

Stranded by floods

Emergency construction, home buyouts & a bond referendum become more likely with each storm

By RORY SCHULER

The water's still waist deep and starting to freeze along Belfield Drive, cutting 10 Johnston homes — and around 30 residents — off from civilization, emergency services, fuel and food deliveries. Following a cooperative effort between local and federal officials, help's on the way, via an emergency access road off the I-295 shoulder.

"Police officers just came in a huge truck and told us about the evacuation but they aren't taking us by force," Belfield Drive resident Cynthia Nova said on Friday, Jan. 12. "We have food here. We wouldn't be able to buy food since we don't have a car on the other side of the water."

Home buyouts, emergency construction and a possible bond referendum to fund flood mitigation all loom on the still cloudy horizon.

Nova hasn't left the house much over the past couple months. Storm after storm has deposited and accumulated at her doorstep, covering the road she takes to the market, to the gas station, to the pharmacy and the veterinarian — to everywhere.

HELP'S COMING: At right, construction crews started an access road to Belfield Drive off the shoulder of I-295 early Wednesday morning. The road was expected to be ready by Thursday morning. (Sun Rise photo by Rory Schuler)



CARRYING THE RESIDENTS OUT: Far left, Johnston firefighters carried residents out of a Park Street apartment complex. (Photo courtesy Johnston Fire Chief David A Iannuccilli)

BIG TRUCK: At left, first responders used a large body dump truck to evacuate residents from Belfield Drive. (Photo courtesy Cynthia Nova)

■ FLOOD - PAGE 14

Back to 'Frog City'

'Between Two Worlds: Rhode Island's Little Italies'

By RORY SCHULER

The roots of Debra A. Mulligan's family tree are thick and tangled throughout Johnston's neighborhoods like a plate of spaghetti with marinara.

As an Ocean State scholar, Mulligan has launched a study of Johnston and its role as one of Rhode Island's "Little Italies."

"My presentation ... will focus on the village of Thornton, nestled in the town of Johnston one of thirteen 'Little Italies' in the State of Rhode Island," explained Mulligan. "Called 'Frog City' because of its proximity to swampland, Thornton housed a rich community of Italians. The immigrant journey to Johnston will be highlighted along with a discussion of their social and political experiences living in one of Rhode Island's enduring 'Little Italies.'"

The Johnston Historical Society will host Mulligan for her discussion, "Between Two Worlds: Rhode Island's Little Italies" at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 28 at the society headquarters, 101 Putnam Pike, Johnston.

JOHNSTON ROOTS: Debra Mulligan's father Peter Cardullo and his mother Lillian posed for a photograph in front of her sister Josephine (Giorgianni) Paolantonio's house at 2465 Hartford Ave. in Johnston. Mulligan's Aunt Josie married Antonio Paolantonio from Frosolone, who was part owner/proprietor of Colonial Knife, which is still in operation. Her grandmother, who lived to be 110, was the second girl in the family. Lillian Cardullo was born in May 1903. Peter Cardullo, who is now 90, was born on August 24, 1933. (Photo courtesy Debra A. Mulligan)



■ ITALY - PAGE 19

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JHS Panther of the Week



POTW: This week's Panther of the Week is Marlice Baptista. Marlice is a sophomore at Johnston High and was nominated by her guidance counselor Mr. Ryan Barrette. Mr. Barrette said, "She always puts her best effort and comes in everyday with a smile." (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.

Panthers Care

PANTHERS CARE TOO:
 Johnston High School was well represented at the RIIL/KyleCares Teen Mental Health Summit held at Rhode Island College. (Courtesy photo)



Johnston High School was well represented at the RIIL/KyleCares Teen Mental Health Summit held at Rhode Island College. According to JHS Principal Matthew Velino, a contingent of Panthers were in attendance. "We sent nine student athletes, all of whom played a fall sport, currently play a winter sport, and most importantly made honor roll for 1st quarter," Velino said earlier this week. He provided some background information on the event. The RIIL and the non-profit KyleCares Foundation have joined forces to take a proactive approach in advocating for mental health awareness across the RIIL community and introducing the "KyleCares-WeCare" awareness campaign, which hinges on the belief that "Mental Health Matters" as much as physical health. The KyleCares/RIIL Teen Mental Health Summit stressed the importance of focusing on one's emotional well-being through self-care and by encouraging those students who are struggling with their mental health to seek help and how to go about it.

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Bev's still walking the beat

Retired JPD officer still fulfilling her 'helping anyone' life mission

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

The Johnston Senior Center Spotlight this week shines on Bev Williams. Bev has been coming to the JSC for about eight years. Bev is one of Johnston's finest and untiring advocates for older adults. Bev has lived in Johnston since 1970. In 1979, she became the first female police officer in the town of Johnston, and one of only two female officers in the state of Rhode Island. As a police officer, she had a reputation for helping anyone in need, a characteristic that still serves the people of Johnston well today. Approximately 15 years ago, Bev moved into the Aime J. Forand Senior Housing Complex here in Johnston. Almost immediately, she took on the responsibility of serving as the Tenants Association President, a post she continues to hold today. In that role she plans numerous activities on behalf of the Forand tenants, including Bingo, holiday parties and other events of interest to residents. Bev also serves on the Johnston Housing Board, and works part-time at the Johnston Library. Bev comes to the Johnston Senior Center a couple of days per week where she enjoys lunch and Bingo, as well as socializing with friends here at the Center. Bev is a source of information for many seniors, who look to her for her expertise in senior services, and identify her as a friendly advocate in all their needs. Bev continues to fulfill a "life's mission" of helping "anyone" who is in need. Bev also has a great sense of humor and a deep spiritual bond.

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.

Johnston Senior Center Highlights

From the Staff

Our Director and Staff would like to wish everyone a very happy and healthy New Year. Our Senior Center gives our all, to make our members feel welcome and enjoy the time they spend here. Along with the activities, lunch is served daily. Bingo is every Thursday and Friday at 2 p.m. We are putting together more activities for the coming months ahead. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Weekly Events

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

Upcoming Trips

- Wednesday, Jan. 31, 11:30 a.m., Mystery Lunch, (\$10 per person)
- Monday, Feb. 5, Lunch & Shopping at Warwick Mall, 11 a.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 13, Decorating for Valentines Day, 10 a.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 14, Valentines Day Lunch & Party, 11:15 a.m.

Senior 'Spotlite'



THE SENIOR BEAT: The Johnston Senior Center Spotlight this week shines on Bev Williams, who has been coming to the JSC for about eight years. She's lived in Johnston since 1970, and in 1979 she became the first female police officer in the town of Johnston, and one of only two female officers in the state of Rhode Island. She's still watching out for her fellow citizens. (Photo courtesy Richard J. DelFino Jr.)

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PANNESE SOCIETY



PADRE'S PAL: Our Lady of Grace Pastor Rev. Peter J. Gower and Pannese Society President David Venditelli are holding two of the 40 hams that were distributed to families in need for the Christmas holiday.

Hams for the holidays

By PETE FONTAINE

The late Joseph "Joe" Spre-
mulli would have been
proud of what the Pannese
Society, which was founded
in 1909, recently did to help
families in need.

"It's a great honor to do this," said
David Venditelli, president of the Pan-
nese Society. "We're keeping this tradi-
tion that Joe started alive. We will con-
tinue helping those in need."

By way of special sponsorships from
Columbus Door, of Warwick, and Stop &
Shop Supermarkets, the Pannese Society
made Christmas Special with a total of 50
huge hams, \$25 gift cards and other
items collected by the proud Italian-
American organization.

Each year, they give out the hams and
other items in conjunction with Our La-
dy of Grace Church.

The Pannese Society showed up at the
Johnston Senior Center and Venditelli
and Lou Mansolillo were helped by vol-
unteers in presenting 10 hams.

The remaining 40 hams and \$25 gift

cards as well as gift baskets were assem-
bled inside OLG's rectory with Venditelli
and Rev. Peter J. Gower coordinating the
important holiday mission.

"This is wonderful," Father Gower of-
fered amid the food and gift baskets as-
sembly. "It's a great tradition and Joe
(Spremullo) would certainly be proud
that it lives on."

Meanwhile, Venditelli wanted it
known: "We are all proud to preserve
our ancestry in honor of our Patron Saint
La Madonna del Bosco. The (Pannese So-
ciety) stresses the cultural, social and
spiritual aspects while educating people
about our proud Italian heritage."

Before his passing in 2022, Spremullo
was highly active in civic and commu-
nity affairs and worked tirelessly to
make the Pannese Society one of the best
ethnic social and fraternal groups in
Rhode Island.

Spremullo also spearheaded the now
famous Sister City Program between
Johnston and Panni, the tiny village in
Italy where many people migrated from
before settling in Providence and parts of
Johnston.

