. 7 through Dec. 10
"Oh? What Fun!"

This concert will be performed by the Rhode Island Gay Men's Chorus on Thurs., Dec. 7, Fri. Dec. 8, Sat. Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. and Sun., Dec. 10 at 3 p.m. at Beneficent Congregational Church, 300 Weybosset St., Providence. Combining traditional holiday favorites, the chorus is proud to be honoring the diverse heritages of choral members with songs of the French, Italian, Portuguese, Jewish, Czech, Irish, Latina, East Asian ethnicities. Join them in their celebration of each other's unique qualities. This is sure to be a sparkling concert filled with music of the season. Tickets are on sale now: Adults \$30, Seniors \$25 and Students \$20. To purchase tickets, please visit: rigmc.org.

Dec. 8

Winter Farmer's Market

An Inside Winter Farmer's Market will be held on Friday, Dec. 8 from 4-9 p.m. at the church, 619 West Greenville Road, North Scituate. Baked Goods, beverages and a Holiday Treasures Table will also be available.

Dec. 9

St. Lucia Fest

The St. Lucia Fest, sponsored by the RI Swedish Heritage Association, will be held on Sat., Dec. 9, at 4 p.m., at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 99 Peirce St., East Greenwich. Adults: \$12, Ages 5-14: \$5, Under 5 - Free. Reception following with Swedish refreshments. Questions or information: contact Astrid at 401-350-9688 or astrid.m.drew@gmail.com or Merlene Mayette at 401-783-2242 or merleneinri@verizon.net.

Dec. 9

Annual HHS Christmas Meeting

The meeting is to be held on Sat., Dec. 9, at 2 p.m. The event will take place at the Howland Barn located at 35 Ryefield Road in Hope. Join members of the Hope Historical Society as they make merry with some olde-fashioned fun, refreshments, special games, caroling, and maybe a special visitor to celebrate the holiday season. Members and guests are invited to bring a special Christmas food item to share and offer the story behind what makes their Christmas food item special. Unique gifts that celebrate the history of the Hope area will be available for purchase.

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 : www.rifoundation.org/funds/soul-of-1971-scholarship-fund.

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■ Crossing

(Continued from page 1)

Pedestrian Struck

Despite the vibrant crosswalk and pedestrian street sign, crossing Atwood Avenue outside St. Rocco Church can be dangerous. It's one of many dangerous Ocean State road-crossings.

Last Tuesday, in the same Atwood Avenue crosswalk, Sister Daisy Kollampampil was attempting to cross the street when a car stopped to let her pass.

"Sr. Daisy Kollampampil is our Second Grade teacher," said St. Rocco School Principal Regina M. Hand. "She is in her 10th year here. Her order is the Daughters of the Lady of the Garden."

According to police, a vehicle traveling behind the stopped car collided with a law-abiding driver who stopped at the crosswalk, pushing the stopped SUV into Kollampampil.

"(Tuesday) night around 6:40 p.m., members of the Johnston Police Department responded to a motor vehicle accident involving a struck pedestrian at 927 Atwood Ave.," Johnston Police Chief Mark A. Vieira confirmed via email last Wednesday. "The pedestrian, a nun and teacher of St. Rocco's Church/School, was identified as Daisy Kollampampil, age 55."

St. Rocco's main parking lot is across the busy state road (Route 5), requiring most guests of the school or church to cross the street at least twice each visit.

"Sister Daisy was crossing Atwood Avenue in the crosswalk located in front of the church," according to Vieira. "A Nissan Rogue traveling north on Atwood Avenue stopped to allow Sister Daisy to cross the street. At that time, the stopped Nissan was rear-ended by a Dodge Durango subsequently pushing the Nissan forward which struck Sister Daisy."

Kollampampil suffered "serious injuries, however they were non-life-threatening and she was transported to RI Hospital by members of the Johnston Fire Department," according to Vieira. "Impaired operation was not a factor and criminal charges were not filed as a result of the accident. The operator of the Durango was cited with multiple motor vehicle violations."

Safer Crossings Possible?

Johnston Police are looking for ways to bolster safety at the St. Rocco crosswalk.

"Officers will be monitoring the area of this

crosswalk, especially during times of heavy pedestrian traffic," according to Vieira. "In addition, we are submitting a request to the State Traffic Commission to conduct a pedestrian safety review of the crosswalk. The installation of a pedestrian activated crosswalk signal equipped with a flashing beacon could enhance the visibility of the crosswalk and aid in alerting motorists."

Around 8:50 a.m. Friday, prior to St. Rocco's Veterans Day prayer service, traffic refused to stop for pedestrians waiting to cross. Several cars continued through the crosswalk until the traffic light finally stopped them.

This reporter waved to vehicles as they passed. Windows up on a cold morning, they exchanged one-fingered salutes and angry silent shouts from their driver's seats. Four consecutive drivers paid no mind to the bright painted lines or the sign in the center of the road. Somehow, pedestrians seem to have lost their right of way on the roads of Rhode Island.

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. confirmed the JPD is on the case of securing public safety for pedestrians crossing Atwood Avenue to attend school and church.

"Chief Vieira is submitting a request to RIDOT for a study of pedestrian safety of the area with the specific intent of installing flashing signage for crossing pedestrians," Polisena wrote via email last week. "He is also increasing police presence during times of high volume pedestrian traffic. We are hopeful RIDOT will immediately put it on the State Traffic Commission agenda for review and approval with a speedy installation thereafter. If it was a Town road I would have forgone the study and just ordered the signal already."

State Pledges Acceleration

St. Martin responded to a request for comment and data on Tuesday morning.

"We are pleased to see Johnston Police increase traffic enforcement in this area," St. Martin wrote.

RIDOT may be able to grease the wheel. They've long been aware of issues along Atwood Avenue.

"A flashing pedestrian crossing signal at that location was designed last year and part of a project going out to bid next summer — work that was underway prior to any requests by the town for a signal, and, unfortunately, prior to this tragic accident," according to St. Martin. "RIDOT will work with its contractor to accelerate its installation."

Despite stronger signaling, pedestrians are in danger if drivers are distracted.

"In this crash, a driver reacted to the controls in place and stopped for the pedestrian," St. Martin explained. "Another driver unfortunately did not, and hit the car that stopped, pushing it into the crosswalk and hitting Sister Daisy. The presence of a flashing pedestrian signal would likely have not made a difference; the cause here appears to be inattentiveness on the part prior of the driver that caused the accident."

RI's Risky Roads

Rhode Island's roads are notably less safe, according to recent data analysis by RIDOT and groups like the Governor's Highway Safety Administration (GHSA).

Although, statistically, as far as pedestrian fatalities (as of 2021) Rhode Island had the nation's second-best survival rate for foot-travelers.

For the latest year in which federal data was available, Rhode Island ranked No. 50 (second lowest of 50 states and the District of Columbia) in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) 2021 Ranking of State Pedestrian Fatality Rates. The Ocean State's seven 7 pedestrian fatalities in 2021 translated into a rate of 0.64 pedestrian fatalities for every 100,000 people.

However, according to a recent report by the GHSA, in 2022, nationwide, pedestrian fatalities have reached their highest level since 1981.

"During the past 11 years, federal data show that U.S. pedestrian fatalities increased from 4,302 in 2010 to an estimated 7,624 in 2021," according to the report (Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State 2022 Preliminary Data). "These fatalities represent nearly 18% of all traffic deaths in 2021, the highest annual proportion during this more than decade-long period."

The GHSA has been tracking alarming trends in traffic fatalities.

"Between 2020 and 2021, pedestrian deaths increased 16%, while other traffic fatalities increased 10%," according to the organization. "More alarmingly, since 2010, pedestrian deaths have gone up a shocking 77%, compared to a 25% increase in all other traffic fatalities."

From 2019-2022, according to the GHSA report, Rhode Island reported 8 pedestrian fatalities in 2019 and 7 in both 2021 and 2022 (and 9 so far in 2023, according to RIDOT). But the number spiked to 17 fatalities in 2020.

Millions Spent on Improvements

Rhode Island's traffic officials are aware of the trends.

"Statewide RIDOT reviews all crash data to determine where improvements are needed, and this included pedestrian safety initiatives," according to St. Martin. "In the past 5 years, RIDOT has reviewed every crosswalk in the state without crossing signals to determine what improvements should be made. During the last five years, the Department spent about \$8.5 million on improvements for pedestrians and in the next 10 years, we will spend another \$26 million."

On Friday, Nov. 10, following the annual Veterans Day prayer service at St. Rocco Church and School (and three days after Sister Daisy's accident) a group of pedestrians walked into the Atwood Avenue crosswalk, an older man followed by two women and a small child.

A black SUV had already stopped, just outside the crosswalk, behind traffic backed up from the red light. The driver had two options — wait patiently or speed around traffic while pedestrians were in the crosswalk.

He made a decision. He was obviously in a hurry. His bumper came within about six feet of the closest pedestrian, who was already more than halfway across the closest lane of traffic (the incident was captured on video). Police were given the video and stills showing the driver and the vehicle's registration plate.

On Tuesday morning, Johnston Police confirmed they would be issuing the driver a citation for failing to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk based on the video evidence.

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FRI. DEC. 15- THE BLUE ROOM, CRANSTON 6:30

SAT. DEC. 16- COURTHOUSE CENTER, KING. 7:30

SUN. DEC. 17- DAVENPORT'S, E. PROV. 12:30

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

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Johnston Sun Rise

SUN RISE SCOOPS

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, 7116 Main St., Hope Valley.

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.

Elks Lodge Essay Contest

The Smithfield Elks Lodge No. 2359 announced its annual Elks Americanism essay contest for fifth through eighth grade students. This year's theme is "What the Bill of Rights Means to Me."

The essay should not exceed 300 words, and must be typed or written legibly in ink. Students residing in Smithfield, Foster, Glocester, Scituate, Johnston or North Providence are encouraged to apply. The entrant must submit the essay for later than Dec. 15, 2023 to the Smithfield Lodge of Elks No. 2359, 326 Farnum Pike, Smithfield, or it can be emailed to the Lodge Americanism Chairperson.

Essays will be judged in originality, development of theme, mechanics, and neatness.

There are four divisions for judging essays: Division I – 5th grade; Division II – 6th grade; Division III – 7th grade; and Division IV – 8th grade. First, second, and third place winners in each division will move onto the district competition in

January, and those winners will move onto the state competition in February. State winners will be sent to the Elks Grand Lodge in March. The first, second, and third place national winners will be selected and announced in July, 2024.

All entrants are required to submit a cover sheet which must be attached to the essay. More information and cover sheets can be obtained by contacting the Lodge Americanism Chairperson, Kristin Sullivan at kristin_sullivan@me.com.

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.

Rhode Island League of Charter Schools announces Open Enrollment for 2024-25 School Year

The Rhode Island League of Charter Schools (RILCS) announced that the application period for charter public schools opens today for the 2024-25 school-year, according to a press release.

"Rhode Island public charter schools are pleased to welcome new students to apply for next school year," said Chiara Deltito-Sharrott, executive director of the Rhode Island League of Charter Schools. "We know one-size public education does not fit all students. A large number of Rhode Island families are seeking the innovative, student-centered learning environments that our charter schools provide."

Charter schools are public schools, free and open to all Rhode Island students. Charters schools are located throughout Rhode Island and provide elementary, middle, and high school options.

Demand for charter school seats in Rhode Island continues to grow. Last year, over 28,000 families applied for about 2,500 seats last year. Total applications have increased by more than 27% in the last five years and more than doubled since 2014-15.

Rhode Island families can learn more about public charter school options by exploring the family information tool at www.enrollri.com. Families can also set up an account and submit a common application to all eligible charter schools. Information is available in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Applications will be accepted through March 14, 2024. Then all charter school will conduct blind lotteries to select students on April 1st.

2024-2025 Charter School Enrollment Timeline:

- Nov. 14, 2023: SY2024-25 Applications Open via EnrollRI
- March 14, 2024: SY2024-25 Applications Close- Applications are no longer accepted
- April 1, 2024: Lotteries-Schools hold a blind lottery to determine

CHARTER - PAGE 11

Carol

(Continued from page 4)

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank distributes food to 80,000 struggling Rhode Islanders each month through a statewide network of 143 member agencies, including food pantries, meal sites, shelters, youth programs and senior centers. Last year, the Food Bank distributed over 16 million pounds of food, of which approximately 3.7 million pounds was fresh produce. The Food Bank is a member of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization. To learn more, visit rifofoodbank.org.

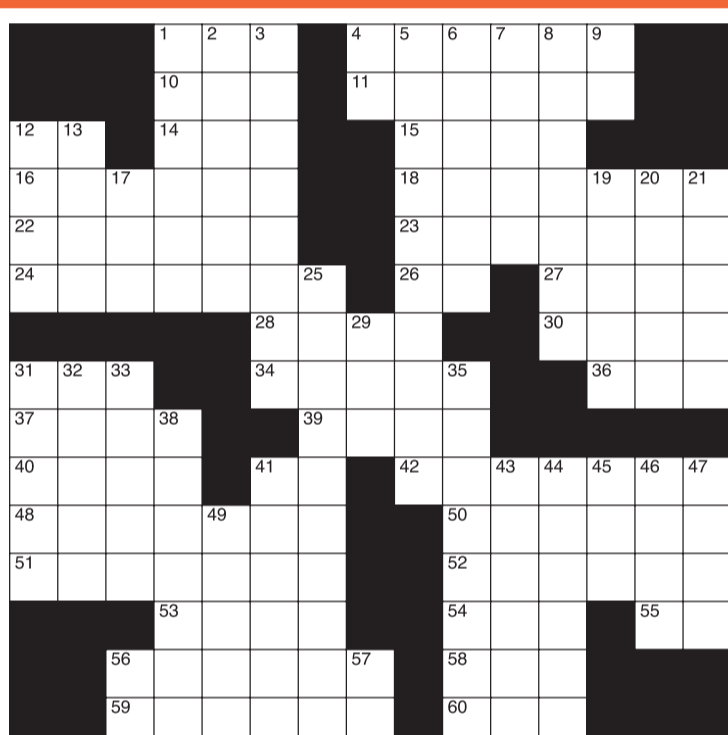
Rhode Island's Tony Award-winning theater, Trinity Rep has created unparalleled professional theater for and with its community since its founding in 1963. Trinity Rep strives to facilitate human connection and has been a driving force

behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region for more than 50 years.

Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally stimulating live productions that range from classical to contemporary and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities. Its annual production of "A Christmas Carol" has brought families together for more than four decades and made memories for nearly two million audience members. For more information, visit trinityrep.com.