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| Denny's Restaurant | Knights Liquor | Tita's Tailors |
| DePetrillo's Bakery | La Nuova | Tri Town Wine & Spirits |
| Dollar Store | Lighthouse Restaurant | Trinity Assembly of God |
| Emmily's Restaurant | Marian J Mohr Library | Tri-Town Health Center |
| English Muffin | Market Basket | Uncle Tony's Pizza & Pasta |
| Espresso Pizza | Mega Liquor | Walgreens |
| Family Dollar | NAPA Auto Parts | |
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GENEROUS GIVING: Pannese Society President David Venditelli and Lou Mansolillo are all smiles alongside volunteers at the Johnston Senior Center, where they donated 10 huge hams that would help families in need. (Courtesy photos)

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Weather: You like it, or not?

It seems a little silly to be pontificating about the weather in a region that is nationally known for being absurdly inconsistent when it comes to the moods of Mother Nature.

However, given these past couple of weeks, we find it a little difficult not to at least point out the things that everybody has been talking about and experiencing, and wondering whether this even crazier pattern of weather is simply becoming our new normal.

Did you shovel a bunch of snow last week only for it to evaporate within a day because of a torrential downpour that occurred after the temperature

climbed back up into the 50s? Did you wake up to a light, fluffy snow on Tuesday morning and think, "Oh, that can wait," only to be smacked by freezing rain a couple hours later that turned the previously easy task into whole upper body exercise? Have you gotten sick and tired of needing to run back upstairs to the closet to grab a sweater when you go to walk the dog and realize the summery weather of yesterday gave way to a near-sub-zero windchill just a short evening later?

While weather has never been particularly predictable in New England, at least we could once rely on the seasons to provide us some guidance on what to expect. September brought out the light sweaters, November brought out the winter coats, December and January put the shovels purchased over the summer to good use. Then, mercifully, March and April meant putting those heavy coats back into storage until the cycle started all over.

But 2024 seems to be off to a rather bipolar start; with no one day really seeming to make much sense in terms of what will happen tomorrow. Days of golden sunshine and t-shirts blend seamlessly into whiteout conditions where you're teeth are chattering while scraping ice off the car windshield.

While no anecdotal experience is equitable to the vast complexity of climate science, we do have to start to ponder how anyone could believe that something is not amiss with our planet when things seem to be so utterly out of whack with the norms we all grew up learning to understand and accept.

If we've learned anything so far, it's to make sure that you keep your hallway closet stocked with the essentials to survive any weather in New England for the time being; a raincoat and umbrella, a shovel, an ice scraper, and of course, your sunblock. You never know which one you'll need.

LETTERS

JRTC says maybe a raise, but not \$50K

Should the mayor get a \$50,000 raise?

"Should the mayor get a \$50,000 raise?" Johnston Sun Rise, Jan. 11 edition, is an eye-catching headline if there ever was one. That's a salary increase by over 66% after serving one year in office.

Most people are lucky to earn a cost-of-living adjustment but it appears the mayor's salary of \$75,000 hasn't changed in 20 years. According to the Municipal Salary Survey for fiscal year ending in 2022 prepared by the Rhode Island League of Cities & Towns, Johnston is at the lowest end of the range while Westerly is at the highest with a whopping \$170,000. A pay increase for the town council was proposed as well.

Johnston Charter Review Commission Chairman Richard DelFino Jr. is correct to caution throwing out suggested numbers without the proper data to back it up. It also means that you can't compare ap-

ples and oranges or in this case Johnston to Cranston or Providence. Johnston is a town with less than 30,000 people while the others are cities. Cities are a different structure with their increased population and services.

If the mayor has the lowest salary in the state, then perhaps a raise is justifiable but in increments.

According to city-data.com in 2021 the Johnston median household income is \$79,335. The median household income is far below of what the proposed new salary would be of \$125,000.

Council members Folcarelli, Garzone, and Civetti all would like to have 4-year term limits. That is convenient for any elected official as campaigning is expensive and very time consuming. However, U.S. Congress, State Senate, and the State Reps have to campaign every 2-years, so why is the town council any different? It is good to have a democracy and the citizens to have

the opportunity to vote. Why change now?

Any elected seat is a public servant and that is a big responsibility. It isn't for the faint of heart. It also means that our elected officials knew what they were signing up for when they proceeded to run. It is a commitment to the town and the voters to do the best job they can with whatever the salary is. They can make the decision to run again or not after their term is up.

We look forward to reviewing the proposed changes by the Johnston Charter Review Commission to justify any amendments to the Town Charter. The Charter proposals will be profoundly important to the citizens of Johnston. What the voters don't want is an increase in taxes. Some of us are not getting a pay raise any time soon. The voters will have their say soon enough.

Johnston Republican Town Committee

'Winsor Avenue could become the next Belfield Drive'

Most of you may know, through mailers, advertisements in the Sun Rise, signage and word of mouth, residents have banded together to stop industrial size solar arrays in residential areas.

Green Development has a plan for most of what's left of residential space in our town, and it is not a good plan at all.

Five separate properties were to be developed and would become one of the largest solar arrays in Rhode Island. When brought before the Zoning Board in April of 2022, the plan was denied and Green Development has taken the town to court.

Fast forward to this past July, when Green and the Town, through it's Zoning Official and Solicitor, decided that a portion of the plan could come forward, even though law clearly states that a plan cannot be brought back for two years unless significantly different.

There are no significant changes to the plan, and residents have turned out time and time again to attend meetings related to this application. The public was allowed to speak at the Dec. 14 meeting. Not one resident, when asked, raised their hand in favor of this plan.

It is a travesty to the environment, the surrounding neighborhoods will see a clear reduction in the value of their homes, and the town will reap very little in financial benefits. If this property were to be developed with single family homes, which it is zoned for, the town would reap substantial taxes, to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars per year.

If this application is approved, the developer will pay a small token amount for land use. According to a recent study by the University of Chicago, nearly 30,000 cities and towns across the country are in population decline. We need residents to keep the town vi-

tal. We need to be kind to the environment. We need trees. If this property is clear-cut for this type of development, Winsor Avenue could become the next Belfield Drive. Water seeks its own level, as the old farmers say.

At the last meeting, so many residents voiced why this was not a very good idea at all. The Town Planner did not attend, so was not subject to residents' questions or concerns.

Over 800 residents have signed a petition. Those who could not attend wrote letters which were introduced by Councilman Robert Civetti. He has been standing with his constituents and fighting for what is right for the town.

The Zoning Board said they would not vote on that night because they had so much to consider. We were told that closing arguments would be heard at the next meeting, which is Jan. 25, and then they would have a vote and that this matter would be heard first.

When the agenda was published, this matter was not placed first, but last. The developer's attorney wants to rebut everything brought forth. It has been mind-numbing listening to him, to say the least.

Now we have heard that the matter is on the agenda but will be continued ... to who knows when.

This information was brought forth too late for us to put an ad in the paper, or send a mailer keeping everyone informed. So I will ask you please to join us at the next zoning meeting. To find out why this is dragging on and on. And to let the powers that be know that we do not want to become an industrial nightmare. The urban blight must stop. Or we could find ourselves on the "ghost town" list. A place where no one wants to live.

Karen Cappelli Chadwick, of Johnston

Johnston's rising seas and political tides

Hey Johnston, Did you know that Rhode Island's sea level has been rising by an average of 1 inch per decade since 1930? Sea levels in the Northeast are increasing 3 to 4 times faster than the global average, resulting in a 6-inch rise between 1970 and 2012!

Politicians, big business, and insurance companies have long been aware of these statistics and potential issues. Surprisingly, Johnston has not updated its Comprehensive Plan with the state since 2007, despite these concerns. Comprehensive plans are crucial for addressing land use, town growth, and climate change mitigations over time.

Remember the floods in 2010 that garnered national attention? Many found out their insurance didn't cover flood damage. Did you know that, in 2005, Allan Fung, while on the Cranston City Council, worked for MetLife and lobbied against a bill requiring insurers to notify policyholders about flood insurance?

Moreover, Mayor Polisena Jr. hired former Cranston Mayor Allan Fung, infamously known for Ticket-gate, as a Town Solicitor to assist in taking over Johnston's School Department. Fung is being paid \$275 per hour with taxpayer money for this effort and an additional \$225 per hour for work and research he is doing with the Johnston Charter Review Board.

The JCRC, including former Cranston Mayor Allan Fung, is proposing changes to the Town Charter, including making the school committee appointed. Notably, they've suggested extending Town Council terms to 4 years and raising pay, along with increasing the mayor's annual salary from \$75,000 to \$130,000.

Did you know that Green Development contributed thousands of dollars to Polisena Jr.'s election campaign? Despite ongoing flooding issues in Johnston, the zoning board looks as if they plan to approve a solar farm, despite being aware of the current flood issues Johnston is enduring along with the safety and health concerns solar farms present if flooding were to occur.

Interestingly, amidst these challenges, efforts are focused on approving a splash pad in Johnston Memorial War Park right next to the controversial Columbus Statue. They worked hard to ensure the statue's safety in the park, while the rest of us are treading underwater, literally.

Tamra Moretti, of Johnston



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JOHNSTON'S HIGHER ED ACHIEVERS

Roger Williams University

BRISTOL — Select students have been named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List at Roger Williams University in Bristol. Full-time students who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a GPA of 3.4 or higher are placed on the Dean's List that semester.

Johnston students making the Dean's List include: Myah Elisse Abreu, Marcella Colardo, Jake Frezza, Jarren Mabray, Alyssa Pascale, Andrew Piccolo, Bianca Robbins, Dylan Robbins, Katelyn Simeone, Jake Souvannavong, Gian Tortolani, Jackie Urizar, and Lauren Vest.

At Roger Williams University, students are prepared to be thinkers and doers ready to solve challenging problems with innovative solutions. RWU offers 50 majors and robust offerings of graduate and professional programs across eight schools of study including Rhode Island's only law school, with campuses on the coast of Bristol and in the heart of Providence.

University of Connecticut

STORRS, Connecticut — The University of Connecticut has released its Dean's List for the spring 2023 semester and it includes three Johnston residents: Vincent Chan, Siera Jeetan, Catrina Zinni.

Quinnipiac University

HAMDEN, Connecticut — Several students from Johnston have been named to dean's list for the Fall 2023 semester at Quinnipiac University.

The following Johnston students were named to the dean's list for the Fall 2023 semester at Quinnipiac University: Emma Homenick (with Honors), Olaitan Olagundoye and Emily Whitlock.

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester.

Stonehill College

EASTON, Massachusetts — More than 1,000 students have been recognized for academic excellence at Stonehill College. To qualify for this honor, students must have a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better and must have successfully completed all courses for which they were registered.

Students recognized from Johnston include: Nicholas Comella, Thomas Comella, Samantha Gobeille, and Julian DiSanto.

Stonehill College, a Catholic institution of higher learning, was founded by the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1948, located on the 384-acre campus and former estate of Frederick Lothrop Ames in North Easton, Massachusetts.

Springfield College

SPRINGFIELD, Massachusetts — Springfield College has recognized Dean's List students from Johnston for academic excellence for the 2023 Fall Semester.

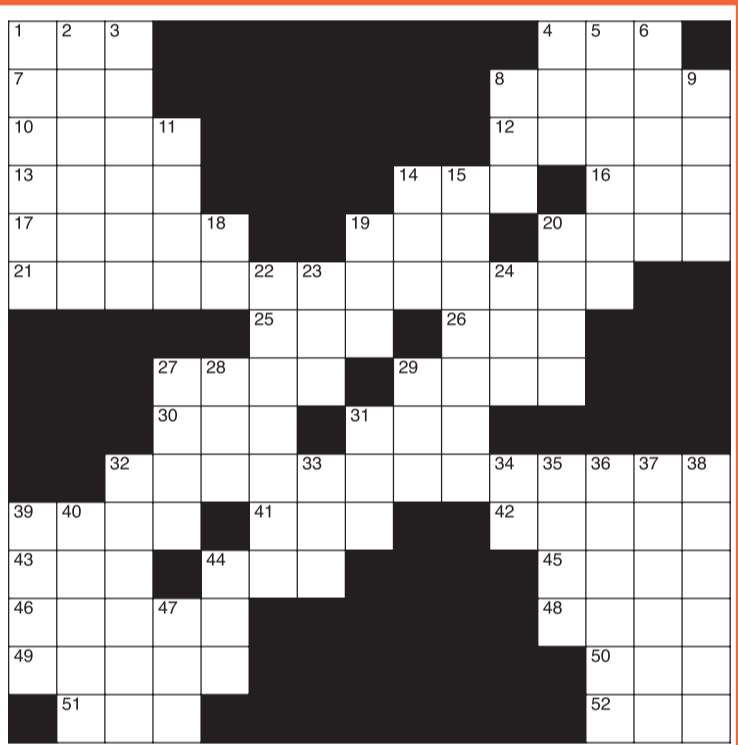
The college honored two Johnston students:

Dante Iafrate was named to the dean's list. Iafrate has a primary major of Communication/Sport Jour.

Derek Mason was named to the dean's list. Mason has a primary major of Business Management.

The criteria for selection to the Dean's List are as follows: The student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.50 for the term.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



CLUES ACROSS

1. Microgram
4. Where golfers begin
7. Each
8. Warm weather metropolis
10. Coat with sticky substance
12. Girl's given name
13. Myth (Spanish)
14. Ultrahigh frequency
16. Former NBAer Jeremy
17. Where rockers work
19. Your consciousness of your own identity
20. Soft-finned fishes
21. Localities
25. Paddle
26. Union
27. Member of religious community
29. Small shrill flute
30. Small constellation in the Milky Way
31. They ___
32. College kid on vacation
39. de Armas and Gasteyer are two
41. Part of the human body

42. A progressive grading
43. Sound unit
44. Noise some birds make
45. Abba __, Israeli politician
46. Portuguese city
48. Be extremely, uncritically fond of
49. Resembling old Norse poems
50. Ask for out of extreme need
51. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
52. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

1. An insane person
2. ___ Boothe Luce, American author
3. Buttock muscles
4. Men's fashion accessory
5. "Hotel California" rockers
6. Electronic communication
8. Magnetomotive force (abbr.)
9. Hostelries
11. A way to resound
14. Exclamation: yuck!

15. A resident of Indiana
18. Exclamation of surprise
19. Make a mistake
20. Boundary
22. Antilles island
23. It's used to make furniture
24. Clod
27. They indicate where places are
28. Bobby __, NHL champ
29. Prints money
31. Honorable title (Turkish)
32. Appetizers
33. Midway between north and northwest
34. Spanish be
35. Breezed through
36. Grilled dishes
37. In a way, excites
38. Change mind
39. A French abbot
40. Popular candy
44. Partner to cheese
47. Wood or metal bolt

LEGAL NOTICES

CITATION

State of Rhode Island
PROVIDENCE, S.C.
Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court

PETITION TO FORECLOSE RIGHT OF REDEMPTION
PM-2023-05471

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, and CLARA SPINA, ANGELINA ZOGLIO, ELAINE MATARESE, GUY V. PIROLI, JEAN A. SPINA AND THEIR UNKNOWN HEIRS AND ASSIGNS; THE RI DIVISION OF TAXATION, THE TOWN OF JOHNSTON and all other persons unknown or unascertained claiming or who may claim any right, title, estate, lien or interest in the real estate involved which is or might become adverse to the Petitioner's right, title or interest therein as alleged, or which does or may constitute any cloud upon Petitioner's title as set forth in Petition.

Whereas, a petition has been presented to said Court by AMERICAN SUSTAINABLE PROPERTIES, LLC, of 140 RESERVOIR AVE, PROVIDENCE, RI and said State, to foreclose all rights of redemption from the tax lien proceedings described in said petition in and concerning a certain parcel of land situated in the Town of Johnston and in said State, bounded and described in said petition as follows:

THOSE TWO (2) CERTAIN LOTS OF LAND WITH ALL BUILDINGS OR IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, SITUATED ON THE WESTERLY SIDE EOF COOLLIDGE STREET AND ON BOTH SIDES OF DAVIS STREET, IN THE TOWN OF JOHNSTON AND STATE OF RHODE ISLAND, LAID OUT AND DELINEATED AS LOT NOS. 21 (TWENTY-ONE), AND 22 (TWENTY-TWO) UPON THAT PLAT ENTITLED "DAVIS PLAT JOHNSTON, RHODE ISLAND BY J. A LATHAM & SON NOVEMBER 1921" AND RECORD IN THE RECORDED IN THE RECORDS OF LAND EVIDENCE, IN SAID JOHNSTON, RHODE ISLAND, ON PLAT CARD 98.

Further identified as Assessor's Plat 1, Lot 22 & 23.

If you desire to make any objection or defense to said petition you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer, under oath, setting forth clearly and specifically your objections or defense to each part of said petition, in the office of the Superior Court in Providence on or before the 8th day of February, 2024 next, that you may then and there show cause, if any, why the prayer of the petition should not be granted.

Unless your appearance is filed by or for you, your default will be recorded, the said petition will be taken as confessed and you will be forever barred from contesting said petition or any decree entered thereon. And in addition to the usual service of this notice as required by law, it is ordered that the foregoing citation be published forthwith once each week for three successive weeks in the JOHNSTON SUN RISE, a newspaper published in said TOWN OF JOHNSTON to wit: January 4th, January 11th, January 18th, 2024

WITNESS the SEAL of our SUPERIOR COURT, at Providence this 27th day of December, 2023.

/s/ Susan M Diggins, CLERK

DOUGLAS SMITH
140 Reservoir Avenue
Providence, RI 02907

1/4, 1/11, 1/18/24

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JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

BENCH WARRANT

Around 8:23 p.m., Dec. 12, while on a fixed post on Plainfield Street, Johnston Police Patrolman Matthew D. Murphy spotted a silver Ford Edge with Massachusetts plates traveling west at a "high rate of speed," according to the arrest report. Police also noted the vehicles "heavy window tint on all of its windows (including its front windshield)."

Murphy clocked the vehicle at 32 miles per hour in a posted 25 mph zone, and followed the vehicle for approximately a half-mile prior to initiating a traffic stop in the vicinity of River Avenue.