The Rhode Island Foundation is the largest and most comprehensive funder of nonprofit organizations in Rhode Island. Through civic leadership, fundraising and grant-making activities, often in partnership with individuals and organizations, the Foundation is helping improve the lives of Rhode Islanders. For more information, visit rifoundation.org.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



CLUES ACROSS

1. Beats per minute
4. Hindu deity
10. Polynesian garland of flowers
11. Not chained to
12. Metric ton
14. Tall, rounded vase
15. Musical composition
16. St. Francis of ___
18. Discover the location of
22. Compact group of mountains
23. Mend
24. Not current
26. Atomic #64
27. Young hawk
28. Or ___
30. Pouches
31. Southern Thailand isthmus
34. Mends with yarn
36. Downwinds
37. One of two equal parts of a divisible whole
39. Italian archaeological site
40. Cold appetizer
41. Yes

CLUES DOWN

1. Similar to the color of a clear unclouded sky
2. Former name of Iran
3. Made smaller
4. Type of meter
5. Revolt
6. Killed with rocks
7. Gregory ___, US dancer
8. Nullifies
9. Home to the Flyers

12. Female parent
13. Pre-1917 Russian emperor
17. Outsourcing (abbr.)
19. Regal
20. Line
21. Hermann ___, author of "Siddhartha"
25. Clearing up
29. No seats available
31. Leaves of an Arabian shrub
32. Groove in organ or tissue
33. Not of this world
35. Cooking device
38. Forget
41. Operational flight
43. Actress Danes
44. Poke holes in
45. A way to discolor
46. Shouts of welcome or farewell
47. Pharrell's group
49. Red fluorescent dye
56. Jr.'s dad
57. Electronics firm

GOOD TO BE KIND



cherry hill manor nursing & rehabilitation center

Opinion

EDITORIAL

You shouldn't have to pray you'll get across the street safely

There's no doubt, Ocean State drivers are getting more aggressive every day. Is it the influx of development surrounding our town?

Or is it simply frustration with choked arteries leading to impatience behind the wheel?

Last Tuesday, a teacher and nun from St. Rocco School was hit by a car in the crosswalk outside the Atwood Avenue church.

The state was already aware of safety issues at the crosswalk. The state Department of Transportation has confirmed they planned to go out to bid for a flashing signal next summer.

State bureaucracy moves slowly — too slowly sometimes.

There are several problem spots in Johnston along the massive state roads that divide the town.

Along Hartford Avenue, residents have been begging for help near Market Basket. Aggressive drivers refusing to follow traffic laws have led to several near head-on collisions with long-time residents attempting to turn off Route 6 and onto their streets.

Market Basket says they're trying to address the issue. The state's been silent.

A couple miles north, Amazon sits empty, for now. What happens once the mega retailer opens its robotic sorting facility?

Will the influx of more than 1,000 employees commuting back and forth to work push Johnston's roads to the breaking point? Will the un-estimated influx of truck traffic bust Hartford Avenue at the fog lines?

Atwood Avenue's full of precarious road-crossings, outside churches and schools.

The crossing at Johnston High School often causes parental stress. Close calls may be stunted a bit by the adjacent Johnston Police Station, but these thriving traffic corridors need every crosswalk safety protocol possible in place to ensure our precious pedestrians make it to the other side safely.

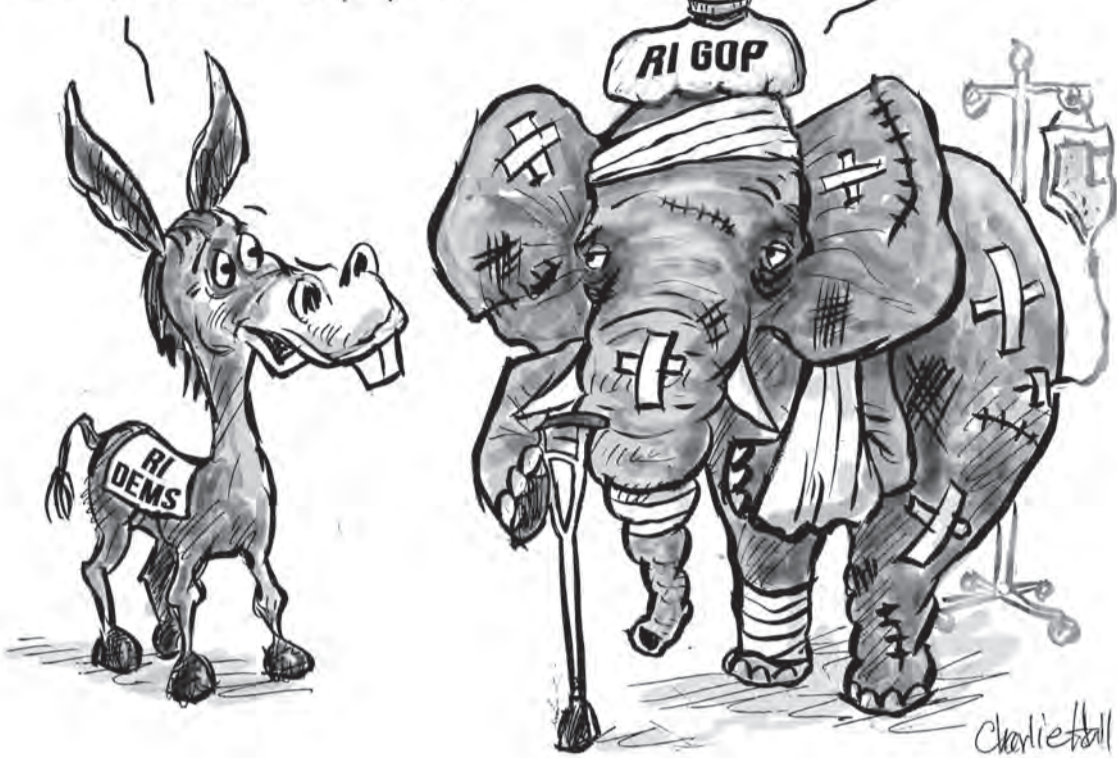
State data reveals Rhode Island roads are on track for one of their deadliest years ever. We need to reverse this trend, one trip at a time.

On Friday, following a Veterans Day prayer service at St. Rocco, a driver refused to wait for pedestrians crossing the street. He floored it and came within about six feet of a man who just five minutes before was seated safely in a church pew.

Based on video of the incident, Johnston Police have cited that aggressive driver for failing to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. One down. Countless more aggressive motorists to go.

DUDE, HOW DID THE ELECTIONS GO FOR YOU?

SAME OL', SAME OL'



EDITORIAL

We must not forget their lesson

There was something somberly fitting about the inconsistency among various government and private entities regarding when to observe the most recent Veterans' Day, which fell on a Saturday this year.

The day set aside to recognize and honor our nation's military service members, past and present, became just another scheduling decision; a choice made in fluorescent-lit board rooms across the state and country without much consideration to the meaning behind that decision.

Perhaps it is also symbolic, or a contributing factor, that the increasingly precarious nature of our democracy's stability is coinciding with the exponential and ever-increasing loss of our veteran population.

According to Census data, of the 16.6 million living veterans in America, nearly half are age 65 or older. Out of the some 16 million soldiers that survived service during World War II, only 183,000 still remain, with a median age of 93 (and only about 1,200 of them live in Rhode Island). Of course, the largest portion of that 16.6 million number comprises mostly veterans from Vietnam, who are also advancing in age rapidly. By 2025, the Department of Veterans Affairs estimates there will be just 14,000 of them left in the Ocean State, while only 1,600 are likely to remain who fought in the Korean War.

The loss of these entire generations of soldiers will continue to signify the loss of a connection with older generations of America who understood a time when things were by no means perfect, but they were certainly more fundamentally stable than what we're experiencing now.

A soldier from 1960s Vietnam would certainly understand government upheaval — bearing witness to assassinations and the advent of the Cold War — but we highly doubt anyone from those older generations could imagine seeing a former president stand trial for multiple serious offenses, including all the way up to their role in trying to unseat a rightful transfer of power. We wager they would be sorely disappointed to see American citizens' disdain for one another based solely off of political differences like we commonly see today.

While the reasons for degrading patriotism in America are numerous, we fear that as the last ranks of these old soldiers continue to vanish, we will lose a crucial thread that has kept our collective spirit for the maintenance and upkeep of the nation together. These veterans believed our nation was worth fighting for, and that's a lesson we would be foolish to forget.



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IT'S OFFICIAL!

Gabe Amo is sworn in and becomes RI's first Black congressman



Solar

(Continued from page 1)

It was 10 p.m. The agenda informed the public the board was willing to hold the hearing until 10:30 p.m.

The petitioner, represented by Mancini, had rested its case (except for cross-examination). The opponent's attorney, Matthew Landry, representing Stop Johnston Solar, had finished presenting his witnesses.

Mancini could further question the opposition group's final witness. And then it was supposed to be the public's turn to talk — the citizen input portion of the hearing.

Mancini said he didn't want to start down that road. He wanted to hear from the public at the board's next meeting, tentatively scheduled for Dec. 14.

"I'm not gonna start now," Mancini told the board. The crowd of around 150 citizens rumbled.

"I think it's a logical point to break, based on my 32 years of legal experience," said Zoning Board Solicitor Joseph Ballirano. "They're going to go back and fourth ..."

"He just gave his testimony," interjected Ward 5 Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti who was seated in the audience. "Let him question him now while it's still fresh."

"What's the advantage to that?" asked Ballirano.

"The agenda says you can go to 10:30," Civetti said, loudly without a microphone. The Zoning Board members sat silently. "Nothing will be heard after 10:30. Let's stick to the agenda."

The meeting was still in session. No adjournment gavel had banged.

"We made the decision, just like the council makes decisions, that we're going to go to a certain time," Ballirano argued. "We said we were going to 10."

"Not on the agenda you didn't," Civetti argued for the public.

In a brief declaration to start the Nov. 2 hearing, Ballirano and Zoning Board Chairman Thomas Lopardo said the night's testimony was expected to run through 10 p.m. The agenda, however, informed the public the session could drag on to 10:30.

Some of the project's opponents argue the petitioner hopes the public opposition will lose steam as the hearing is stretched out over three months.

The Sept. 28 hearing attracted a near-capacity crowd (Johnston Fire Marshal Tom Marcello counted 179 people). Noticeably fewer attended the Nov. 2 hearing (the fire marshal didn't make an appearance to count, but there were still seats available in the Senior Center dining room).

"We can go to 10:30 ..." Ballirano clarified. The board had the option to go to 10:30.

"I'm asking through the chair," Civetti said, turning to Lopardo.

Mancini jumped into the discussion.

"It's my call," the attorney declared. "I'm not going forward tonight. It's ending at 10 o'clock."

"It's not your call," shouted several meeting attendees.

"Just adjourn the hearing and tell them to get out," one woman shouted.

"It's my hearing," Mancini repeated.

"It's my hearing. I'm the applicant. It's my hearing. That's the law."

He packed his papers and fled the building.

Arguing ensued — a stenographer's nightmare.

Finally, several minutes later, a motion to adjourn came through the speakers. It carried.

"You better send out notices," Civetti warned the board. "You already adjourned."

The meeting date was not clarified to the public prior to adjournment (though multiple sources agree the hearing will likely continue to Dec. 14, pending public advertising). A regular meeting of the Zoning Board has been advertised for Nov. 30, but the continuation of the solar hearing is not mentioned on the official agenda posted on the Rhode Island Secretary of State's website.

"It was a total disgrace how the last meeting ended," Civetti wrote via email.

"The attorney for the applicant walked out of the meeting before the meeting was adjourned. Once again I am not an attorney, but if they're running the zoning board ... like it's a court I think the attorney would have been held in contempt. I think the attorney for the applicant owes the board (and) the public a public apology for how (he) conducted himself at the end of that meeting."

Too Soon?

The Nov. 2 meeting was a continuation of a public hearing that began on Sept. 28, when Cranston-based Green Development decided to petition the Zoning Board less than a year-and-a-half after their first attempt failed (in April 2022 the Zoning Board narrowly rejected a larger project; the new petition is essentially a sizeable portion of the previous project).

Landry argues Green Development jumped the gun. Town ordinance says an applicant must wait two years before re-presenting their case before the Zoning Board, unless the project changes substantially. An appeal of the previous decision still lingers in court.

"This application has been heard, it has been decided upon, it has been denied, it has been pending appeal for the last year," Landry told the zoning board to start his case.

"Hear, hear!" Shouted an audience member. The crowd erupted with applause (as they did often through the night to punctuate Landry's arguments).

"The doctrine of administrative finality, which is also a provision in your ordinance that specifically prohibits repetitive petitions within a two-year period," Landry argues. "The applicant has the duty to satisfy this board that their application is materially and substantively different than the last application before this board even has jurisdiction to hear it."

Solar Opposites

Civetti agrees: "There is no way that this should even be in front of the zoning board at this time ... In my opinion, which is not a legal opinion, but just from reviewing the documents, this does not appear to be a substantially changed project."

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. has been a supporter of solar projects in residential neighborhoods, arguing solar panels will tax town services less than new housing developments. And Green Development has supported Polisena with thousands in campaign donations.

"There's opposition to every project: new houses, condos, Amazon, solar, the new hospital, so that's to be expected," Polisena wrote via email. "Regardless of the outcome I'm sure whichever side loses will file an appeal of the decision, just like the first time, and the matter will end up in court, again."

Public support for the re-pitched project has been silent during public hearings; however the majority of public input has yet to be offered.

"I do not support a blanket, one-size-fits-all ban on solar, as I've spoken to many people who prefer solar as an alternative to houses being built near them," Polisena wrote.

The mayor has \$173,803.08 in his campaign account, as of Sept. 30, according to the latest filings available on the Rhode Island Campaign Finance Electronic Reporting & Tracking System (ERTS). Polisena has not reported any campaign contributions from solar company management since taking his oath of office in January.

Civetti, who often voices Town Council's lone opposition to solar development in Johnston's residential neighborhoods, has been attending the zoning board meetings as a concerned neighbor, seated near the front of the hearing space. The room has been packed with his constituents.

"I look forward to having the opportunity to speak to the members of the zoning board on Dec. 14 and to hear the public voice their opinion at that time," Civetti said. "Hopefully the majority of the meeting will be committed to hearing the public speak and this will be the last meeting and the board will take vote at the end of the meeting."

Polisena, who rarely attends public

meetings in town, has not attended either of the first two sessions of public hearings before the Zoning Board.

Mancini echoed Polisena's argument while questioning his final witness, appraiser and witness Thomas Sweeney, of Sweeney Real Estate & Appraisal.

"So you referenced a North Carolina Report, a Midwest report, a Berkley report and a URI report, but do you agree that the question really comes down to whether this solar development ... disturbing the existing green space has a more negative impact than a residential development at this exact site?" Mancini asked Sweeney.

"In my opinion, a residential development ... you'd lose a lot more green space," Sweeney replied. "You'd ... have more houses. It's going to be more dense. There'll be more pavement. That's my opinion."

"And finally, is it your opinion that a properly buffered ... development of solar would have no negative impact to sales or valuation of residential dwellings that are at least a tenth of a mile away from the solar project?" Mancini asked the witness.

"My opinion, is that if it's done the right way, with the right buffer, it's not going to have a negative impact," Sweeney answered.

In Other Towns ...

Landry introduced his first witness, Westerly Town Planner Nancy E. Letendre, a land-use expert. He asked her about the Johnston's outdated Comprehensive Plan.

"In your opinion, is the town of Johnston out of compliance?" Landry asked the witness.

"The town of Johnston is out of compliance, and it's not just my opinion," she answered. "The state's Division of Planning has the town of Johnston's Comprehensive Plan as expired as of ... 2014."

The crowd released a collective gasp.