Police identified the driver as Mariano Ventura, 39, of 155 Earle St., Apt. 1, New Bedford, Massachusetts. After running checks of Ventura, police discovered an active bench warrant issued by Sixth District Court for failing to appear in court. Ventura was arrested and his vehicle was searched and towed from the scene.

Ventura was transported back to Johnston Police Headquarters where he was processed and advised of his Constitutional Rights. He was transported to the ACI Men's Intake Center.

He was also cited for Speeding 1 to 10 MPH in Excess of Posted Speed Limit.

VANDALISM

Shortly after 10 p.m., Oct. 10, 2023, Johnston Police Patrolman Richard J. Varan responded to the report of vandalism to a vehicle at an address in town (redacted from the incident report). He met with the victim who told him that between 10 and 10:05 p.m. someone vandalized his 2009 Honda Civic while it was parked in his driveway.

The vehicle had no registration because the owner said he had just purchased it. Police note that the victim told them there was an altercation with another individual, whose name was redacted from the incident report narrative.

Police did, however, identify Alfonso D. Paolantonio, 32, of Lincoln, as the suspect, and eventually issued an arrest warrant for Vandalism/Malicious Injury to Property, a mis-

demeanor.

On Dec. 21, around 4:30 p.m., Johnston Police responded to the Warwick Police Department Headquarters, where they took custody of Paolantonio, who was wanted on the vandalism warrant. He was handcuffed and transported back to Johnston Police Headquarters.

Police updated the address listed for Paolantonio, now 33, as 123 Endicott Drive, Warwick.

HIT AND RUN

Around noon on Dec. 18, Johnston Police Sgt. Luca A. Lancellotti Jr. responded to a reported hit and run incident on Hartford Avenue. A red Toyota with Massachusetts plates (the reporting driver provided the registration number) attempted to merge into the victim's lane of travel, struck his vehicle on the driver's side rear door causing damage, flipped him off and fled the scene.

"He stated that the operator of the vehicle was a younger blonde female and that after she struck his vehicle she stuck him the middle finger and continued east without stopping," Lancellotti wrote in the incident report.

Lancellotti contacted the vehicle's registered owner who identified the primary driver of the vehicle as Emily O. Cicconi, 27, of 1 Eugen Circle, Milford, Massachusetts.

Police checked a local hotel (name and address of hotel redacted from the report narrative), and confirmed Cicconi was a registered guest the day of the crash. On Dec. 19, three witnesses of the incident responded to Johnston Police Headquarters to view a photo lineup.

According to police, "all 3 witnesses were separated throughout the process and each viewed the photographs outside of the presence of the others." According to the incident report, however, an unidentified (redacted) number of witnesses were unable to identify Cicconi, but an unidentified (redacted) did pick "photo #3 which was the suspect Emily Cicconi."

"I called Emily back and ad-

vised her of my findings," Lancellotti wrote. "She then told me that she was operating the vehicle and that she lied about it. She advised that she would respond to police headquarters to explain what occurred that day. She has since not responded to police headquarters and therefore I will be drafting a warrant for Emily Cicconi for Duty to Stop in Accidents Resulting in Damage to Attended Vehicle."

On Dec. 27, Johnston Police Patrolman Thomas Pederzani responded to Warwick Police Department to take custody of Cicconi, who was picked up on the Johnston warrant. She was handcuffed and transported back to Johnston Police Headquarters.

She was charged with Duty to Stop in Collision With Attended Vehicle, according to Johnston Police Sgt. Joseph D. Anderson.

"Emily was later turned over to North Smithfield Police Department in reference to another outstanding warrant from their police department," Anderson wrote in a supplementary report.

LARCENY

Around 8:30 a.m., Nov. 27, Johnston Police Patrolman Nicholas A. Crowe responded to a business (business name redacted in the incident report narrative) in town to discuss a larceny from the previous day.

Crowe spoke to the business owner who reported a man caught on security footage stealing plumbing tools from trucks at the business.

The suspect exited a white sedan, which pulled onto the property around midnight. The suspect "appeared white" and was described as around "5'10", heavy set, and wearing a black shirt, light colored shorts, white sneakers and a sweatshirt on his back with the hood over his head."

The suspect pried open the doors of a work van and smashed the rear window of another. The victim told police that the man swiped \$3,000 to \$5,000 worth of plumbing tools from the vans and fled the vehicle in the sedan.

The victim told police they "strongly" believed the suspect

was Paul Joseph Nicholson, 56, of 202 Elmwood Ave., Warwick. They told police that the victim "seen in the security footage matches exactly to the description of Paul," Crowe wrote in the incident report.

"Paul is usually always wearing shorts even when the weather is cold and that his walk is very distinct as he has a slight limp," the victim told police. The business owner told police he wished to pursue a criminal complaint. Police logged a photo from the security footage into evidence, attached to the report.

Police issued a warrant for a felony charge of Larceny Over \$1,500 and a misdemeanor charge of Vandalism/Malicious Injury to Property. On Dec. 21, Nicholson was arraigned before Rhode Island District Court Magistrate Joseph P. Ippolito, according to a narrative addition to the incident report, written by Johnston Police Detective James L. Seymore.

"Paul was presented as a Superior Court violator on four cases," Seymore wrote. "It should be noted that Paul was not processed due to his incarceration at the ACI."

Ippolito set surety bail at \$5,000.

MALICIOUS INJURY TO PROPERTY

Around 8:15 p.m., April 16, 2023, Johnston Police responded to an address in town (redacted from the publicly available incident report) for the report of vandalism to a vehicle.

Police spoke to the victim, who drove their vehicle and the tire pressure light turned on. They stopped, and discovered two "aluminum spikes" in both of the passenger side tires, which were completely flat.

One of the vehicle's owners returned home to search the area for more spikes. According to the police incident report, while looking for additional spikes, the victim stepped on one, and it "went through the bottom of his shoe and into his foot." Similar spikes had been found at another location (redacted from the report) on two separate occasions. Police reviewed re-

cords from the other reported incidents.

The victim told police that "he estimated that he has had to replace over 40 tires since November due to these incidents." They also provided a name of the individual they believed was responsible, and provided a voicemail message left by the suspect on Nov. 10, 2022, "three days before the first reported vandalism."

The evidence was forwarded on to the Johnston Police Detectives Division for further investigation. On Jan. 4, around 2 p.m., Johnston Police Patrolman Thomas Santurri responded to the Warwick Police Department to take custody of the suspect, for whom Johnston Police had issued an arrest warrant.

Police identified the suspect as Kevin Turgeon, 58, of 23 Ledgesmont Court, West Warwick. He was transported back to Johnston Police Department and charged with two misdemeanor counts of Vandalism/Malicious Injury to Property. Turgeon was processed and held pending arraignment.

CONSPIRACY & FELONY SHOPLIFTING

Around 6:30 a.m., Nov. 28, 2023, Johnston Police Patrolman David K. Chen responded to a business in town (name and address redacted from the incident report), following the report of a larceny that had occurred approximately 15 minutes earlier.


Police were told that a "white female wearing camouflage shirt and a heavy set white male wearing camouflage pants and black sweatshirt entered the business via the front entrance," according to the report.

The woman walked to the home cleaning supply aisle and allegedly filled a cart with merchandise and then exited without paying. According to police, the couple both exited the building and got into a white Malibu and fled the scene in an unknown direction.

The store estimated the value of the merchandise at "approximately \$557." They provided an image from security

■ POLICE - PAGE 10

One Year Anniversary
TC ROGERS
 1/13/23 1/13/24



When you awaken in the morning's hush, I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight. I am the soft stars that shine at night. Do not think of me as gone. I am with you still in each new dawn.

Our Love, Mom & Dad
 Sister Tabitha and Family

Obituaries

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

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

— Thank you



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SUN RISE SCOOPS

Jan. 20

Help Johnston's Troop 20 Fill the bus!

On Saturday, Jan. 20 from 8-10 a.m., the scouts from Troop 20 Johnston will be collecting old clothing, bedding, pillows, jackets, anything soft, and books — all in good and usable shape.

"We are hoping that the community will take the opportunity to clean and declutter your space and drop these belongings off to us in the parking lot of the Johnston Courthouse located at 1600 Atwood Ave.," said Susan DeAthos, leader of Troop 20 Johnston. "In addition, you will be helping the scouts raise funds to send them on an educational adventure to Sea Base Camp in Florida."

According to DeAthos is Sea-Base, "a high adventure camp that helps scouts learn to survive in the wilderness." "They will learn to snorkel, fish, and use non-motorized water craft while living off the land and sea for a week long adventure," she said. "They will practice leadership skills and team work while sailing a boat together for 2 days. They will also participate in a service project to protect the reefs. We look forward to seeing our community on Saturday from 8-10 at the Johnston Municipal Court House."



FILL THE BUS: Troop 20 in Johnston needs your help on Saturday, Jan. 20. They have events all year long, but they're trying to raise some money for an 'educational adventure' and the public can pitch in. (Courtesy photos)

Jan. 24

JRTC Meeting

Calling all Johnston Republicans! Start the New Year off right and attend the next JRTC Meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 6 p.m. at the Bishop Hill Tavern, 2868 Hartford Ave., Johnston.