"You've reviewed the Johnston Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance?" Landry asked Letendre, who answered in the affirmative.

"Have you formed an opinion as to the consistency of this project with the Johnston Comprehensive Plan?" He asked the witness.

"It's my opinion, because there is absolutely zero information in either the comprehensive plan or in the zoning ordinance, that it's impossible to find it ... consistent with either one," Letendre explained. "So my opinion is that it is inconsistent."

Letendre said that although it's expired, the plan is still applicable in town. Green Development has had mixed results clearing Rhode Island woodland to construct massive solar arrays.

"You'll find it interesting to know, that it's not the first time the applicant has raised this issue before a municipality," Landry told the zoning board. "It did so in the town of Exeter, and the planner in that town called them out on it and said this violates our lot coverage provisions. You exceed the lot coverage limits in our ordinance, it violates it and should be denied. The board denied it on that and other grounds. It went up to the Superior Court on appeal. It was upheld in favor of the town. And just recently it was upheld again by the Rhode Island Supreme Court."

Argument with Structure

Some Ocean State towns have laws clearly defining solar development. While Johnston doesn't, it does have strict lot coverage restrictions. While housing developments are restricted to 15% lot coverage (by structures), the solar company has argued solar panels don't count as structures (therefore no coverage restrictions apply to their project).

"The definition of a structure is the broadest definition in all of zoning," Landry argued. "It can be a deck, a tennis court, a driveway, fences, awnings, any overhangs from a building — all of that stuff has been deemed to constitute or contribute to lot coverage. This facility is on 43% of this property; not 15%. It far exceeds the limits. If you look at the definition of structure, it is a combination of materials, combined to form a use

... it doesn't talk about impervious versus pervious surfaces. It doesn't talk about buildings."

Landry urged equity from the board — he challenged them to hold the solar project to the same standards as a housing development.

"You have no evidence before you to demonstrate how not building a building gets them away from the lot coverage problem," Landry told the board. "And they far exceed it. If this was a residential development, you better believe the town would limit them to 15% lot coverage. This far exceeds that."

Mancini's witnesses have asserted that solar panels shouldn't count toward lot coverage.

"This facility includes concrete platforms for some of their equipment ... inverters, racking systems ... driveways, fences, all kinds of heavy equipment," Landry argued. "The definition of a structure includes materials above or below the surface of the ground. It doesn't refer to a building. You don't need a building to trigger the definition of a structure. And respectfully, this absolutely constitutes a structure."

Letendre produced a report which has been presented to the zoning board. According to the application, the proposed solar site, which is currently zoned for residential use, includes a historic farmstead and agricultural fields on the top of Sikkibunkiaut Hill, a Rhode Island Historical Cemetery and isolated pockets of wetland.

"The proposed location is a historic farmstead, which has both cultural and natural and historic significance to this community," Letendre testified. "The farmstead has agricultural fields and is surrounded by residential development. Which is consistent with the conservation policies for the area west of (Interstate) 295 ... as described in the comprehensive plan."

She referred to one of the applicant witness's testimony, regarding the "beneficial features of forest" and "what types of affects on natural habitat should be considered."

"And it's my opinion that the loss of agricultural lands and this forest will have more affect on the area than if housing was to be ... constructed in the area," she told the zoning board. "Because that's consistent with what's there now ... There's no guarantee that 20-25 years down the line, that this property will be once again suitable for agricultural purposes."

The opposition also argues that the solar project could threaten nearby aquifers.

"The topography, steep to moderately rolling terrain, also provides many benefits including protecting water quality, recharging surface water and supplying drinking water to the community," Letendre testified. "And ... I understand ... drinking water is a subject of critical concern to both Johnston and the state of Rhode Island."

Who yelled 'Bingo'?

Several times during the Nov. 2 hearing, Mancini, a Providence attorney, interacted and taunted the agitated crowd. He paused questioning when audience responses were notably audible.

"Let's play bingo while we wait, because I've got all night," Mancini told the crowd. They shouted back.

"What we need to do, we need to keep our decorum here," Chairman Lopardo told the crowd. "We've been doing good to this point. Everyone's gonna have a chance to speak. We're not gonna rush this. We're gonna take the appropriate time so that everyone can be heard. We just need to work our way to the end. Fairly. But if we have all this outburst and disruption, it just drags it out even longer."

"He's trying to drag it out," an audience member accused Mancini.

"I don't think he's really trying to drag it out," Lopardo defended the applicant's lawyer. "I think he's trying to make his case ... We're gonna keep at this ... That's all we're asking please."

Paul Francis of Johnston, unofficial emcee for the opposition, stood and demanded to be heard (as he has during public session numerous times).

Solar

(Continued from page 8)

Once again, he was granted a few minutes by the board.

"Listen to this guy's BS, okay," Francis told the crowd. "Listen to what he has to say, because after it's all said in done ... Please don't ..."

Francis was interrupted as a Johnston Police officer on-duty at the meeting approached him and stood within a nose-length.

"I am being very nice about it sir, this is the third time you approached me," Francis shouted at the uniformed police officer. Shouts of support and condemnation of both Francis and the police officer nearly unraveled the meeting.

"Listen to this guy's BS," Francis said, appealing to the audience. "Let him get it said and done. Okay, we know exactly what's going down. He knows exactly what ... buttons he's pushing. You're gonna push it his way and that's what you're doing ... Be calm. If you have something to say, once in a while, nicey nice. But keep it ... in a respectful manner. I can't give you permission to speak, but please keep it down."

The zoning board, however, managed to maintain order until 10 p.m. when Mancini stormed out of the hearing.

Full-time Planner

Earlier this year, Polisena promoted part-time Town Planner Thomas Deller to a full-time position with the town. At Tuesday night's Town Council meeting, Deller was introduced to the public as Johnston's Director of Development Services.

"Thom went from part-time planner to the DPW director," Polisena replied to questions via email Wednesday morning. "Our previous DPW director Robert Parker, who did an outstanding job, left in early 2021 and we were going on almost 2 years without a DPW director, which is unacceptable for a municipality of this size."

Deller now has the dual-title of Johnston Town Planner and Director of the town's Development & Public Services Department, which according to Polisena "is the official name of public works" in Johnston.

Deller has given Green Development's application his blessing. He has determined the zoning board has jurisdiction, despite 2022's failed attempt. And he sees no conflicts with the town's comprehensive plans or zoning laws.

Deller said he agrees the solar panels do not classify as structures, under local law.

"It's very easy to take another town's document and find lots of things and say them," Deller said during a break in testimony on Nov. 2. "There are precedents."

Deller defended the town's long-outdated comprehensive plan and the slow-moving process to update it.

"We're working on it," Deller said. "It takes time. For six years I was a part-timer."

Deller said he was promoted to his new full-time position "some time in March," and that it requires "additional responsibilities."

"So now in addition to his duties as town planner, he oversees the entire department as director," Polisena confirmed. "The previous director made \$85,000 and Thom, as both the director and town planner, makes \$95,000. A town with \$2 billion in economic development in the last decade needs a full-time planner anyway and I'm glad ours can double as town planner and public works director."

Deller picked apart one of Landry's key arguments regarding lot coverage.

"The definition that we have is 'lot building coverage' not 'lot coverage,'" Deller explained as the crowd shuffled around his seat. "So there's a different interpretation ... A building's a building ... I think the bottom line ... there was a precedent that was established for a number of years. Our ordinance is very old ... and there's lots of things that are open to interpretation."

Editor's Note: Watch for more coverage of this pending solar development application leading up to and following the expected Dec. 14 continuation of the Johnston Zoning Board special use permit public hearing.



NEW TITLE: Although he has said little during public session of the zoning board's public hearings on a solar field project pitched for a residential neighborhood in Johnston, former part-time Town Planner Thomas Deller has given the project his blessing. He says the plans comply with town zoning laws. According to Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr., Deller was promoted earlier this year to full-time employment with the town and now serves as both Town Planner and Director of the town's Development & Public Services Department. His new annual salary is \$95,000. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)



PACKED HOUSE: The Johnston Senior Center was packed with vocal opponents of a solar field pitched for one of the town's residential neighborhoods.



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.

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By JENNIFER COATES

For working parents everywhere, there is no more important decision to be made than to whom they will be entrusting their child's care and supervision while they are apart from them. Pressing questions such as "Will my child be safe? Will my child get the attention and individual care he/she needs? Will my child get the developmentally-appropriate learning opportunities he/she needs? Will my child be disciplined with love? Will my child be happy?" must all be satisfactorily answered when parents make this decision.

Dreamland Learning Center in Johnston will answer these questions for you and bring you the peace of mind you need as you search for the best childcare option for your child. This busy center is a bright, welcoming, and progressive center located in the heart of Johnston.

Dreamland Learning Center is a family-owned and operated learning center whose guiding philosophy is stated in their website: "We aim to provide quality care that will inspire each child to explore and discover the infinite possibilities available to

them through the power of learning. Our environment was created to enhance a child's natural curiosity and desire to learn. At our center, opportunities are provided to help children prepare to make the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical adjustments needed in life. We believe children learn best from their own experiences."

Their mission statement also clearly outlines their objectives: "We aim to provide safe, affordable, high-quality childcare for all families. In doing so, we support them in their efforts to reach their goals. Dreamland provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum for children ages 6 weeks to twelve years. The Dreamland staff is committed to the families we serve, providing support and encouragement to promote children's desire to be life-long learners."

As parents visit the center, they will find attentive caregivers tending to a sunny room of infants while elsewhere, toddlers are toddling, preschoolers are exploring, and rooms await the before & after-school crowd of students which arrives here every day. Each day at this sparkling clean, regularly sanitized and whimsically decorated center is filled with activity, learning, discovering and yes, even dreaming!

The curriculum and staff-to-child ratio requirements here meet the strict guidelines of the RI Early Learning & Development Standards while all staff are licensed; many are also CPR certified. The staff work as a team with one goal in mind, to enrich the lives of the children over whom they have been given this very special stewardship. The center is also highly "Bright Star" rated.

If you are looking for safe, loving and dependable childcare for your child, come take a tour of this happy learning center. The center is open all year round, including a fun-filled summer program.

The Dreamland Learning Center is located at 1253 Hartford Avenue. For more information, call them today at 401-280-1400 or visit their website at www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com. Rhode Island state subsidies are accepted!

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GOT BOCCE? From left to right, the Rizzo Team: John R., Nino R., MVP Nino R., President Leo F., Cosmo R., and Frank R. (Photos courtesy Louis J. Spremulli)

RI Bocce League holds 2023 banquet

By LOUIS J. SPREMULLI
Special to the Sun Rise

On Friday, Nov. 3, there were about 200 bocce players at the Prata Society Hall in Cranston. This was the end of season banquet with food from Ralph's Kitchen.

On a sad note, President Ray Fanaro of Prata passed away and a prayer and moment of silence was said for him. Ray was president for 10 years, and participated in everything. He was a friend to everyone. He will be missed.

All teams sat together, and everyone was enjoying themselves, even the ones who were in last place. The teams consisted of six players and only four balls for each team. They played three games up to 12 every week.

Some players take this very seriously, and others are just there to have fun. But when the tape measure comes out, things get serious, and some get very loud. The president of the bocce league is Jim the Pirate and he must deal with all the issues.

There are two divisions in the state, North and South, and teams represent various parts of the state. Each team must travel to play another team. Some playing surfaces are great and others are unbelievably bad. But both teams play on the same ground and adjust to the surface.

The first-place team champions this year were from St. Peters, whose home court is Santa Maria DI Prata Society. All these players make up a good team, but there are always standouts.

One player who stood out the most was Nino Rizzo. He was named MVP! He was the one who won the Eye of the Tiger tournament, the 2-man tournament champion, the close-in champion and the 2023 Rhode Island bocce league champion with his team.

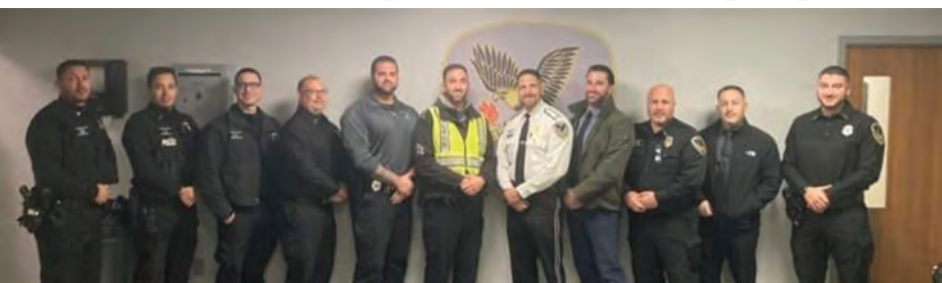
Nino says thank you all for a momentous year with his family and friends. We will see each other again next year for another great season.

Editor's Note: Louis J. Spremulli, a Johnston resident, is founder of Spirit of Hope. The Sun Rise regularly publishes articles submitted by Spremulli and his organization. Call Spremulli at 401-374-4590 or email louis@spiritofhope.org. He sometimes serves as the Johnston Sun Rise Italian correspondent.



THE MVP: Nino Rizzo, with the trophy, was named RI Bocce League MVP, after winning the Eye of the Tiger tournament, the 2-man tournament, the close-in and the 2023 Rhode Island bocce league champion overall, with his team.

Getting scraggly



Johnston Police have been “putting down the razors for a great cause!” “Have you noticed that our officers are looking a little scraggly?” The department asked on their social media accounts. “The Johnston Police Department is proud to participate in No Shave November to raise awareness and support for The Brain Tumor Research Fund at Rhode Island Hospital.”

The whiskers will be sprouting until December. “Throughout this month, our officers donated funds and are letting their facial hair grow wild to raise awareness and support for this important cause,” according to Johnston Police. “Brain tumors affect so many lives, and every dollar raised will make a difference in supporting research for better treatments and ultimately finding a cure.”

More at Mohr Library

Mohr Library is offering extended programs for elementary-age kids afterschool.

Preschool Yoga with Ms. Pauline will be held Wednesdays Nov. 15 and Dec. 13 at 10:30 a.m. Register at mohrlibrary.org/forchildren.php or by calling 231-4980. Children will be guided into gentle movement exercises using the power of their imagination. They will also learn breathing techniques that calm and center them. It will be a time of joy, wonder and movement. Ms. Pauline is a certified yoga teacher practicing since she was 17 years old. A former school teacher, she began programs to bring yoga to children and teachers in schools throughout Rhode Island.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) is an opportunity for children ages 6 to 9 to experiment, explore and build with Ms. Melyssa, on Thursdays, Nov. 16 to Dec. 14 at 5 p.m. (except Thanksgiving, Nov. 23).

Art Smart for ages 8 to 12 will be held Wednesdays, Nov. 15 to Dec. 13 from 4-5:30 p.m. Art Smart for ages 5 to 7 will be Saturdays, Nov. 18 to Dec. 16 from 2-3 p.m. Registration is required and begins Nov. 6. See the library’s website at mohrlibrary.org or call 401-231-4980.

Preschool Story Time started in October, on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. and

includes stories, songs and crafts. For kids 3-5 accompanied by a caregiver.

Babies and Books will be held on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m., from October through Dec. 5. It includes stories, songs, puppets and rhymes for children newborn to 2.5 years old, accompanied by a caregiver.

The Library offers help with technology, information, and finding books and media. They have fax service, self-service copying and public computers, and a Notary Public most evenings (call ahead to confirm). You can reserve quiet rooms and meeting space.

Drawing for adults will be held at 3 p.m. on Thursdays.

The Knitting and Crochet Group meets Fridays at 10 a.m.

Activities for middle-school and high-school age kids will be offered many afternoons. Kids should talk with our Young Adult Librarian, Marissa, for more information.

There is an ongoing book sale in the lower level, whenever we are open.

The Children’s Library always has drop-in, self-directed activities for kids and families like crafts and scavenger hunts.

The Library is open Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and beginning Sept. 9, Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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JPD holds Thanksgiving Food Drive for OSDRI

The Johnston Police Department is collecting non-perishable food items to be donated to Operation Stand Down Rhode Island for Thanksgiving. A drop off box has been placed in the police department’s foyer.

“Thanksgiving is around the corner,” the Johnston Police Department posted on its social media accounts. So the department is collecting “canned and boxed food items at their headquarters to support our veterans in need.”

“Any assistance is greatly appreciated, just stop in our front foyer to make a donation in our drop off box. We appreciate the support!”

Charter

(Continued from page 6)

who is offered a seat

After lotteries are run at all charter school on April 1st, each school will reach out to families who are receiving offers. Families will have 15 days to

accept.

April 16, 2024: SY2024-25 Waiting Lists Open- If a student was not selected to the school of their choice, they can apply for the waiting list through their EnrollRI account.

The Rhode Island League of Charter Schools is an association of 20 charter public schools serving over 6,400 students from 34 communities.

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Race Day Registration begins at 7:15AM

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Registration: WarwickRotaryRI.com

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St. Rocco hosts annual Veterans Day Prayer Service



RHYTHM NATION: St. Rocco seventh-grade students formed a patriotic drum line outside the church following Friday's annual Veterans Day Prayer Service. They played "The Stars & Stripes Forever" on buckets. (Sun Rise photos by Rory Schuler)





CALLED UPON TO SERVE:

Above, St. Rocco students carried banners for each branch of the military during Friday's annual Veterans Day Prayer Service inside St. Rocco Church on Atwood Avenue in Johnston. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



MOST VALUABLE VETERANS:

At right, St. Rocco students held up photographs of the important veterans in their lives. (Photo courtesy Robin Okolowicz)

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RhodyLife

RHODYBEAT.COM

Nilton Cardenas working on a painting called "I'm From There But I'm Not There." from his series entitled Native Land.



The Many Lives of Nilton Cardenas, Rhode Island Artist, Teacher and Leader

By KEVIN FITZPATRICK

I first met Nilton Cardenas on Nov. 8, at the opening of an exhibition he organized at the Cranston Public Library, titled "Lines of Feeling/ Lineas de Sentimento."

Twenty-one black and white drawings by six artists hung on display, all created in the preceding several months, all based on a somewhat nebulous theme: to "seek answers and pose questions that are inherent to their nature." The drawings were done in a variety of styles and mediums, the only obvious connection being the monochromatic palette, and a somberness which spoke of melancholy, bad memories, and anxiety.

Despite that somberness, Nilton bounced around the room radiating pride in the gallery and in the artists. At the beginning of the night, Nilton gave a speech, explaining the inspiration for the exhibition. He described a time in his life when three loved ones passed away, and he chose to abandon color in his practice, electing instead to adopt a black and white palette for his next series of paintings.

■ ARTIST - PAGE 22



Sports

Lady Panthers upset in finals

Rogers
downs
JHS in DIV
title match

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston girls soccer team was upset by Rogers in a 3-0 shutout in the Division IV Championship last weekend at Rhode Island College.

After a scoreless first half, the Vikings would be granted a penalty kick early in the second and convert to take the 1-0 lead. Things would get tough for the Panthers, who lost standout striker Alexia DiLorenzo to injury moments later as Rogers tacked on two insurance goals down the stretch to run away with the win.

"That penalty kick (was the difference). Once that penalty kick happened, unfortunately that is where everything began to unravel. The injuries began to set in and started to take a toll. By that point we were up against the wall," said Johnston coach Toni Scavitti after the loss.

The Johnston offense slowed down after DiLorenzo's exit and struggled to pressure the Rogers defense in the second half.

"That impacted us significantly. She's our speed, she's part of our speed at the top so to not have her be able to run, we had to switch some things around that we weren't expecting to do," Scavitti said.

This was the third time that these two teams squared off this season. The second-seeded Pan-

■ FINALS - PAGE 17



TITLE GAME: Johnston's Kaylee Poole (above) and Karen Lastor Rojas (at left) make plays during the team's Division IV Championship matchup against Rogers last weekend at Rhode Island College. The Vikings won, 3-0. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)



UP FRONT: Johnston center Nicholas Testa gets set to deliver a block. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

JHS football falls in semifinal heartbreaker

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston football team fell in a heartbreaking 20-14 defeat to Middletown in the Division III Semifinals last week on the road.

After falling being 14-0, the Panthers would come storming back in the third quarter as running back Steven Finegan found the end zone. Finegan would

■ JHS - PAGE 19

The highs and lows of the past week

It was a wild week of high school sports playoffs and there was plenty to chew on both on and off the field.

Here are some of my biggest takeaways from the events I had the pleasure of covering:

I was present on Saturday night covering the girls soccer championships as we had both Johnston and Toll Gate competing. Unfortunately for our clubs, they came up short despite playing well overall.

The Panthers took on Rogers and fell 3-0. John-

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

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ston beat Rogers twice in the regular season, but this game was one of those examples of how

■ PITCH - PAGE 17

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DEM outdoor winter programs

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) announced their winter season of outdoor programs from fly tying to wild game cooking classes. The Aquatic Resource Education, Hunter Education, Wildlife Outreach and Volunteer programs have planned a schedule with plenty of opportunities to learn about Rhode Island's fish and wildlife resources or to try out a new outdoor skill.

Programs being offered include fly tying, K-12 teacher training, wild game cooking, introduction to firearms, wildlife solutions for coyotes/foxes/fishers, wild winter tracking, and bird watching on the coast. Most programs are free of charge and family friendly. For a complete list of up-to-date programs, visit Fish & Wildlife | Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (ri.gov).

Mt. Hope Bay reopens to shellfishing

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) announced that the emergency shellfish harvesting closure of portions of Mount Hope Bay ended Monday, November 13, 2023. Portions of the conditional shellfish harvest area have been closed since Sunday, October 22 due to an accidental discharge of 11,250 gallons of untreated wastewater from the Mount Hope pump station at the eastern end of Anawamscutt Avenue in Bristol. To safeguard public health the waters of Mount Hope Bay in the vicinity of the sewage spill were closed to shellfish harvest immediately after the unpermitted wastewater discharge.

The industry and department aim is to deliver a high-quality Rhode Island shellfish product. This goal has been achieved by diligent monitoring of shellfish harvesting waters, protecting public health with a high level of oversight when conditions indicate a change in water quality either from natural sources such as algae blooms or by the quick response to emergency conditions.

For information on emergency and conditional area water quality related shellfish closures, call DEM's 24-hour shell fishing hotline at 401-222-2900, visit www.dem.ri.gov/shellfish, or sign up for DEM's Office of Water Resources' shellfish closure list-serve by sending an email to: RishellfishOWR-subscribe@listserv.ri.gov.

Freshwater ponds stocked for Fall

Massachusetts and Rhode Island have been engaged in fall trout stocking programs. Massachusetts stocked over 60,000 trout in area waterways and last week Rhode Island had a special stocking in ponds for Veterans Day weekend.

Wallum Lake in Douglas was stocked last month with rainbow trout and Whiting Pond and Falls Pond in North Attleboro were stocked late September. For a complete list of stocked ponds in Massachusetts visit Mass Wildlife at Trout stocking report | Mass.

gov .

In Rhode Island ponds such as Willet Avenue Pond in Riverside, Stafford Pond in Tiverton, and Olney Pond in Lincoln have been stocked with rainbow and brook trout as well as Sebago Atlantic Salmon. Visit DEM's Division of Fish and Wildlife's Facebook Page, visit www.dem.ri.gov/fishing, or call 401-789-0281 or 401-539-0019 for more information on stocking in Rhode Island.

Where's the bite?

Striped bass, bluefish. "There are still striped bass in our bays and estuaries, but the fish are a lot smaller with school bass and some slot size fish being caught. And, this week we had an influx of Atlantic menhaden enter the Bay and Providence River," said Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence. Declan O'Conner of Breachway Bait & Tackle, Charlestown, said, "Striper fishing from the surf has slowed down this past week but the run is not over. We still have some good schools of fish that need to make their way by our area. We tend to see a run of bigger fish mid to late November and an occasional bluefish frenzy. Keep an eye out for Gannets flying they are an indicator that there are large baits in the water. Cow bass will be right on these big schools of bait. There are still some bass feeding in the back ends of estuaries taking advantage of the bait that hasn't headed out of town yet. The water is still relatively warm in these areas still and that's why the bait likes to hold out in these areas."

Tautog fishing continues to produce for anglers. Angler Greg Spier said, "Left dock 7 a.m. Sunday for reefs off Newport. Worked hard, but ended with six keeper tautog and two black sea bass, fished until 11 a.m. Last Sunday similar spot, limited out in two hours. All caught with green crabs and some old squid, mostly on Sammy rigs."

O'Conner of Breachway Bait & Tackle said, "Tautog fishing has been very good with many customers reporting limit catches in water ranging from 15 to 40 feet. There are still some good sized black sea bass around locally and even a few cod moving into the area."

"The tautog bite continues to be outstanding in the Bay and off Newport with anglers still landing some double digit fish in the 10 and 11 pound range," said Henault of Ocean State Tackle.

Squid fishing continues to be fairly good. But as usual it is hit or miss. Squid fishing expert Greg Vespe of Tiverton said, "Phil Duckett and I fished the Newport Bridge area last Friday night and did pretty good."

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



LARGEMOUTH BASS BITE: John Migliori with an Aquidneck Island largemouth bass said, "Sunday morning I caught this nice 17 inch largemouth using a Kastmaster lure." (Submitted photos)



THE SQUID ARE IN: Phil Duckett Jr. of Portsmouth with a squid he caught Friday night fishing the Newport Bridge area with squid fishing expert Greg Vespe of Tiverton.



FOOTWORK: Johnston's Catherine Privitera handles the ball last weekend in the championship matchup against Rogers.

■ Finals

(Continued from page 15)

thers beat the No. 4 Vikings each previous contest by a combined score of 3-0.

Although the Panthers were the favorite heading into the matchup, Scavitti and company tried not to overlook the Vikings, who also upset top-seeded Providence Country Day in the semis.

"(Our goal was) to not underestimate them. We knew what they were capable of, we trained specifically for them, we were prepared to work with their strengths and their weaknesses. It's just unfortunate that they were able to pull out the win tonight and we didn't," Scavitti said.

The Panthers will be graduating nine seniors from the roster, including their two top scorers in DiLorenzo and Kaylee Poole, as well as keeper Ava Waterman.

After a few down seasons, the Panthers moved to Division IV last year and qualified for the playoffs each go-around. Scavitti will miss this senior core that helped revitalize the Johnston program.

"They've been a phenomenal group. It's going to be a big loss losing all of them," said Scavitti.

Johnston finished the season with a 16-3-1 overall record.

■ Pitch

(Continued from page 15)

though it is to beat a team three straight times.

Although Johnston was the more successful team throughout the fall, and to be frank, was the better team overall, it was just not its night. Sometimes in sports, that happens. The best team doesn't always win. That's not taking anything away from Rogers, either, the Vikings pulled off an upset over top-seeded Providence Country Day then Johnston, but the Panthers should have won that game.

After a scoreless first half in which Johnston controlled the pace and field position, Rogers got a penalty kick opportunity and converted to take the lead. From there, the Panthers just could not recover.

Alexia DiLorenzo got injured shortly after, the Vikings gained the confidence, and the Panthers were not used to playing from behind considering how dominant they had been all season long. It was just a tough way to go out.

That being said, Johnston moved down to Division IV last season and immediately rose to the top of the rankings. Nine seniors are graduating, so it will be interesting to see what happens, but this program is in a great spot and had one heck of a run. Sometimes, you-know-what happens.

Toll Gate fell to No. 1 Westerly 4-0. It was a similar type of game as Johnston's.

The Titans played strong defense in the scoreless first half, but in the final 10 minutes or so, it felt like the Bulldogs began finding their way.

Toll Gate keeper Alanna Pereira came up with a few big saves to close out the first half then stood on her head in the early going in the second. Eventually, Westerly broke through and poured it on in the final 20 minutes.

Toll Gate's program is also in fantastic shape. The Titans have reached the playoffs the past four years, including three trips to the finals and one win. As always, there will be some roster turnover, but there were 15 seniors that graduated last season and look what happened. The Titans will be right there again.

Friday night provided another thrilling week of the football postseason and we had two more teams in action.

I made the trip down to Middletown to watch the Islanders host the Johnston Panthers. It was an awesome game, possibly the best game I've covered this fall.

Middletown took a 14-0 lead, but the Panthers hung in there and tied it. Middletown, though, pulled off a big time drive in the final two minutes to score a touchdown and secure the win.

The talk of the Johnston team this fall has been around its offense. Between Matt Clements, NeAri Vasquez, Michael Carlino, Steven Finegan, this offensive unit was a powerhouse that grabbed the headlines, and deservedly so.

Going into this matchup, I was fascinated to see how this Johnston defense would hold up, and it passed the test. It came up with two goal line stops in the first quarter

and forced an interception in the second quarter to hold the Islanders to just seven points in the first half.

The only drive that the defense flopped on was the opening drive of the second half, when Middletown scored on three plays. To go 48 minutes against a team as good as Middletown and to only have one poor drive is impressive. This defense was prepared.

The players were devastated, as you could imagine. To enter the game on the road as underdogs, to erase a two-score lead, to have chances in the fourth quarter to take the lead. It was about as close of a loss as you'll see. That's why it was so thrilling as a viewer, but devastating as a player or coach.

Prior to the season, Johnston felt that it had a championship roster on its hands. Despite the loss, it proved that it did. The Panthers proved to be on the same level as Middletown, who enters this weekend's championship as the favorite once again.

I will say, this game was not free of controversy.

In Middletown's game-winning drive, it was aided by two 15-yard penalties. The second was on a facemask penalty that I did not get a good look at, but the first was a late hit call on the Johnston sideline which was an utterly disastrous call by the officials.

Middletown's ball carrier was maybe a toe out of bounds, and was touched by a Panther finger. In the final minutes of a playoff game, the ref should have swallowed his whistle. That call was borderline at best ... at the very best. You don't make that call in a playoff game, you just don't.

What was more unfortunate than the call though, was the behavior from the Johnston fans. It may have been the best game I covered this fall, and that may have been the worst fan etiquette I have watched as well.

For the remainder of the drive after the penalty, the fans were ruthless to the referees. Between hurling cuss words, insults, jabs, it just went too far. It was embarrassing.