Jan. 13

Celebration of Life for Ernie Gifford

The Hope Historical Society invites the community to join us as we celebrate Ernie Gifford's passion for all things historical to the Village of Hope and surrounding areas. HHS will showcase Ernie's best and most interesting historical research. The tribute will be held during the regular meeting on Sat., Jan. 13 at 2 p.m. at the Howland Barn on 35 Ryefield Road, Hope. Refreshments will follow.

Feb. 5

Program for Homeschool Families

On Monday, Feb. 5, at 10 a.m., the Museum of Work & Culture and Harris Public Library will hold a free educational program for the Ocean State's "Homeschool Families."

The event will be held at the Museum of Work & Culture, 42 South Main St., Woonsocket and the Harris Public Library, 303 Clinton St., Woonsocket.

The Museum of Work and Culture, a division of the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the Woonsocket Harris Public Library will host the third program in their bi-monthly free educational series for home-

schooled families, according to a press release.

"A l'école: Walking Through Their School Day" will begin at the Museum, where families will gather in the parochial school classroom to learn about early twentieth-century school life. Children will discover what school was like for the French-speaking Catholic population of Woonsocket. By interacting with photographs, artifacts, and traditional classroom resources, students will discover the relationship between the church and school, learn a few French words, and maybe even take a pop quiz!

After the Museum program, participants will move to the Woonsocket Harris Public Library. At the library, homeschool students will consider a school day in the early 20th-century parochial schoolroom while contemplating their own experiences as modern-day homeschoolers. Students will self-reflect on their personal interests, talents, & goals to create a mixed media collage on canvas or notebook, using lots of fun crafting tidbits.

This two-part program will have two sessions, each starting at the Museum of Work & Culture. Families may register for the 10 a.m. to noon session, or the 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. session. Space is limited, and registration is required. Email mowc@rihs.org for reservations.

Feb. 10 Pasta Dinner

Former Coventry High School Navy JROTC Cadets will host a Pasta Dinner Fundraiser in memory of Lucas Finegan (Class of 2019) on Feb. 10 from 6-11 p.m. at the VFW Post 9404, 29 South Main St. in Coventry. Menu includes chicken, pasta, salad, rolls & desserts. Tickets will be available at the door for

\$20 per person. All are invited to enjoy a night of great food, raffles and memories. Contact Dot-tie at 401-451-0632 with any questions.

Feb. 10 Valentine's Dinner Dance

On Saturday, Feb. 10, the West Warwick-Coventry Emblem Club 454 is holding a Valentine's Dinner Dance, with "No Host Cocktails" starting at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. The menu includes: salad, stuffed boneless chicken breast, mash potatoes, glazed carrots, bread and butter, coffee and dessert. The event will also include music, dancing and raffles. Tickets are \$25 per person and must be prepaid. No tickets will be sold at door. The event is being held at the West Warwick Elks Lodge 1697, 60 Clyde St., West Warwick. For Tickets call Linda at 401-497-3680.

Attention Johnston flood victims

Residents impacted by recent flooding events should document damages for potential federal reimbursement. Send this documentation to Johnston EMA Director, Chief Mark A. Vieira, at ema@johnstonpd.com (include photographs).

RI Historical Society announces Programming for Black History Month

The Rhode Island Historical Society will commemorate Black

History Month with a full slate of programs in February highlighting the achievements and impact of Black Rhode Islanders, as well as the work of contemporary Black-led organizations.

Programs include:

"Valley Talks: Making Art History," Sunday, Feb. 4, 1:30 p.m., The Museum of Work & Culture (42 S. Main St., Woonsocket) — "In September 2023, more than 120 years after his passing, Providence honored gifted artist Edward Mitchell Bannister with a public statue. Hear about Bannister's history and legacy from RIHS Executive Director Christiana Morgan Grefe, followed by sculptor Gage Prentiss detailing his inspiration and process in creating this tribute.

"A Purposeful Life: Charles Thomas and the Struggle for Racial Equality in Sports," Wednesday, February 7, 7 p.m., via Zoom — "Historian Robert Cvornyek will present on Rhode Island-born athlete Charles Thomas. Thomas lived most of his life in Providence as a respected mentor to the city's African American youth. During his long athletic career, Thomas competed at the amateur, collegiate, semi-pro, and professional levels. He integrated a few lineups along the way but also played on teams comprised solely of non-white players. His multiple experiences provide insight into how Black athletes navigated the troubled waters of segregation, found pride in all-Black teams, and showcased their talents to advance the struggle for freedom and equality in several different arenas, including the baseball diamond, basketball court, and football field."

Dr. Ira Reid: "Haverford College's Unsung Scholar Activist Documentary Screening with Rhode Island Black Film Festival," Saturday, February 10, 2

p.m., at the Aldrich House, 110 Benevolent St., Providence: "(Reid) tells the story of the transformational scholar who strengthened the chorus of justice, peace, and equal opportunity for all. In the first half of the 20th century, Ira de Augustine Reid was the first African American to pioneer the acceptance of Black scholars as faculty members at predominantly White Northern universities. His study of Black immigrant communities resulted in a close working relationship with W. E. B. DuBois. He later mentored a young Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who served as Reid's research assistant. Following the screening, director Rel Dowdell will speak about the process of creating the film and the importance of Reid's legacy."

The Rhode Island Historical Society, the state's oldest and only state-wide historical organization, is dedicated to honoring, interpreting, and sharing Rhode Island's past to enrich the present and inspire the future. Founded in 1822, the RIHS is an advocate for history as a means to develop empathy and 21st-century skills, using its historical materials and knowledge to explore topics of timeless relevance and public interest. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, it is dedicated to providing high-quality, accessible public programming and educational opportunities for all Rhode Islanders through its four sites: the John Brown House Museum, the Museum of Work & Culture, the Mary Elizabeth Robinson Research Center, and the Aldrich House.

The headquarters of the Rhode Island Historical Society are located at 110 Benevolent St., Providence. For more information, call 401-331-8575, or go to their website (rihs.org). Follow the RIHS on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

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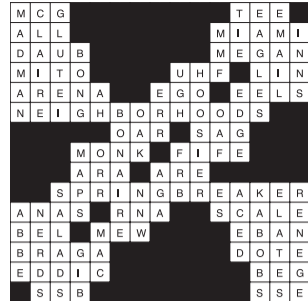
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Johnston Sister City Committee's 'on the move for 2024'

Sun Rise Staff Reports

Last year, the Johnston Sister City Committee got the ball rolling all the way to Italy.

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. gave Louis Spremulli the authority to put a Sister City Committee together before his fifth trip to Panni, Foggia, Italy.

Spremulli explained to the mayor that he helped found the Sister City Program in 2015 and wanted to carry it forward for the residents of Johnston.

Spremulli then met with both mayors, after his trip across the ocean, and had them both sign new documents to rebuild "this special partnership."

Spremulli said he did "some very strong soul-searching to come up with the right committee to get all his ideas done with dedication, professionalism and those people with special talents and skills."

On Thursday, Nov. 8, the newly rebuilt committee's first meeting was conducted at the Johnston Senior Center.

"I have been running a lot of meetings, but every person of 12 attended the meeting," Spremulli said. "This is a blessing and a sign of dedication."

He provided the list of Sister City Committee members who were chosen

to continue the tradition: Mayor Polisena Jr.; Chairman Spremulli; Co-Chairman Stephen Macchioni; Secretary Tina Desmarais; Treasurer Lisa D'Ambra; members Arnold Vecchione, Louis Mansolillo and Maria Panciocco; student members Sheila Soto, Diana Rosales and Sofia China; Head Trustee Richard Delfino Jr.

The first meeting lasted about 90 minutes and the committee followed protocol to cover all issues tied in with the town's Sister City program.

"Now I am sitting with the best, and it showed, on how we all participated and worked through all the issues we had to figure out," Spremulli said after the meeting. "Well, the town can be assured they have the best on this committee. After long discussions the town will be seeing some cultural Italian activities taking place starting in 2024."

The committee hopes to have a big year and needs the public's help.

"We want to bring all nationalities together to learn about Italian culture and hope to have all residents attend our events," Spremulli said. "One thing that is necessary to run this committee is funding. So we will be asking community businesses to sponsor this program and they will be promoted with everything we do."

SISTER CITY COMMITTEE: Above, from left to right, Louis Spremulli, Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr., Arnold Vecchione; back row, Lisa D'Ambra, Lou Mansolillo, Maria Panciocco, Tina Desmarais, and Stephen Macchioni; students Diana Rosales and Sofia China. (Photo by Richard Delfino Jr.)

More at Mohr Library

Mohr Library is offering extended programs for elementary-age kids afterschool. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) is an opportunity for children to "experiment, explore and build" with Ms. Melyssa.

Registration began Jan. 3 for the following elementary-school-age programs with Ms. Melyssa:

Thursdays at 5 p.m., through Feb. 1, Children ages 6 to 9 are invited to experiment, explore and build.

Wednesdays from 4 to 5:30 p.m., Feb. 7, Art Smart for Ages 8 to 12. Have fun exploring different art styles and techniques.

Saturdays from 2 to 3 p.m., to Feb. 10, Art Smart Jr. for Ages 5 to 7.

See mohrlibrary.org or call 401-231-4980 to register.

Registration is ongoing for a variety of programs and events at the Mohr Library, 1 Memorial Ave, Johnston.

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.

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

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

Library hours are Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

James A. Diossa
Rhode Island General Treasurer

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By JENNIFER COATES

When Kaushal and Sripal Jain moved to America from India in 1976, they came with little but a dream and an uncompromising work ethic. They settled into life in our country and eventually welcomed a young son. They named him Akshay whose name means "eternal, immortal and indestructible" in Sanskrit ~ perfect words to describe their now incredibly accomplished and impressive son.

The same year that Akshay was born in 1993, the Jain's landed upon an opportunity to own and operate a laundromat on Route 44 in Johnston; thus was born Jain's Laundry. Now, thirty years later, the laundromat is going as strong as ever, as is their successful son. Akshay has gone on to pursue a PhD in BioTech at Harvard University while doing cancer research at nearby Dana-Farber Research Hospital. Both Akshay and his parents are the personification of the "American Dream."

Today, customers of Jain's Laundry will find a full-service "wash-dry-fold" laundromat. If you don't want to dedicate all

your time wrestling with piles of clothes, bring your laundry in and trust it to the care of Kaushal Jain. She has committed over 30 years of her life to serving her customers. She is meticulous and consistent. She will wash, soften, and dry your clothes, then fold them and wrap them up to go ~ all within a few hours. This is an amazing convenience, all for only .89cents/pound. The math is simple enough - ten pounds of dirty clothes, dropped off in the morning and ready to go by day's end - all for less than \$10.00. Fifteen pounds of dirty clothes dropped off on the way to work and ready to go by dinner - all for under \$15.00.

If you are more of a do-it-yourselfer, then you will find a large room full of coin-operated washers and dryers. There are folding tables for easy sorting and folding. Don't have enough quarters? No worries ~ there is a change machine that accepts up to a \$20.00 bill available here.

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Jain's Laundry is found in the Plaza 44 shopping plaza on 39 Putnam Pike. It is open seven days each week - from 8 am to 9 pm, Monday through Friday, and 7 am to 8 pm on Saturday and Sunday. For more information about their services, call 401-231-7019.

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AG: Mass. man charged with strangling woman, gun possession, following Johnston arrest

Sun Rise Staff Reports

On Tuesday, Rhode Island Attorney General Peter F. Neronha announced charges against a Massachusetts man in Providence County Superior Court following his arrest by Johnston Police last May.

In December, the AG charged Yaran Drawbridge, 42, of Holden, Massachusetts, with 68 counts of firearms and domestic violence-related offenses.

According to a press release distributed Tuesday by the AG's Office, on Dec. 4, 2023, the Office of the Attorney General charged Drawbridge, "by way of criminal information, with 62 counts of possession of a large capacity magazine, three counts of possession of a sawed-off rifle, one count of domestic assault by strangulation, one count of simple domestic assault, and one count of domestic disorderly conduct."

"As alleged in the criminal information, on May 4, 2023, Johnston Police responded to a report of a domestic disturbance on Juniper Lane," according to prosecutors. "It is alleged that officers encountered the victim waiting at a neighbor's house, where she told police she escaped a domestic assault by her boyfriend, the defendant. It is further alleged that the defendant physically assaulted her and put her in a chokehold, before the victim was able to escape through a bathroom window."

The AG's Office will argue that when the victim "met the responding officers, she told officers that she believed that the defendant was still in the residence and in possession of multiple firearms."

"As alleged, officers responded to the residence and entered the home through a rear door," according to the AG's press release. "While searching for the defendant, officers observed various types of large capacity magazines and other gun paraphernalia in the basement of the home. Ultimately, they were unable to locate the defendant, at which time the victim told police that the defendant owned another home in Holden, Mass."

Investigators sought a warrant for Drawbridge's arrest and alerted Holden Police.

"On May 5, 2023, the defendant turned himself in to Johnston Police Headquarters," according to the AG's Office. "Investigators subsequently executed a search warrant at the defendant's Johnston residence in which they seized three altered rifles, with shortened barrels, and 62 large capacity magazines, including 30-round .223 caliber, 30-round 7.62mm, and 31-round 9mm magazines."

The defendant is scheduled for a pre-arraignment conference on Feb. 7, in Providence County Superior Court.

Police

(Continued from page 7)

surveillance footage of both the man and the woman. Police checked the Malibu's New Jersey registration and discovered the plates were likely "stolen from Woonsocket."

The report was forwarded to the Johnston Police Detective Division.

Johnston Police eventually issued arrest warrants for two suspects: Robert Edward Ayala, 45, and Regina Marie Thibedau, 43, both of 78 Sutton St., Apt. 2, Providence, for felony charges of Shoplifting and Conspiracy.

On Jan. 9, Thibedau was arraigned before Rhode Island District Court Associate Judge Joseph Terence Houlihan on felony charges of Shoplifting, Conspiracy and Habitual Shoplifting. Surety bail was set at \$5,000.

"It should be noted that Regina was not processed due to her incarceration at the Womens Intake," according to a report by Johnston Police Detective James L. Seymore.

Johnston Police did not provide an update on her alleged co-conspirator, Ayala.

Say you saw it in the Johnston Sun Rise

Sports

Panthers extend win streak to 7

Rollins leads JHS girls to 64-19 win over Central

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston girls basketball team continued to roll as it toppled visiting Central 64-19 last week to improve to 7-1 and extending its win streak to seven games.

Point guard Jayanah Rollins led the Panthers with 28 points while Bella Gesualdi added 12. Rollins put up 14 points in the third quarter to help slam the door on the Knights. Nearly all of Rollins' points came from breakaways, which Johnston coach Jhamal Diggs has been emphasizing at practice with the club.

"We've been practicing playing a lot faster and our transition game has gotten a lot better. Rebound the ball, outlet and get down the floor. We have been working on that in practice and it showed today," said Diggs, who has been thrilled with Rollins' impact. The senior standout missed the early portion of the year after coming off her second ACL tear and has immediately become one of the Panthers' go-to producers on each end of the floor.

"She's a huge difference maker. So much respect and so much love for the kid. She's still out there giving us 100 percent on both the offensive end and defensive end. She's a key piece to what we do," said Diggs.

The win keeps the Panthers in second



ANOTHER WIN: Jayanah Rollins drives to the basket last week at home. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

■ PANTHERS - PAGE 13

JHS boys pick up two more wins

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Johnston boys basketball team is continuing to surge in its Division II title defense this winter as it picked up a 67-42 win over Hope then a 66-62 win over South Kingstown last week. The Panthers improved to 8-0 with the wins.

Brandon Testa stayed hot this winter as he emerges as one of the division's best scorers as he led the Panthers with 20 points in the win over Hope. Three other Panthers reached double figures, as Neari Vasquez racked up 13 points, Jayden Testa 13 and Mike Carlino 10.

Vasquez had a huge outing against the visiting Rebels last weekend, leading the way with 29 points scored. Jayden Testa finished with 18 points, 16 coming in the first half to help propel the Johnston offense.

The Panthers were set to take on Middletown in a championship rematch on Tuesday, but the game was postponed due to weather. Johnston will next face Toll Gate at home on Thursday.



STILL UNBEATEN:

Neari Vasquez takes the ball up the court in a recent game in Johnston.

(Photo by Alex Sponseller)



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Speed zones to save right whales

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

NOAA Fisheries announced the annual opening of a Seasonal Management Area (SMA) in Cape Cod Bay to protect North Atlantic right whales starting on January 1, 2024 to May 15, 2024. All vessels 65 feet or longer must travel at 10 knots or less in this area to reduce the threat of vessel collisions with these endangered whales.

The northern right whale population is one of the most endangered species in the world, with a total surviving population now estimated at only around 340 animals, including about 100 females that can bear young.

Because vessels of all sizes can strike and injure a right whale, NOAA Fisheries also encourages vessels less than 65 feet in length to slow down to 10 knots or less within active SMAs.

Studies have shown that ship speeds of 10 knots or less can reduce the danger of a ship collision being fatal to whales by 80 percent to 90 percent, according to Oceana.

The mandatory management area includes all waters of Cape Cod Bay with Northern Boundary of 42°04'56.5"N, 070°12'W to 42°12'N, 070°12'W then due west back to shore.

Boaters and fishers have expressed concerns about blanket mandatory speed zones restricting vessel traffic unnecessarily as today's whale tracking technology can be used to be more selective with mandatory speed zones. Much of this is still being worked out by conservation groups, NOAA and the fishing/boating communities. Mandatory speed zones do restrict and create economic hardship for vessels such as ferries and charter/party boats so if we can use technology to avoid harming right whales and not apply mandatory speed zones as much it would be desirable.

All boaters from Maine to Virginia, or interested parties, can sign up for email or text notifications about the latest Right Whale Slow Zones. You can also follow NOAA on Facebook (@NOAAFisheriesNEMA) and Twitter (@NOAAFish_GARFO) for announcements.