I am all for some banter, I love some good viewer feedback. However, flat out cursing out a ref with some highly offensive language in public, it was low class in every sense.

One of my fellow media members turned to me and said, "well, we all know who's side the refs will be on in the final minute," and sure enough, moments later, the facemask was called. I'm not saying the penalty was manufactured, but if the refs were antsy to toss an additional flag against Johnston, you can do math.

In the soccer finals, the Johnston student section was heckling the referee, but did it in a way that makes those interactions lovely theater. One kid made a joke saying, "hey ref, you know your whistle works, right?!" Innocent poking that didn't humiliate the official. I wish I could go deeper into what was said during the football game, but even speaking in code would be inappropriate for print.

It is never one call that completely sinks a team. Sure, some hurt more than others, and that late hit call was a tough one to overcome. But Johnston had chances before and after to win the game. Let's not forget that.

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PLAYOFF BATTLE: Johnston's Alex Fedorchuk (left) looks to block. Quarterback Matt Clements hands the ball off last week in Middletown.

JHS
(Continued from page 15)

then cap off another drive with a touchdown rush five seconds into the fourth to knot things at 14. The two defenses traded stops in the final frame, but Middletown would piece together one final drive and score on a touchdown pass with 18 seconds remaining to seal the win. The Panthers fell victim to two costly penalties in the final drive, one coming on an unsportsmanlike conduct call for a late hit on the sideline

and the other on a facemask penalty, which resulted in 30 yards given to the Islander offense. "We asked them all year to play four quarters as hard as you can, and tonight they gave us four quarters. It was never easy, it didn't matter who we played, they always gave us four quarters. They played with all their heart today. Every coach wants their team to give them everything they've got and tonight they did. You can't ask for anything more," said Johnston head coach Joe Acciaro after the loss. Johnston's defense was sharp in the first half, coming up with two red zone stops in the first quarter to keep

the Islanders off the board. Chris Civetti would also haul in an interception in the second quarter to end another Middletown drive. The Islanders managed to find the end zone with 3:48 remaining in the first half to go up 7-0 at the break, then would open the third quarter by going on a three-play scoring drive to up the advantage to 14-0. The Panthers turned to a power rushing attack in the third quarter which gave the Middletown defense fits. Finegan would catch fire behind some sturdy line play up front to help get Johnston on the board in the third. "Everything is a discussion about

what is going to work best. We did what we thought we had to do, we were right there, that's why it hurt so much," said Acciaro of the stylistic switch in the second half. With the win, the Islanders will next face West Warwick in the DIII Championship on Saturday, while Johnston's season came to a close with the loss. Acciaro was proud of his team, which bounced back after a down 2022 to become a contender once again. "They play with their hearts. That's what they did and they did a great job. It just didn't turn out our way," Acciaro said.

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49 Willow St	James A Costanzo T and Costanzo, James A	Genesis T	10/25	\$180,000
61 Fairview Ave	Decoste, Susan E	Barnett, Jacob A	10/27	\$335,000
68 Knotty Oak Rd	Joan L Jervis T and Jervis, Bonnie	Mouradjian, Monica E and Delbonis Jr, Vincent C	10/27	\$425,000
70 S Main St	Elevator Properties Inc	Proctor, Danielle R	10/27	\$294,275
76 Fieldstone Dr	Pastrana, Anthony	Casavant, Lisa A and Casavant, Steven	10/27	\$555,000
123 Doolittle St	Pelletier, Barbara L and Knight, Jane E	Caparelli, Kayla M and Caparelli, Maria	10/25	\$400,000
206 Station St	Angell T and Angell 3rd, Raymond J	Sandouk, Keenan	10/23	\$499,999
259 Read Ave	Caparelli, Kayla M	Lamusta, Olivia and Watson, Amy	10/25	\$335,000

Cranston

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
15 Aplin St Lot 70	Wellman, Keith J	Luceus, Aaron and Dasilva, Samantha	10/24	\$335,599
15 Aplin St Lot 71	Wellman, Keith J	Luceus, Aaron and Dasilva, Samantha	10/24	\$335,599
18 Restwood Rd	Pasquale & Cecile Solitro and Solitro, Cecile	Li, Jianhui and Chen, Rukui	10/24	\$393,800
25 Woodbine St	Concetta E Greco RET and Greco, Scott A	Segura, Orlando and Estrada, Yesica M	10/24	\$510,000
32 Palmer Ave Lot 8-3	Ragosta Louis J Est and Ragosta, Monique D	Verrechia Const Mgmt LLC	10/23	\$222,000
34 Capuano Ave Lot B	Allen, Louis	Naccarini, Teresa	10/23	\$182,000
51 Imperial Ave	Dowding, Alan M and Dowding, Roberta G	Cook, Madison T	10/23	\$306,000
70 Long Ct	Henry Jr, Russell C and Henry, Charlene M	Gomes, Maria T and Gomes, Jose M	10/23	\$475,000
75 Cottage St	Furlong, Michelle A and Romanelli, Audrey	Pelegrin, Franci and Perez, Rosa	10/23	\$320,000
114 Villa Ave Lot 46	Her, Txoos	Hernandez, Luis M and Perez, Xhavier J	10/23	\$450,000
114 Villa Ave Lot 45	Her, Txoos	Hernandez, Luis M and Perez, Xhavier J	10/23	\$450,000
139 Rangeley Rd	Preston Judith G Est and Preston, Ronald J	Golden, Justin B	10/24	\$421,000
143 Hoffman Ave Lot 205	Gautschi, Henri W and Homonoff, Marvin	Allen, Louis H	10/23	\$249,950
144 Columbia Ave	Howland, Elizabeth L and Doran, Adrian K	Phillips, Kenneth J and Rollins, Vanya E	10/23	\$575,000

East Greenwich

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10 Middleberry Ln Lot 10, Middleberry Assoc		Phelps, Vicki G	10/25	\$820,000

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58 Scenic Way Lot 58	Nisbet, Daniel L	Bobbin, Alexa	10/27	\$230,721

Johnston

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7 Luther Ct	Mazzulla, Gianna M	Mazzulla, David M	10/27	\$200,000
12 Meriline St	Pagliari, Steven R and Campo, Diane E	Guerrero Jr, Jose R and Guerrero, Gladys	10/31	\$355,000
18 Camille Dr	Lake Life LLC	Langlous, Jonathan M	10/26	\$370,000
29 River Dr	Joye, Kevin D and Joye, Cibele O	Chartier, Danielle L and Chartier, Tracey A	10/26	\$462,000
39 Buchanan St	Gemma, Sandra L	Joaquin, Xiomara and Joaquin, Yesmel	10/27	\$400,000
39 Dale Ave Lot D	Younkin, Joy M	Langley, Monika	10/30	\$250,000
50 Roger Williams Dr	Marcia M Novak T and Gurzenda, Jane G	Jaswell, Michael	10/27	\$375,000
51 Hopkins Ave	St Pierre, Rodney M	Tassie, Liam M	10/25	\$310,000
75 Borden Ave	Orourke, Thomas J and Camara, Kylie E	Riley, Jaime F	10/27	\$397,138
75 Wheeler Ave	Bianchi Mary F Est and Cotoia, Barbara	Tmc Keywest LLC	10/25	\$175,000
114-1/2 Hartford Ave Lot 7A	Pierowski, Walter S and Pierowski, Roseanna L	Dagostino, Joseph and Dippolito, Lara	10/27	\$145,000
821 Greenville Ave	Power Realty	Moore, Julie K	10/30	\$1
821 Greenville Ave	Moore, Julie K	Moss Home Solutions LLC	10/26	\$210,000

Warwick

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23 Benefit St Lot 4B	Holley, Kevin A and Holley, Rebekah R	White, Brittany E	10/23	\$250,000
28 Burnett Rd Lot 85	Thomas Fit and Thomas, David E	Ralph R Muschett RET and Muschett, Ralph R	10/24	\$1,300,000
28 Burnett Rd Lot 86	Thomas Fit and Thomas, David E	Ralph R Muschett RET and Muschett, Ralph R	10/24	\$1,300,000
28 Burnett Rd Lot 87	Thomas Fit and Thomas, David E	Ralph R Muschett RET and Muschett, Ralph R	10/24	\$1,300,000
28 Burnett Rd Lot 84	Thomas Fit and Thomas, David E	Ralph R Muschett RET and Muschett, Ralph R	10/24	\$1,300,000
28 Gillyooly Dr	Benavidez, Jose C	Patricia L Desforges RET and Desforges, Patricia L	10/24	\$540,000
34 Eagle Run Lot A	Palczynski, Peter R and Mcintyre, Carol L	Greaves, Karin A and Wainwright Jr, John J	10/25	\$450,000
39 Tidewater Dr Lot 170	Elevator Prop Inc	Barnabe, Danielle L	10/25	\$230,000
39 Tidewater Dr Lot 171	Elevator Prop Inc	Barnabe, Danielle L	10/25	\$230,000
55 Mystic Dr	Lsf9 Master Participation and Us Bank TNa	Morse, Connor	10/25	\$355,000
73 Dexterdale Dr	Koferl, Gerard F and Koferl, Dawn K	Crouch, David J and Crouch, Marion P	10/23	\$636,000
79 Van Buren St	Lamb Locked Rlty	Suchite, Ester E	10/26	\$1
93 Harrop Ave Lot 418	Sukovatitsyn, Valery and Putsykovich, Yuliya	Traficante, Carrie and Gebhardt, Bradley	10/23	\$399,900
93 Harrop Ave Lot 419	Sukovatitsyn, Valery and Putsykovich, Yuliya	Traficante, Carrie and Gebhardt, Bradley	10/23	\$399,900
117 Heritage Dr	Margaret M Gentile Lt and Benway, Tracy A	Willoughby, Graham and Willoughby, Amanda R	10/23	\$294,450
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200 Post Rd Lot 401	Heston, John S and Heston, Catherine A	Lape, Michael T and Lape, Johnna	10/23	\$252,500
210 Harrison Ave	Et Invest LLC	Cabral, Charles L and Cabral, Brenda	10/25	\$1
255 Ardway Ave Lot 38	Szeliga, Brenda	Parascandolo, Zachary B	10/25	\$315,000
255 Ardway Ave Lot 36	Szeliga, Brenda	Parascandolo, Zachary B	10/25	\$315,000
255 Ardway Ave Lot 37	Szeliga, Brenda	Parascandolo, Zachary B	10/25	\$315,000
300 Centerville Rd Lot 203	Bank Ri	Bri Rlty Corp	10/23	\$180,000
300 Centerville Rd Lot 100	Bank Ri	Bri Rlty Corp	10/23	\$875,000
409 Squantum Dr	Mcvay, Christopher D and Mcvay, Tammy	Mcnamara, Matthew P and Mandeville, Erica J	10/26	\$565,000

West Greenwich

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27 Greenridge Ct Lot 13	Frazier Jr, Robert P and Frazier, Margaret M	Breault, Erik and Breault, Caitlyn	10/26	\$565,000
27 Greenridge Ct Lot 19	Frazier Jr, Robert P and Frazier, Margaret M	Breault, Erik and Breault, Caitlyn	10/26	\$565,000

West Warwick

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14 Kristee Cir Lot 14	Dafonseca, Nichole M	Brunelle, Ivy J	10/30	\$248,000
17 Jacques St	Mcewan, William L	Mattress, Scott M	10/26	\$350,000
28 Bridge St	White RET and White Jr, S Keith	White, Jennifer and Sotomayor, David	10/30	\$450,000
53 Douglas St	Mulligan, Barbara A	Sjnf Realty LLC	10/25	\$255,000
74 Leaf St	Prime Re Investment LLC	Kerr, Peter P and Kerr, Vanessa	10/30	\$380,000
130 Harley St	Jesse, Jean M	Fortin, Jenni-Lynn and Fortin, David	10/27	\$325,000

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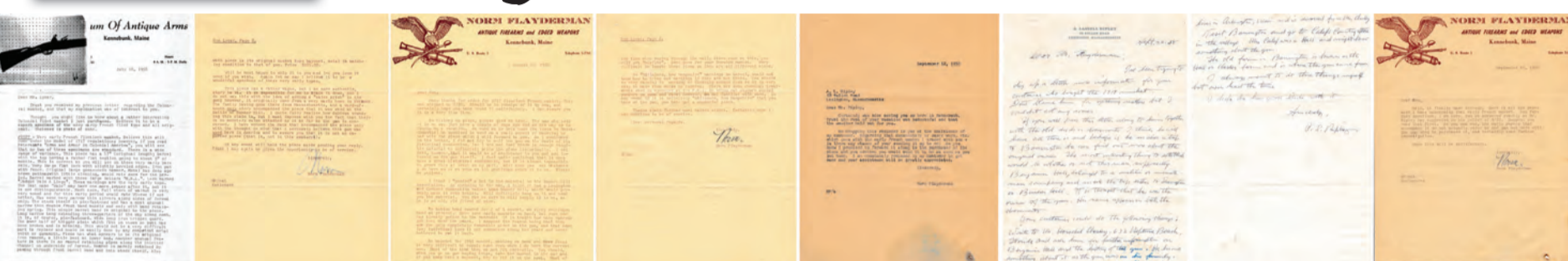
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A Musket from the Siege of Boston and Before



By Joel Bohy
Historic Arms & Militaria
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A few months ago, a friend contacted me about a musket and bayonet he had purchased, and since this era wasn't really his thing, he shipped it off to me. From the few pictures that had been sent, I thought it was a really cool French Model 1728, however, it had a more interesting history than that.

When it arrived, I took it out of the box and looked at the lock. It was marked "JACQUES VALET/A LIEGE" in front of the cock, which I was not expecting. I had seen these Liege markings on a French-style lock before, but not on a complete military musket.

With the package were some documents that went with the gun from noted dealer of antique arms Norm Flayderman which gave some information to start working on. It seems Norm had gotten the gun from artist A. Lassall Ripley of Lexington, Massachusetts. Ripley was an artist known for his depictions of landscapes, history, and hunting scenes who was actually a friend of



my father-in-law. It had descended in a friend of Ripley's family before it ended up in Lexington. Ripley traded it to Flayderman in 1958, and he soon flipped it to a collector in Chicago. Luckily with all of the correspondence, it gave me some information to go by as to who had owned it during the 18th century.

The letter from Ripley mentioned that the man who had carried it was named Benjamin Hall, and mentioned a town called Barrington, but no state. It also mentioned a country store called Calef's in the village of Barrington. Turned out, I had been to Calef's Country Store numerous times as a kid in Barrington, New Hampshire. The letter also mentioned that Hall may have been at Lexington & Concord or Bunker Hill. Obviously, being in New Hampshire he didn't make it to Lexington, but he could have made it to Bunker Hill. After searching the records, he didn't make it in time for Bunker Hill, but he did make it to the Siege of Boston.

Benjamin Hall was born on December 12, 1730 in Barrington. In 1775, he enlisted in Captain Benjamin Titcomb's company, Col. Enoch Poor's New Hampshire regiment. In late June, his unit marched to Boston and he was on the siege lines in Medford, Massachusetts. When his enlistment ran out, he went back to Barrington to continue his life as a farmer and died on October 30, 1810. A check of the Stafford County, New Hampshire his-

tory mentions that Hall "was a soldier of the Revolution, commencing at Cambridge, and brought home a remarkable musket."

What the writer of the history didn't know is that the history of the gun was even more remarkable. Recent research published in Man at Arms magazine shows that the French government ordered muskets from Liege for their militia in Canada. The guns were shipped over for use during the French & Indian wars. This gun was likely captured and was used by Hall during his service in the American Revolution and also has an early French bayonet which may be original to the gun. It truly is a great musket with multiple layers of history.

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A pinprick of light

In this era of political turmoil, where horrendous violence is taking place worldwide, especially in the Gaza Strip and the Ukraine, where people are starving in Africa and senseless hate crimes are taking place in the United States, it is easy to get discouraged. Who wouldn't have a knot in their stomach just thinking about it? If I concentrated on these negative thoughts, my head would surely be buried under a pillow, and I would be crunched up under the covers in my comfy bed.

The only logical choice for me is to think about the positive things in life, especially with the arrival of Thanksgiving Day, a day that was designed to express gratitude. On this special day, I am appreciative of the fact that I do not have to cook. We are going to a friend's house, and she loves to prepare gourmet meals, presented with pomp and circumstance! What a coincidence, I love to EAT gourmet food.

I am gratified that my five children have grown to be healthy, somewhat happy, adults. (Four out of five isn't bad.) They each have a home that is not with me. Several are successful, such as my son who works in California for a major computer company, my daughter who excels in doing make-up and arranging other resources for weddings, and my son who owns a tow truck with a plow and becomes everyone's best friend after a snowstorm. Marie would love to work but she dances to her own drummer. When she volunteered at the animal shelter, she grabbed the big box of dog treats and ran around giving them to all the dogs. When she volunteered at Saver's to sort clothes, she just went through the donations to pick out which clothes SHE liked and wanted to buy. Some people are just not meant to work!

I am grateful for my five astonishing grandchildren, who

Life Matters



with
LINDA PETERSEN

bring smiles to my face and make me feel extra loved. I appreciate my supportive friend, Karen, with whom I laugh and have a good time no matter what we do.

Hubby and I share a nice home and are greatly enjoying our old age. For some reason, age has wizened us. We no longer worry about paying bills because we have a set income and a set amount of costs. I have a super job working part-time writing grants for the hungry and homeless, and recently re-

ceived a federal grant for a million and a half to house individuals in recovery from substance abuse. Getting that was quite exciting!

Hubby and I just purchased a slide-in camper for atop his pick-up truck and look forward to a future of traveling around the country. When we were first married pre-children, we camped in a tent, but this is the next level up. Of course, it IS rather small inside and only one of us can walk in it, so the other person must jump up on the bed to get out of the way. The bathroom, which was a selling point, is no bigger than a postage stamp, and we laugh at it now because there is no way either of us could use it for what it was intended. It does make a great closet, however.

There are so many everyday things for which I am grateful. The blender gets a work-out every morning as I prepare my tasty smoothies. My car is still

under 100,000 miles and has needed no major repairs. My bed is extra comfy with a Down comforter, flannel sheets, and Hubby to cuddle up against.

Most importantly, I am thankful to be happy. Yes, there are some horribly depressing things happening in the world, but what good would it do for me to be depressed about them? That would just add more unhappiness to the world. I choose to smile at strangers, hold the door for them, let them turn into the Walgreen's parking lot while I am in West Shore Road traffic, donate money to various causes, purchase toys for the church Christmas giveaway, and freely give compliments when a friend or stranger is wearing something I like. I choose to look at the bright side of things, even if that light is only a pinprick, (and I need glasses or a magnifier to see it.)

Artist

(Continued from page 14)

He asked, "How I can express my deepest sadness, my emptiness, my solitude?"

As he described this grief, Nilton was dressed in bright pink and blue. Easter colors, as if to say that though the artworks we see today stem from grief, the sharing of that grief is cause to celebrate.

Nilton went on to describe a simpler inspiration which, I would come to understand as I got to know him better, is not only a theme for this gallery but for the man's entire life's work. He wanted to afford these artists, who for one reason or another hadn't had many chances to put their art out for the world to see, an opportunity to share.

Most of these artists had never met until a couple months before the opening of the exhibition. They were Nilton's friends or colleagues or students. At least one artist, Niko Tolentino, Nilton himself had only just met by chance when the artist was painting a mural as Nilton happened to be passing by. This was enough to warrant an invitation.

"When I say 'I'm an artist' often they say 'I'm an artist too.'" Nilton said in his speech. "When I talk with an artist, always I say 'Show me your work! Show me your work!' and some people, they show me their work. And I ask, 'Do you have any shows? Do you present any gallery?' No! I save it. I hide it! Don't do that. We need you as an artist."

Nilton asked each of the artists to speak to the audience about their work, which each of them did, with varying degrees of comfort. Later on, I had the opportunity to speak with a few of the artists, Michaela Clift, Linda Peterson, and Kyle Dumkuski, as a group. In my interview, they all spoke so eloquently not only about their own work, but about each other's work. They had developed a rich understanding of one another as artists, despite most of them having only met a few weeks prior. They had been empowered to take a very personal stock in the gallery and the other artists.

This was by design. Nilton described to me later how each of them helped in some way in the creation of the gallery, so that each of them could take personal pride not only in their individual creations, but that of the collective. This is because Nilton's priority in all things is not to simply create art or exhibitions or even to elevate individual artists, but to build communities. It is a skill he came by honestly.

Nilton comes from Peru, where he lived with his family and attended art school until, facing the threat of political violence, his father chose to move the



Nilton Cardenas painted this mural for Shark's Peruvian Cuisine in Central Falls.

family to the United States. When Nilton was in his early 20's, the family moved to Miami, Florida, and then eventually to Providence. It was there that Nilton would take part in his first exhibition, a Latino Art Exhibit at the University of Rhode Island.

At the same time, Nilton's father was becoming an institution in Rhode Island.

Nilton's Father Jorge F. Cardenas was a community leader, and an advocate for the Latinx community. He spearheaded many campaigns and projects designed to uplift the people of Rhode Island. Nilton spoke glowingly about the Back to School Celebration, a program founded by his father, which for over 20 years has distributed tens of thousands of backpacks and other school supplies to children across Rhode Island. After his death in 2020, Gov. Dan McKee was among his mourners, and a street in Central Falls is now named after him. It is his father's spirit of community leadership that Nilton applies to everything he does.

"I used all my skills to help my father," he said. "But in the same way I learned from him, 'How is the community leader presented to the community? How is the leader acting to the community? How the leader compromises himself to the community.'"

Nilton's career is threefold. He is an artist, a teacher, and a community leader. He is an accomplished painter who has exhibited work across the state, country, and internationally. He has received doz-

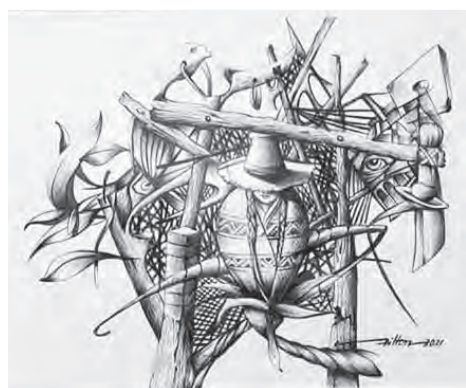
ens of awards, certificates of appreciation, and citations for his work as a community leader. He is a teacher in public schools, after school programs, and camps. He is a member of the Cranston Arts Council. But all these diverse accomplishments all seem to come from the same fundamental passion, and the scale of the project seems irrelevant to his enthusiasm for it.

When I asked about Nilton's inspirations, he brought up Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Jackson Pollock, Rembrandt, and Roberto Matta — artists known for (among other things) working at huge scales, on the sides of buildings or canvases the size of entire rooms. Certainly, Nilton works at that size.

But as of writing, I have only seen one of Nilton's pieces in person. I meant to go see some of his local murals, but I caught a cold over the weekend and couldn't make the trip. So I have only seen a single pen and ink illustration, about the size of a dinner plate and hung in a corner of the gallery at the Lines of Feelings Exhibition, which the other artists had to convince him to add to the gallery so that he would have work to share up on the wall with the rest of the team.

Titled "The Girl," it depicts a swaddled figure in a straw hat and braids cradled in a woven contraption of wooden beams, wicker, and dried leaves — a little Andean child supported by a fragile framework, half grown organically, half carefully constructed.

There's something archetypal about Nilton. It's hard to describe, but I think what I mean is this. If there were only 10 people in the whole world, Nilton would be one of them. He is filled with an enthusiasm and pride that is somehow devoid of ego, despite all his accomplishments. He knows what he does is vital, but even when given the chance to talk about himself, he would prefer to talk about the other wonderful people in his life. There's just a simple certainty in the value of his actions, and by extension in the actions of everyone he meets. It says "I am a person in this world, and therefore I will act." I'm glad that he does.



Cardenas' illustration "The Girl" is hanging in the Cranston Public Library as part of the Lines of Feeling/Lines de Sentimento" Exhibition.

Philharmonic presents "Messiah" at Vets

By DON FOWLER



PATRICK DUPRE QUIGLEY

If you attended last year's presentation of Handel's "Messiah," you know what a moving afternoon it was at The Vets.

This year's performance by the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra with the Providence Singers is certain to be another sellout, so get your tickets now.

Patrick Dupre Quigley will conduct the orchestra, accompanied by Christine Noel, Artistic Director of the Providence Singers.

Featured soloists include soprano Kathryn Mueller, mezzo-soprano Emily Marvosh, tenor John Matthew Myers, and baritone Nicholas Newton.

Audience numbers are increasing every month, as classical music lovers feel comfortable attending quality events, such as Philharmonic concerts.

The November concert, featuring conductor Morihiko Nakahara, Music Director of the South Carolina Philharmonic and renowned violinist Randall Goosby was a classic, with Goosby given a standing ovation for his Violin Concerto, op 35, D major by Korngold. The audience wouldn't let him go. He returned to the stage for an encore.

RIC's Stillman At Top of Her Game

Meanwhile, over at Rhode Island College, Judith Lynn Stillman accompanied cellist Sara Sant' Ambrogio in a free concert that began with "Ave Maria," continued with Debussy, Rachmaninoff and Beethoven, and ended with an incredible rendition of Manuel de Falla.

Stillman has accompanied several of the best musicians in the world, including Sant' Ambrogio, and deserves to be recognized as one of Rhode Island's treasures.

School served Hughesdale (a part of Johnston) for nearly a century

Thirty-two-year-old chemist Thomas Henry Hughes settled in Johnston in 1849, established the village of Hughesdale and founded the Hughesdale Dye & Chemical Company. In 1868, he gifted Johnston with the deed to a piece of land to be utilized for erecting a school where the local children could obtain their education. A schoolhouse, measuring 50 by 25 feet, was soon constructed.

During the winter of 1896, the Town approved of funds being used to replace the teacher's desk. Additionally, it was voted that the school's janitor would have his weekly salary increased from one dollar to two dollars. Some Johnston residents felt that the school would benefit from having a cellar dug out beneath it and became irritated when conversations about the matter went on without any decisions being made.

Eventually the cellar was installed and, in Feb. of 1900, the school had to close temporarily due to the cellar being flooded with two feet of water. Because the furnace had been located in the cellar, the flooding made it impossible to heat the school. Over the course of the next decade, the issue would be one of constant concern as, throughout most of each year, at least three inches of water were present beneath the building at any given time.

Kathryn Lavallo, who had been employed as a teacher at the school during the early 1890s, was promoted to principal in 1898 and went on to serve in that position for several years. From holiday celebrations to graduation programs, the little building was the site of future memories for hundreds of children.

By 1909, Hughesdale School employed three teachers. The budget was able to support necessities such as repainting the blackboard and getting the school in the best shape possible before it opened its doors each fall. However, it was becoming quite overcrowded. It became a

Back in the Day



by
KELLY SULLIVAN

health and safety concern to have so many children crowded into such a small structure. Because the parents of some children could not afford medical attention for their family, the Town directed a physician to visit the school once a year and examine the students. In 1912, the visiting doctor determined that 16 students had not been vaccinated, six were suffering with nasal problems, 10 were in need of dental attention, one was deemed to be mentally deficient and two had defective eyesight.

In 1925, the school went through a renovation to bring it more up to date. Beyond cosmetics, the overcrowding situation was growing worse. While nearly all the schools in Johnston had more kids than room, Hughesdale was by far the most desperately outgrown. In the coming years, nothing was done to alleviate the problem and a member of the Johnston Town Council finally spoke up in 1934 and called the situation deplorable. He pointed out that, besides the building have become totally unsuitable, the small lot of land didn't allow for the students to enjoy any recreational activities while at school. He recommended that a new, bigger school built somewhere else in town. Two years later, the same councilman was recommending the same idea, only he now he was taking the age of the building into account and suggesting that

it be razed.

No one listened to the suggestions. In 1937, Hughesdale School went through another total renovation and was brought even more up to date. That year, Miss Irene Jerrett, who had served as math teacher and principal of Graniteville School since 1930, was brought to Hughesdale to teach first, second and third grade. Her salary was cut from \$1,600 to \$1,300 per year. The following year, a Parent Teacher Association was formed to oversee the school. Mrs. Louis Brown served as president while Miss Alice Edwards filled the role of vice president.

In the fall of 1946, children residing in Hughesdale were transported to Thornton School, it finally being decided that the little old structure couldn't accommodate the growing classes any longer. On July 2 of the following year, the family of Thomas Hughes had a notice of repossession slapped on the former school's front door.

Hughes's deed read, "It being my meaning and intention to convey this lot for educational purposes and none other and when the district ceases to use the same for such purposes, the same to revert to my heirs or assigns."

Mrs. Arthur L. Sheldon, an heir of Hughes, acting on behalf of herself and other heirs, obtained an attorney and filed a repossession notice with the Johnston Town Clerk. As the school had been abandoned by the Johnston School Department the prior year, the heirs wanted the land returned. The Johnston School Department quickly denied that they had abandoned the school.

It took six years for the matter to be settled. In November of 1953, the little school building went up for auction – and the Hughes family were given their land back after it had served its purpose for almost a century.

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

ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable

Buddy



Photo credit: Brielle MacDonald

Everyone is in search of a Buddy, right?

Well, this Buddy is searching for you too! He is just a year old and is an all around great pup! He is playful with other dogs, loves people, walks great on a leash, is playful and loving...is your search over yet? We think so because you just found your new Buddy boy! He is a mixed breed (we say mixed to perfection), medium in size and he is as handsome as they come! Contact Save One Soul Animal Rescue League via their website www.sosarl.org or email them at info@sosarl.org. Bring your new Buddy home in time for the holidays!

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

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PRIME TIME

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'Tis The Season To Be Thankful!

As Thanksgiving approaches, we shift to a space of reflection and practice gratitude for all that has happened this year. Like all things, the process of aging can present its fair set of challenges, but the positive aspects of old age drastically outweigh the negatives. PrimeTime highlights things to be thankful for this season and year round. From the financial perks like senior discounts and Medicare to the wonderful knowledge that can only come with decades of experience, there is a multitude of things to be thankful for as we age.