A number of voluntary speed zones, in addition to this mandatory speed zone are in effect from Maine to Virginia. For right whale sightings and speed zones visit North Atlantic Right Whale Sightings | NOAA Fisheries.

Rhode Island shellfish areas closed

The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) announced several shellfish areas in Narragansett Bay have been closed due to inundating rainfall throughout Rhode Island last week and this weekend.

The following areas are subject to a 10-day closure and are scheduled to reopen to shellfishing on Friday, Jan. 20, at 12 p.m., however, check DEM's website or hotline noted below as closure dates could be extended with additional rain and/or snow melt. Areas include Upper Narragansett Bay Area A (including Mill Gut), Upper Narragansett Bay Area B and Lower Providence River Area E'

Also, the following areas are subject to a seven-day closure and are scheduled to reopen to shellfishing on Wednesday, Jan. 17, at 12 p.m., however, check for extensions on this date too. Areas include Point Judith Pond Conditional Areas, Greenwich Bay, Mount Hope Bay, The Kickemuit River, The West Middle Bay shellfish area (GA9), and The East Middle Bay shellfish area (GA3).

The emergency closures include water of Narragansett Bay north of a line running from approximately Quonset Point in North Kingstown to the northern tip of Conanicut Island (Jamestown) to the southern tip of Prudence Island to Carr Point in Portsmouth.

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 the Office of Water Resources' listserv here: RishellfishOWR-subscribe@listserve.ri.gov.

Workshop on fishing regulations

The Department of Environmental Management's (DEM) Division of Marine Fisheries will hold a regulatory workshop on Monday, Feb. 5, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. to solicit input regarding prospective and/or proposed amendments to the marine fisheries regulations.

This is the workshop you should attend to voice your opinion on desired regulation options shared for the species we all love to catch, eat, and/or release. Recreational species discussed at the workshop will include scup, Black sea bass, summer flounder, as well as commercial and recreational regulations for striped bass, bluefish and tautog.

The in person meeting will be held at the URI Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium, 215 South Ferry Road, Narragansett RI. The hybrid meeting's Zoom webinar link is [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86560685183?pwd=Z2w1anFZM3pTNDBIOXVpdVpNaD-Bwdz09\[us02web.zoom.us\]](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86560685183?pwd=Z2w1anFZM3pTNDBIOXVpdVpNaD-Bwdz09[us02web.zoom.us]); meeting ID: 865 6068 5183; Passcode: 565590; dial in: 1-929-205-6099 (listen only)

Please send proposals to John Lake @ john.lake@dem.ri.gov no later than Thursday, February 1st if you would like your proposal included in the slide presentation. Staff are available to assist you with discussing prospective proposals.

Hartford Boat Show at Mohegan Sun this week

The Hartford Boat Show will be held Jan. 18 to Jan. 21, 2024 at Mohegan Sun's Earth Expo Center, 1 Mohegan Sun Blvd, Uncasville, CT. The Show is sponsored by the Connecticut Marine Trades Association offering an exciting venue for this Boat Show,

See more boats and bands than anywhere else in the Hartford area with cruisers, fishing boats, pontoon boats, jet skis, accessories of all types and more.

Tickets at the door \$16 with children under twelve admitted free with an adult. Show hours Thursday, Jan. 18, 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Friday, Jan. 19, 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 20, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 21, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For directions and a list of exhibitors with floor plans visit www.hartfordboatshow.com

Where's the bite?

Freshwater fishing in stocked ponds for trout and salmon continues to be good with a largemouth bass bite too. For a complete list of trout stocked ponds in Massachusetts visit Mass Wildlife at Trout stocking report | Mass.gov and in Rhode Island visit www.dem.ri.gov/fishing, or call 401-789-0281 or 401-539-0019 for more information on trout stocking.

Saltwater fishing has been limited with severe storms. However, anglers continue to catch school striped bass and an occasional keeper in salt ponds and estuaries. If you want to try your hand at cod fishing call ahead to make a party boat reservation, vessels will sail once the weather clears. Visit www.islandcurrent.com and www.francesfleet.com. Full day rates for vessels are generally \$130 to \$135 per adult and around \$80 for those under 12 years old.

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



FIRST FISH: John Migliori with his first of 2024. A 21-inch Sebago Salmon caught at his favorite Aquidneck Island pond with a Kastmaster lure. (Submitted photo)

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ATTACK THE BASKET: Bella Gesualdi in the paint last week.

■ Panthers

(Continued from page 11)

place in Division IV behind Davies, who got a comeback win over Johnston on opening night. The two teams appear to be on a collision course and Rollins' return will likely create a whole new dynamic on paper. Although the Panthers would like to be in first place, they are focused on the long-term rather than the short.

"I'm a competitor and I like being number one, but all we care about is what happens in the playoffs. Right now,

it doesn't matter. Those standings can change before the playoffs so right now we just want to focus on getting better in time for the playoffs," said Diggs.

Rollins has faith in her teammates and also looks forward to the chance to reestablish Johnston as one of the state's best basketball communities.

"It's a team effort. We work together, pick each other up, and if we mess up, we don't dwell on it. There's a little bit of pressure but if we stay positive, we'll be good and get the outcome that we're looking for," Rollins said. "We're very motivated because we want to get Johnston back on the map."



LAYUP: Idaizha Brown drives to the hoop.

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■ Flood

(Continued from page 1)

"We don't have a car on the other side and I have two cats I can't leave," Nova said. "One of my cats is a diabetic and needs his medicine and wet food every day."

The town issued a Jan. 12 mandatory evacuation for Belfield Drive residents.

"On Friday evening, residents of Belfield Drive who were stranded as a result of the flooding were evacuated," wrote town Emergency Management Director and Johnston Police Chief and Mark A. Vieira. "At the deepest portion, the water level on Belfield Drive measured 40 inches in depth making it difficult for our military Humvees to travel through the flooded areas of the roadway. Due to public safety concerns, the affected residences were determined to be unsafe for occupancy and the Town of Johnston issued a mandatory evacuation order."

Earlier this week, Vieira said the town was "in the process of working with members of RI DOT and the Federal Highway Administration to install an emergency access road at the end of Belfield Drive for use by emergency personnel."

Gaining emergency access to Belfield Drive proved more difficult than expected.

Dead End Street

Belfield Drive's a dead-end street, and at the end of the street you can see and hear the traffic passing on Interstate 295, less than an underhand stone's throw away. Between the highway and the waterlogged town road, however, a fence and a culvert block access.

The town wanted to start construction on "a temporary access road for emergency vehicles on Monday," Jan. 15, but "over the weekend" they were "informed of a regulation implemented in 2017 which restricts the temporary construction of roadways connecting to interstate highways," according to a press release from the office of Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. "This regulation prohibits any such construction of a temporary access road from Belfield Drive to I-295 South, similar to the one constructed in 2010."

Johnston's public safety officials consulted with federal officials and determined the Belfield Drive residents may not be reachable for as long as two weeks (under current conditions). In the meantime, they'd need food and heating oil (and potentially, access to emergency services).

Several sources confirm Polisena had been trying to get help from Gov. Dan McKee's office throughout the weekend, but the governor's office was slow to offer solutions. The mayor had 30 constituents who were unreachable by emergency vehicles and minutes mattered.

He contacted the state's federal delegation — they were on it, but once again, it was a holiday weekend, and an inaccessible neighborhood was unacceptable. The town needed vehicle-access to Belfield Drive, and the water was now too deep for the town's Humvees to cross (the water had not fully receded following the Dec. 18 storm).

After striking out with the governor's office, sources reveal Polisena worked back channels to reach Washington D.C., starting with Helena Foulkes, McKee's Democratic rival (he beat Foulkes to the nomination in 2022).

Foulkes, who serves on Johnston's School Building Committee, connected town officials with former Rhode Island Gov. Gina M. Raimondo, who now serves as the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. Raimondo connected Polisena's office to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg.

On Wednesday morning, Polisena provided an emergency agreement he signed with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), seeking Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval for a "temporary emergency locked gate access to Interstate 295 from Belfield Avenue in Johnston," which ultimately permitted the town to start construction at 6 a.m. Wednesday morning.

Gov. McKee's Press Secretary Olivia DaRocha provided a statement late Wednesday morning recapping the state government's efforts to help Johnston's flooded property owners.

"The State, including our office, has been in contact with the Town of Johnston regarding recent flooding issues," DaRocha wrote via email. "RIDOT put in a request to FHWA to get authorization for the town to create temporary access to Belfield via 295. RIDOT is currently awaiting FHWA's response."

The document itself indicates the agreement for emergency highway access was only secured after Polisena talked to the FHWA.

"In accordance with the conversation between the Mayor of Johnston ... and the Federal Highway Administrator, the Town of Johnston agrees to the following stipulations," reads the letter, signed by Polisena and RIDOT Director Peter Alviti Jr.

Polisena wouldn't comment on his conversation with the feds (and why the state didn't have that conversation on behalf of the town). Instead, Polisena thanked the Ocean State's federal delegation — U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner, and Sen. Jack Reed and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse — for their continued support.