1. Wisdom (From Learned Experience). The saying, "experience is the best teacher" exists for a reason. That's because experience brings about wisdom that can't be learned otherwise. You learn more from things that happen to you in real life than you ever will from studying things that happen to other people. Along with the wisdom that comes from learned experience, another advantage of old age is the ability to empathize. Empathy is sensing other people's emotions and imagining what someone else might be thinking or feeling.

2. A Happier Outlook. Perspective has a way of showing you that ultimately, life always works out. In fact, researchers are beginning to uncover the biological and developmental underpinnings of gratitude that suggest it may be easier to

feel grateful as we grow older. Neuroscientists have suggested older people have a sunnier outlook because the amygdala, an area of the brain involved in emotional attention and memory, becomes less active in response to the negative information. At the same time, older individuals maintain or even increase their reactivity to positive information.

3. Opportunity to Pursue Lifelong Dreams. Many aging adults have reached the age of retirement. Not working gives retirees 40+ hours of free time back every week which can be dedicated to pursuing other lifelong passions and dreams.

4. Financial Perks. One of the obvious positive aspects of old age is the opportunity to money. Governmental programs include guaranteed minimum income for seniors supported by Medicare and Social Security. There are also an abundance of senior discounts, including those specific to travel, dining, and shopping.

5. More Time for Loved Ones. More free time usually translates to more time to spend with those who really matter. Which brings us to our next advantage of old age...

6. Grandchildren. What's better than your own children? Grandchildren. The experience of raising your own children

makes you value your grandchildren that much more. They offer the love and fulfilling relationship, with a less responsibility.

7. More Stable Friendships and Relationships. By the time you've reached old age, you've likely been able to filter through toxic friendships and relationships that suck the life out of you. Having and maintaining quality friendships and relationships contribute to companionship, which is a huge factor for longevity.

8. Good Stories to Tell. Who doesn't appreciate a good story? The longer you live, the more experiences you have, which translates to more good stories to tell. Fond memories, whether kept to yourself or told to someone else, are a huge advantage of old age.

9. A Greater Sense of Self. The older you are, the more you know WHO you are. Having a greater sense of who you are allows you to be less influenced by outside opinion and less bound by cultural restraints. When you have a greater sense of self, decision making is easier. Knowing yourself allows you to be yourself, and no one can say you're doing it wrong!

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You Need to Know the Score



AARP - RHODE ISLAND
by CATHERINE TAYLOR

AARP's 2023 Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Scorecard finds that more than three years after the COVID-19 pandemic began, care provided in the United States for older adults and people with disabilities is painfully inadequate.

Ranking 12th overall in the country, Rhode Island has made some progress to improve care options for older adults, including enrollment in the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), as well as the availability of Adult Day Services.

However, the report finds that major gaps persist in every state, including Rhode Island, especially related to Housing for Older Adults, Home Care Costs and Home Health Aide Supply.

In fact, the Scorecard comes down especially hard on where we stand on housing choices for older Rhode Islanders. The number jumps off the page.

The pandemic reinforced the need to strengthen long-term care for countless loved ones across the country, including here in Rhode Island. AARP's Scorecard shows that there are many roads to meet the needs of all Rhode Islanders who deserve the very best care, including the 121,000 family caregivers in our state. The overwhelming majority -- 87% -- of Rhode Islanders age 45+ would prefer to receive care for themselves or loved ones at home with caregiver assistance. Yet, our low rankings in Housing for Older Adults (51st), Home Care Costs (43rd) and Home Health Aide Supply (41st) underscore how difficult it is for them to age the way they choose. It's time to accelerate our efforts, for the sake of saving more lives.

Rhode Island's dismal ranking for Housing for Older Adults -- dead last in the country -- points to the urgent need to increase the supply of affordable, accessible housing. We can do that by passing legislation early in 2024 to strengthen homeowners' ability to build an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) to allow them to age in place, support a family member, or house a caregiver. This legislation is a top AARP Rhode Island State House priority. Expanding housing options for older Rhode Islanders cannot wait.

Here are other key findings from the report and where Rhode Island stands:

Twelve states, including Rhode Island, have enacted paid family leave laws and eighteen states have paid sick-day laws, which can be used for caregiving. Only six states provide a tax credit for family caregivers' out-of-pocket expenses. Rhode Island does not provide a tax credit.

Dozens of states experienced declines in the number of care choices that help support families managing caregiving. Rhode Island had declines of 10% or more in access to home health aides since 2019. And more than 20% of nursing home residents in Rhode Island have low needs, compared to 9% nationally.

A major workforce crisis exists in nursing home care. Across all states, wages for direct care workers are lower than wages for comparable occupations. In Rhode Island, wages are \$1.79 lower than other entry level jobs. Nationally, more than half of nursing staff in nursing homes leave their job within a year (53.9% turnover rate). In Rhode Island, the rate is better than the average, at 49.3%.

There is some progress toward innovative and effective alternatives to traditional nursing home models. Ten states, including Rhode Island, made strides in nursing home innovations, such as by Green House® Nursing Home availability and policies, which includes small facilities, private rooms, and other best practices.

Although AARP's LTSS Scorecard contains some good news for Rhode Island, clearly the state of housing and homecare for older adults is at a crisis point.

AARP Rhode Island is calling on legislative leaders to take urgent action on housing options such as accessory dwelling units and bolstering the direct care workforce. Let your state representatives know that a ranking of 41st, 43rd or 51st is unacceptable.

I also invite you to connect with AARP Rhode Island programming. Starting this month, we are including a handy events lineup in this space. I hope you'll find many opportunities we join us at our many events.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER EVENTS

November 21, 4 p.m. – Tai Chi/Qi Gong

November 29, 6 p.m. – Laughter Yoga

December 6, 6:30 p.m. – Prepare to Care

AARP Speakers Bureau Caregiving Presentation

Warwick Public Library

December 7, 10 a.m. – State Legislative Leaders Tele-Town Hall

December 13, 1 p.m. – Everybody Dance!

December 14, 4 p.m. – RI Healthy Cooking Demo

*In-person event. Learn more and register at aarp.org/RIEvents

AARP
Rhode Island

Connect with AARP Rhode Island

Make plans to join us online for **Laughter Yoga** on November 29, **Everybody Dance!** on December 13, **RI Healthy Cooking** on December 14, **Tai Chi/Gi Gong** on December 19 and **Laughter Yoga** on December 20.

Interested in having your group or organization host an in-person AARP Rhode Island presentation on Brain Health, Fraud, Caregiving or Social Security? **Call our Speakers Bureau at 401-248-2674.**

Learn more at aarp.org/ri.



Food Tips for the Holidays



RETIREMENT SPARKS

by ELAINE M. DECKER

The holidays are upon us and that means lots of meals, both at home and dining out. We almost need a PhD in Culinary Arts to plan a proper menu these days. There are some obscure food acronyms that we all should be aware of as we choose our meals. I'll get to those later. This is a good time to reacquire ourselves with important eating terms. Also to learn a new term that I've coined to better describe where today's food issues have taken us. As a refresher, let's start with the difference between a gourmet and gourmand.

A gourmet is someone who knows everything about food, especially from a historical perspective. Her palate is so discerning that she eschews any restaurant that isn't up to her standards. She seeks out haute cuisine and rare ingredients. You may be wondering what she does when she's a guest at a party where the hostess is not also a gourmet. Good question! A true gourmet will travel with a package of acceptable food in her purse. After excusing herself for a trip to the powder room, she nibbles just enough to keep her stomach from growling until she gets home.

So, how is a gourmand different from a gourmet? A gourmand is someone who enjoys eating. Period. He'll consume anything that isn't nailed down. More often than not, he's a glutton with nothing discerning in his palate. You won't find restaurants that feature small plates and tapas on his dine-around list. He'll probably turn down invitations to holiday parties where the fare will mostly consist of grazing on light appetizers. Chances are you'll never hear his stomach growl, though it likely hangs over his belt!

This brings me to the third eating term, one of my own making: the gourmaven. You may have heard the word "maven" before, perhaps as a herring maven. A maven is an expert in a particular field, someone who is proud to pass on his knowledge to others. A gourmaven differs from a gourmet in that his field of culinary expertise is focused on the latest trends. Gourmets usually share their knowledge only as a way to show off their own expertise. A gourmaven keeps informed of all the new food information and trends and shares them freely.

Let's start with some food items that a gourmaven should understand. You might already know about one of them, and that's kombucha. I kept seeing it but I didn't have a clue what it was. This is what my research turned up. Kombucha tea is a fermented,

lightly effervescent, black tea that supposedly has health benefits. Kombucha is a SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria and Yeast). I still don't have a clue what it is, but I suggest we become familiar with the acronym, just in case there's a test somewhere.

I also see a lot about bone broth these days. It supposedly offers many health benefits, especially for your joints, gut and skin. It sounds downright creepy to me, like something witches would brew in a huge black caldron. I have no plans to make my own, despite what the so-called experts recommend. And it's not going on my shopping list, either. However, as your resident gourmaven, I'm obligated to put it on your radar.

This brings me to my last acronym, one I bet you've never seen before. FODMAPs are short-chain carbohydrates that are poorly absorbed in the small intestine. They're likely to soak up water and to ferment in the colon. Sounds yucky? You betcha! Don't even think about what must be going on down there when you eat FODMAPs (Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, And Polyols).

Research identifies these carbohydrates in FODMAP foods: fructose, lactose, and polyols. That's all your fruits, your honey and corn syrup, your dairy, and your sugar alcohols. They also include the lesser known fructans and galactans. Those are not aliens in a Star Trek movie. They're wheat, onions, garlic and all your legumes. So much for the guidance that says to replace red meat with beans and lentils in your diet and to consume local honey to boost your immune system.

This completes my food tips for this holiday season. You can decide if you'd like to be a gourmet, a gourmand, a gourmaven, or just someone who appreciates a good meal. Whatever your decision, if you're at a house party, think about pitching in to clear the table and do the dishes after you've indulged.

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

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The Backyard

MEMOIRS

by SUSAN DEAN



Jack looked up in wonder at all the smiling faces around him.

in the waning days of August.

My grandfather, Friend Mellor, was the official “Wiffle Ball Commissioner”. He’d stand on the back deck - which was elevated above the backyard - and throw out the first wiffle ball and declare that the games had begun. First base was the tree at the edge of the lawn, second and third bases were any combination of items - a trash can cover or somebody’s sweatshirt or a beach towel.

I have memories of games and eating and laughter and talking with my cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents from the afternoon into the dark of the night. We’d move into the house once the mosquitos appeared, but there was always someone wanting to take an evening walk to the beach to watch the moon rise and the stars appear. I loved those nighttime walks that ended the day of fun.

As time went on we began to lose our older relatives, one by one. First, my grandparents, then my parents, then my aunts and uncles. Each year we’d talk about who we had lost, and we’d remember our times spent with them. At times it almost felt like they were still with us, a ghostly presence sitting in their usual chair, or a feeling that one of them might just walk around the corner of the house any minute and join the festivities in the backyard.

My father always took home movies of our Labor Day gatherings, along with many photographs. My brother, Rob, took over the task of recording and documenting. We now have many years of pictures and footage. People magically grow old as we view the films and photos. Children grow up before our eyes. We somehow appear older - even though we still feel young.

As we’ve lost our older relatives - the last two passing away this year - Uncle Tom in January and Uncle Don in June - our family continues to grow. My children and my brother’s children and my cousins’ children have grown and now have children of their own. So there are still three generations running around, talking, eating, laughing, and playing in the same backyard we’ve always known.

At this past Labor Day gathering, I was in the house helping with the food when one of my cousins came inside looking for me.

“Come quick!” she said.

“Jack’s walking!”

I ran outside and there was Jack, my 10-month-old grandson, standing alone, barefoot on the grass in the backyard. He was surrounded by his aunts, uncles, and cousins, and my daughter, Gretchen - his mother - was kneeling on the grass, her arms outstretched. Jack looked up in wonder at all the smiling faces around him. With a big toothy smile he tottered to Gretchen in three stuttering steps. Everybody clapped and cheered, and Jack promptly sat down and looked up at us as if to say, “What’s all the fuss?”

Looking around at the three generations of my time, I thought I could almost see the faces of my parents, my grandparents, and my aunts and uncles intermingled within the circle - smiling and laughing, too. A circle of love - sent by the angels - to witness sweet baby Jack taking his first steps in the backyard. The backyard where it all began.

Some backyards are tiny, others are huge. Some are perfectly manicured, others are covered with crabgrass or dandelions left to run wild. Backyards have hosted weddings and parties for every occasion. Or they’ve been used as makeshift ball fields, or quiet places to read, think, or dream, to watch the clouds pass above, or to listen to the birds sing.

My first backyard, in Warwick, had a boundary on one side that was a field belonging to the neighboring farm. There was only a small row of short bushes separating our yard from the farm, no higher than my knees when I was a child. From my backyard I could see the farmer dressed in his faded blue overalls and floppy hat riding his tractor slowly up and down the rows in his field. Sometimes I saw his wife wearing a house dress and a bibbed apron outside the back door of the distant farmhouse, shaking her mop or hanging her laundry on the clothesline. Could they see me? A child of six or seven gazing across the field at them? Did they ever wonder about me as I played with my dolls in the yard that bordered their field?

The other side of our yard and the back were both bordered by the yards of our neighbors. My older brother, Doug, had friends his age living in both houses. The boundaries were the same - just a row of short bushes that we could step through or easily hop over. I remember one incident involving those bushes. Somehow, they caught fire one spring day. Whether it was a fluke of nature, or whether it had something to do with Doug and his two neighboring friends, Jimmy and Tommy, was...um...never clearly established. But the mothers were alerted by the boys, who were about nine or ten at the time.

I watched as my mother came running out of our house carrying a broom at the same time as Tommy’s mother came running out of her house, also carrying a broom. The two women didn’t even speak to each other. With house dresses flying and their brooms flailing, my mother and Tommy’s mother went to work beating down the flames from their respective sides of the hedge. In concert, as if they’d previously rehearsed this scene, together they put out the fire.

Still hardly exchanging a word with each other, both retreated with their brooms to their back doors - as if this was a normal occurrence, a minor wrinkle in the course of their day. And I don’t remember my mother even mentioning it to my father at supper that night.

One year, Doug and his friends decided to build a fort in our backyard. They gathered scrap wood from their basements and sheds. They collected hammers and nails and saws. Saws! Doug and his friends were eleven or twelve at the time - but...saws? Wasn’t anyone worried about this scenario? The boys managed to build their fort - quite the ramshackle structure. They did it all themselves and thankfully nobody lost a finger.

We have Super 8 movies of this fort with the boys standing proudly next to their creation upon completion. I’m sure that Doug and his friends honed their building skills that summer and learned many life lessons. Confidence, working together towards a common goal, decision-making, and having pride in one’s work - all while somehow miraculously avoiding bloodshed and injury.

It was my cousin, Paul Mellor, who got me thinking about

backyards. We were standing together in the backyard of the beach house that my parents built in 1959. It was this past Labor Day weekend and we were surrounded by relatives, both the Italian Falciglia side and the English Mellor side. My younger brother, Rob, lives in our parents’ summer home - long ago winterized for year-round living. Rob has continued the tradition of hosting a family gathering at the end of the summer - something started by our parents in the 1960s.

Paul talked about backyards. He pointed out that our family backyard was a thing of beauty because it was filled with people - little ones running around, teens taking selfies, and adults - sitting, standing, laughing, and conversing.

It struck me that we were now the “older” generation - my brothers, my cousins, and me. I began to think of summers long ago, when my parents and aunts and uncles were middle-aged, and my grandparents were the older ones. We were the kids back then - the ones running around while the adults chatted and did the work of providing the food. My mother always made red chowder for this event - in a huge pot that took hours to prepare. My grandfather was tasked with cracking open the quahogs that he and my brothers had harvested



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NOVEMBER is Fall Prevention Awareness Month



In your home

- **Bathroom:** Install grab bars in the shower and by the toilet; use shower mats with no-slip grip on the bottom.
- **Bedroom:** Install a night light; avoid tripping by using sheets and blankets that do not reach the floor.
- **Stairs:** Install hand rails; don't leave anything on steps.
- **Kitchen:** Store often-used foods and equipment on easy to reach shelves to avoid the temptation to climb up on a chair or step ladder.

For your health



Have your
eyes
checked
regularly.



Track medication
and pay attention for
side effects, especially
dizziness and dehydration.



Have an
annual
wellness visit
for a full physical.



BATHROOM SAFETY

- Keep the bathtub clean. Soap residue or other grime can contribute to slippery conditions in the shower and tub. Cleaning these surfaces frequently can improve traction.
- Declutter the space. Remove extraneous items from the bathroom that can pose as tripping hazards.
- Choose the right bath mat. Bath mats can contribute to slips and falls. For those who cannot live without them, choose a mat with slip-resistant backings and add double-faced tape for added security.
- Limit moisture. Use a weighted shower curtain or install shower doors to prevent water from getting on the floor. Mop up any water or additional condensation to help dry the bathroom. Install an exhaust fan to help vent moisture that can condense and accumulate on the floor and fixtures.
- Improve bathroom lighting. Make sure lighting in the bathroom illuminates all areas.
- Wear non-slip shoes. Wearing non-slip shoes when in the bathroom can reduce the chances of slipping on wet floors.
- Install a walk-in shower or bathtub. These lipless fixtures can assist those who have difficulty entering a standard tub or shower. Grab bars also can help with maneuvering in and out of the shower area.
- Use a raised toilet seat. A raised toilet, or one with a special seat that reduces the distance one has to go to reach a seated position, may help prevent falls.

Easy Home Modifications TO PREVENT FALLS

Install Handrails

along indoor and outdoor staircases, hallways, and anywhere you feel you need a little extra support.



Use nonslip mats and treads

to help improve traction on bathroom floors, shower, bathtub, outside decks, and outside steps.

Falls are the leading cause of injuries among older adults, sending more than two million people to the emergency department each year.



Improve lighting.

Make sure you have adequate lighting in hallways, stairways, and outdoor walkways, and areas in which you're likely to walk in the middle of the night.



Install grab bars

near showers, bathtubs, and toilets. Avoid grab bars that "stick on" to shower tiles with suction, which are less reliable than metal grab bars attached to wall studs.



Many of the fall hazards are right in our own homes, and a few inexpensive changes could lower your fall-risk.



Inexpensive fixes.

Remove all floor clutter. Rearrange furniture so that it works well with the flow of traffic. Use double-sided tape to secure the edges of area rugs to the floor, and remove small throw rugs.



Repair steps and flooring.

Repair crumbling outdoor steps, loose wall-to-wall carpeting, and uneven floorboards. Call a handyman to repair stairs or floorboards, or a carpet store to come and tighten wall-to-wall carpeting.

Probate Horror Stories & How to Avoid Making Mistakes with Creditors

Probate is a legal process that involves the administration of a deceased person's estate. There are several reasons why probate can become a challenging and complicated process. One of the main reasons is that many decedents fail to prepare for their death, leaving their affairs in disarray. This can make it difficult for the personal representative or executor overseeing the estate after death to locate and track down the decedent's assets. In such cases, records may not be easily accessible, leading to delays, confusion, and disputes among the family members.

Another reason why probate can be a daunting experience is familial infighting. Greed and emotional ties to items can lead to heirs and even personal representatives/executors feuding from the probate estate. This can create internal strife among families, and in some cases, criminal charges may be filed. The person who does the stealing justifies their actions by claiming that the relative would have wanted them to have the item. In other cases, honest disagreements may occur, and these need to be resolved by the probate court, which can take years.

Probate battles, often thought to be confined to regular folks outside the public eye, can also befall celebrities, leading to publicized legal disputes that capture the nation's attention through newspapers and TV programs. The rich and famous are not immune to the emotionally draining and financially costly legal proceedings that can arise after the death of a loved one. Let's look at a few of the most infamous probate horror stories among the so-called A-listers.

Celebrity Probate Horror Stories

The experiences of some of the most famous people in history have shown that proper estate planning is essential to ensure that your assets are distributed according to your wishes after your death. Marilyn Monroe, for instance, had a valid will, but the probate of her estate was a lengthy and cumbersome process that took 39 years to conclude. As a result, the IRS took half of her estate in estate taxes. The remaining assets were eventually passed on to a friend whom she had never met, but who died before the probate was concluded. The friend's widow inherited the assets and made almost \$40

LAW ADVICE

by DON DRAKE
CONNELLY LAW OFFICES, LTD.

million dollars from Marilyn's estate.

Elvis Presley's estate, on the other hand, was mismanaged by an unscrupulous personal representative he chose to handle it. After the IRS took 73% of his \$10 million estate in estate taxes, the personal representative squandered \$2 million, leaving Elvis' beneficiaries with only \$1 million.

Avoiding These Battles

A comprehensive estate plan should be in place to avoid such horror stories. This includes having a will, a trust, and other legal documents that outline how assets should be distributed after death. By doing so, the personal representative or executor can manage the estate efficiently, reducing the chances of familial infighting and other complications. It's crucial to seek the help of a qualified professional while dealing with probate as attempting to handle it without the right expertise can lead to terrible experiences.

Creditors and Probate

One major aspect of the probate process is handling the debts owed by the deceased person, also known as creditors. The probate court will oversee the process of notifying creditors of the death, and they will have an opportunity to make a claim against the estate for any debts owed. The will's executor is responsible for identifying and paying valid claims, using the estate's assets. If there are not enough assets to pay off all debts, the court will prioritize which creditors get paid first. It is essential to understand the probate process in relation to creditors to ensure that all debts are properly handled, and the assets of the estate are distributed fairly. Let's take a closer look at this process.

Priority Lists

There is a priority order for estate debts. Below is a general list of the debt priorities, understanding that some states may have different priority lists.

- Administrative costs – In the probate process, several expenses occur. These include court fees, filing fees, notice costs, attorney's fees, and the administrator's commission. It is important to consult with a legal professional to fully understand all the costs involved in the probate process.

- Funeral and burial costs – Every state has specific laws that dictate which expenses can be considered as funeral and burial costs. It's important to note that these expenses are all permissible and can be covered as part of the funeral and burial costs.

- Government debts – When it comes to financial obligations, it's important to remember that income, property, and estate taxes should be prioritized over other types of debt.

- Final medical bills – In the case of a deceased person their final sickness or injury is given priority over other unsecured debts. This means that if the deceased person had any outstanding medical bills, they must be settled before other unsecured debts can be paid off.

- All other claims – In the process of debt payment, states tend to focus on the repayment of secured debts, such as mortgages and car loans, before addressing unsecured debts, which are generally considered less important.

When it comes to safeguarding your assets, it's important to know that certain assets such as retirement accounts and insurance proceeds with a designated beneficiary receive different treatment and provide more protection from creditors. An irrevocable trust is also protected from creditors upon death. Opting for a beneficiary designation or a specific trust entity can go a long way in shielding an estate from a heavy debt burden.

The probate process can be quite tricky, and the more assets and debts involved, the more mistakes can be made. Using an experienced and knowledgeable elder law attorney is highly recommended to avoid problems and make the probate process as smooth as possible.

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Are You Going To Fryeburg Fair?

(With apologies to Simon and Garfunkel)



MY SIDE OF THINGS

by LARRY GRIMALDI

Walk through the gates and step back into a time when daily living in rural America adhered to the dictates of the calendar and the Farmers Almanac was nearly a Bible; where the annual county fair was one of the calendar's most anticipated events; and the community displayed a distinctly non-urban lifestyle to city slickers longing for a glimpse of a long-forgotten past. It's also the culmination of 4Hers year as they display their cooking, sewing, and domestic skills and parade their livestock in front of judges hoping to win the prized. It's a festival of gaudy sights, a cacophony of sounds, a feast of tastes, and the unmistakable aroma of tantalizing foods. Welcome to the Fryeburg (Maine) Fair.

The annual eight-day Fryeburg Fair is held the first week of October. This year, the Fair ran from October 1 through October 8. It was founded in 1851 by the Maine's Blue Ribbon Classic Agricultural Fair group. The original 1851 Fair structure still dominates the infield of the harness race track. While Fryeburg is not the oldest Maine country fair (that designation belongs to the Skowhegan Fair founded in 1818), it is the largest, posting an average attendance of approximately 225,000 people each year. Fryeburg closes out the state's fair season.

Stroll the midway and hop on the ferris wheel, roller coaster, or other terrifying contraption that tilts you up and down and rolls you head over heels. (I'll pass rather than putting myself at risk of passing out). There are kiddie rides and carnival booths where you can win stuffed animals or other inexpensive prizes that appeal to and appease the toddler crowd. If you're so inclined, there are pseudo casino games and pull-tab booths where you can try to catch financial lightning in a bottle and strike it rich. There is also a tent running continuous Bingo games. All that's missing are the carnival barkers.

Some booths also tout the virtues of various political candidates and there are the inevitable t-shirts, jewelry, leather, anything-you-want but don't-need-to-necessarily-have vendors hawking any manner of gadgets. Exhibition booths urge tourists, as well as residents, to relax and enjoy a Maine vacation and its stunning landscape.

When you get hungry, you can chow down on hot dogs, hamburgers, fried clams, shrimp, scallops, a seafood platter with a side of french fries, or (being a celebration of Maine culture and cuisine), a "lobstah" roll. You can get hot or

sweet Italian sausage sandwiches, fried pickles, corn dogs, fried dough (doughboys to us Rhode Islanders), popcorn, or any manner of picnic and carnival fare. You can wash it all down with a cold beer, soda, or fresh-squeezed lemonade. For dessert you can have a homemade ice cream sundae, a funnel cake, cotton candy, or frozen banana, among many other treats to satisfy your sweet tooth. One thing is sure, you can walk off those excess calories roaming the numerous walkways.

If you're looking to peer into bygone days of farming and northern New England ingenuity, then the Fryeburg Fair has your ticket. You can watch corn being ground into meal, corn stalks being threshed, or wood being split by ancient, well-oiled machines powered by John Deere tractor engines. You can marvel at the artistry of a carver as he creates eagles, moose, or other figures with a chainsaw from solid blocks of wood. If you are so inclined, you can buy a tractor, four-wheel drive vehicle, an RV, back hoe, or other farming and recreational machine. There is even a daily nine-race harness racing meet at the Fair.

The Fryeburg Fair hosts tractor, draught horse team, and oxen pulling contests featuring the hauling heavy cement blocks pique the interest of visitors and locals alike. You can visit the milking shed; goat, swine, prize bull, llama and poultry barns; or sample local honey, maples syrup, and other dairy products and farm fresh local produce. If you are into arts and crafts, the Fryeburg Fair is a must-stop on your tour itinerary.

Nostalgia, pride, fierce determination, and the independent streak of New Englanders are always on the menu and the Fair that is heavy on the timeless traditions of rural culture. Plan a trip to the Fair next October and thank you Simon and Garfunkel for your title inspiration!

Larry Grimaldi is a freelance writer from North Providence. Many of his previous PrimeTime columns have been re-issued in the anthology, "50 Shades of Life, Love, and Laughter." Columns published in this book are used with the permission of Beacon Communications. For more information about "50 Shades of Life, Love, and Laughter;" or any of his other books, e-mail lvgrimaldi49@gmail.com



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Thanks For The Memories



ACCORDING TO DON

by DON FOWLER

She always greeted us at the front door, this big, black, beautiful Labrador Retriever they called Maggie.

The tail was always wagging as she vied for attention, grabbing her favorite plush toy and begging us to play with her.

Even in her twilight years, when rheumatism slowed her down, she would lie next to us and look up with her big black eyes, waiting to be petted.

Maggie's humans, Robin and Mike, loved her unconditionally. Their expenses were high, even with pet insurance, as Maggie aged, and her

body succumbed to cancer.

A retired doctor, Mike spent every day with Maggie, walking her in the neighborhood, playing "Chase the ball" in the living room, and comforting her when the cancer took over.

Mike and Robin recalled the visits to the beach, when Maggie would run into the water to fetch a stick, or played with the hose in the backyard, full of energy and excitement.

Maggie recognized Robin's car when she came home from work greeting her at the door and acting as if she hadn't seen her for months.

We visited our daughter and son-in-law two days after Maggie died.

The house was quieter. There was a sense that something was missing. The toys that previously were scattered all over the living room were gone.

What do you say to loved ones who have lost such an integral part of their lives?

"She's gone to a better place."

"She won't suffer any more."

"You have so many wonderful memories."

Words were so inadequate. Silent hugs were needed most. What wasn't needed was to ask if they were going to get another dog. This was the time for grieving and remembering.

"Time heals all wounds" the old cliché tells us. The joy that pets bring us is deeply challenged when they leave us.

It is time for another well-worn cliché: "Thanks for the memories."

We arrived home that evening to our three-legged rescue cat, Trey, who was at the front door waiting for us. He recognizes the car, also.

He got an extra treat that night.

To show his appreciation, he climbed in both our laps, took short naps, and purred loudly.



Bourbon Bacon Pecan Pie

Recipe courtesy of Emily Caruso of "Jelly Toast" on behalf of of the American Pecan Promotion Board

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 70 minutes

Servings: 10

- 1 pie dough (9 inches)
- 4 strips thick-cut bacon
- 1/2 cup dark corn syrup
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons bourbon
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 cups raw pecan halves

Place baking sheet in oven. Preheat oven to 350 F.

Gently line pie pan with rolled out pie dough. Press into edges and up sides. Use fingers or fork to create decorative edge. Set aside.

In skillet, fry bacon until crisp. Remove from pan and drain on paper towels then chop into small pieces and set aside. Reserve 1/4 cup bacon grease.

In large bowl, whisk dark corn syrup, light corn syrup, brown sugar, reserved bacon grease, butter and bourbon. Add eggs and salt; whisk until mixture is even. Fold in pecan halves and chopped bacon.

Pour mixture into pie crust and spread evenly with spatula. Gently cover edges of pie crust with aluminum foil. Place pie on preheated baking sheet and bake 60-70 minutes, or until pie is set in center.

Remove pie from oven and cool completely before serving or chilling.

Notes: Pie can be made 1 day ahead and refrigerated overnight. Allow pie to come to room temperature before serving.



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