He estimates the access road will cost the town about

\$500,000 (construction combined with traffic details, first-responders, diesel fuel, hotel fees, etc.).

"I'll do what I can to help," Polisena said Wednesday morning. "But I can never do this again."

Last week, as the fresh rain fell, Johnston received a small dose of good news regarding federal disaster declarations from earlier storms.

Later Wednesday morning, Polisena's office issued a press release, which included the following statement from the mayor:

"I'm grateful for the hard work of Senator Reed, Senator Whitehouse and Representative Magaziner for helping the Town receive this permission from the federal government. This one-time agreement ensures that while the main road remains impassible, those residents will regain access to essential food, medicine and home heating oil deliveries by our first responders, whose vehicles were incapacitated in the flood waters last week. While this is an essential first step to preserve the health, safety and welfare of the residents still there, the only permanent solution forward is home buyouts for all properties affected by persistent flooding. I look forward to working with the federal delegation to achieve that goal."

Tearing Down Fences

Workers in fluorescent gear stood off the highway shoulder, down an embankment. They cut through the metal fence and awaited the arrival of steel plates, which would be placed across the culvert, and truckloads of gravel for the emergency road surface.

Alex Cordeiro, general superintendent for DiGregorio Construction, said the crew hopes to connect the dead end of Belfield to the interstate by Thursday morning, Jan. 18. The freezing temperatures made the job uncomfortable, but doable.

"This was a Herculean task," Polisena said, standing on the side of the highway. "But we got it done."

After the road's built (Cordeiro estimated around 24 hours), emergency crews and home heating oil deliveries (fuel delivery vehicles "will be considered emergency vehicles" in "subfreezing weather") can utilize the access road to reach the homes on Belfield Drive during two short, one-hour windows each day (from 10-11 a.m. and from 7-8 p.m.).

And if an emergency does pop up on Belfield, they will have access when needed, until the water subsides.

"We would estimate it would take 1-2 weeks for the water to recede enough for first responder Humvees to get through," Polisena said Wednesday morning.

The emergency agreement expires on Jan. 26.

"This is why they gave us the Jan 26th closing date for the road, or until the water recedes enough for first responders to pass by," Polisena said. "For reference, the Dec. 18th storm brought the water level up to three feet. Prior to the last rain storm, there was four inches of water still there from that December storm."

Floods Too Frequent

Polisena's administration has been working on a plan. On Wednesday morning he drove his public safety vehicle onto Interstate 295 South, to check on the start of access road construction. The storms have been frequent and furious since the mayor took office, almost exactly one year ago.

Mid-week, several inches of rain, a high water table and saturated top soil led to more widespread flooding in Johnston. Once again, Atwood Avenue sank under water, cutting off access to Stop & Shop and surrounding businesses. Police shut down the ramps to Route 6.

Christina Rondeau, owner of Rondeau's Kickboxing on Atwood Avenue, posted an update to the gym's social media accounts.

"I have spoken to the Mayor of Johnston, Atwood (Avenue) is a state road," Rondeau wrote. "Apparently the state does not want to do anything about the issue so Johnston took it upon themselves to fix the issue. They have a (\$2 million) grant and plan on fixing the situation asap."

Rondeau also said she'd be calling on her local state representatives to help focus funding on the Atwood flooding issue.

Tenants at a residential complex were the first to sound the alarm.

"The Park Plaza apartments, located at 20 Park St., experienced flooding on Wednesday morning affecting approximately 20 units," according to Vieira. "About six residents had to be evacuated from Park Plaza by the Johnston Fire Department."

Johnston firefighters carried residents and pets from the complex through thigh-high water.

"We sent our Engine-1 and our boat to the apartment complex," said Johnston Fire Chief David A Iannuccilli. He estimated "approximately 20 units were flooded."

A cooperative effort followed, between local relief organizations and the town.

"The RI Red Cross, in conjunction with the Town of Johnston, set up an evacuation shelter for affected residents at Rainone Gym located at 45 Mill St.," Vieira said. "Approximately seven people stayed at the shelter until it was closed on Friday once arrangements were made for alternative living quarters at the Marriot Courtyard in Lincoln."

Residents from Belfield Drive have also been sheltered at the hotel, following Friday's subsequent mandatory evacuations.

"Approximately 20 people were successfully evacuated from Belfield Drive utilizing a F-750 large body dump truck provided by the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 57, located at 873 Central Avenue, Johnston," Vieira wrote via email earlier this week. "Arrangements were made for the affected residents to be transported to alternative living quarters at the Marriot Courtyard ... Ten people between four homes refused the order to evacuate and remained in their homes. The residents who stayed behind assured public safety personnel they had sufficient food and supplies."

Rescue crews carried residents on their backs. They climbed into boats and bobbed to neighbors in need. In most of areas of town, however, the water sank back into the Pocasset River. On Belfield, it was a different story.

Polisena estimates around 8-10 homes were cut off by road flooding, and around three of those homes were flooded (in all around 30 residents were affected; 10 stayed in their homes and 20 were sheltered in the Lincoln Marriot).

"An Industrial pump is currently operating on Belfield Drive to pump the large body of water and mitigate the flooding," Vieira said.

The Worry Spots

Last Tuesday, flood waters devoured the Ocean State's lowlands. Widespread flooding was reported across Rhode Island, and according to DaRocha, on Jan. 9, "RIEMA activated the State Emergency Operations Center ... to assist municipalities with emergency response operations."

"As we transitioned our operations from response to recovery, RIEMA also contacted the municipalities and requested initial damage assessments," DaRocha wrote Wednesday to the Johnston Sun Rise. "The assessments are used to review and verify the impact of a disaster or emergency. Additionally, as you know, the Governor signed a declaration of disaster emergency which is essential in positioning the state and local municipalities to receive FEMA reimbursement for damage related to the flooding."

In the end, the town, and its property owners, will have to examine whether recent weather trends are anomaly or Johnston's newfound reality.

"The areas of the town that worry me the most are areas near the Pocasset River, specifically Belfield, Johnston Memorial Park, Atwood Ave, Lafazia Drive and other surrounding neighborhoods of the river," Polisena said earlier this week. In December, Polisena told the Johnston Sun Rise about government plans to buy homes on Belfield Drive, demolish them and install wetlands.

"The home buyout process application for Belfield Drive is submitted to the federal government," Polisena explained earlier this week. "While there are 10 houses, I believe there are about 17 individual parcels of land between vacant property and residential homes. We are hoping to hear back from the federal government within a few months."

Government buyers may be knocking on Belfield Drive doors by summer, estimates the mayor.

"The big picture is we have two options," Polisena argues. "We can either continue that status quo; piecemeal this project-by-project, year-after-year, or the town can invest in substantial flooding upgrades. My specific course of action is we are currently working on a master engineering list of areas prone to flooding."

Polisena has ordered engineers to draft a list of "recommended projects that will help alleviate flooding for the highest number of people possible."

"Once we get that final list of projects recommended, we get a specific price, then go to a general obligation bond in the November election," Polisena said. "Let the voters decide. Tell them they have two options: we can continue to Band-Aid the problem by pumping water, closing roads and dispatching first responders or we can spend money and do this right."

The mayor insists the state refuses to address flooding issues on Atwood Avenue (Route 5), a state road. And the town itself, working with the federal government following flooding on Belfield Drive in 2010, already attempted a buyout program on Belfield. One house was purchased, demolished and replaced with a retention pond (and other flood mitigation structures). They worked a little, but not enough to prevent last week's flooding.

"We need to be honest with the voter and tell them what the average property tax will be to pay for the bond, and ... just let (them) decide," Polisena said. "I know people where property taxes are their number one priority no matter what. I've also spoken to quite a few people, particularly lately, who are being severely paralyzed by flooding, whether in their own neighborhood, Atwood Avenue, or another route to work. We're at the point now where the flooding is affecting our productivity and economy. But that would be my ultimate plan. Once we have the specific list of projects and the cost, let the voters decide."

On Wednesday morning, he pondered the possibility that once again Belfield Drive property owners may not want to leave their homes (even if it's for fair market value).

In that case, Polisena said the town may need to consider more drastic action. He quietly said the words "eminent domain."

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, 71116 Main St., Hope Valley.

Volunteer with NAMI-RI

The RI chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-RI) is currently seeking volunteers to facilitate our family programs in 2024. Free training is required and available for interested persons who have a loved one struggling with mental health issues. Together with our grassroots volunteers, we work every day to provide help and hope to millions of Americans. Volunteers are essential to the work that we do at NAMI Rhode Island, and we are always seeking enthusiastic people to help us achieve our mission. For more information about our family programs and volunteer training, email beth@namirhodeisland.org, call the NAMI-RI office 401-331-3060 or visit our website at namirhodeisland.org.

Soul of '71 Scholarship Fund

In 2021, the Johnston High School Class of 1971 established The Soul of 1971 Scholarship Fund at The Rhode Island Foundation. The Class of '71 is the first class in the history of the Johnston School System to establish a permanent fund. The Fund currently stands at \$23,031. Scholarships have been awarded in 2022 and 2023 to deserving JHS seniors. For additional information or to make a donation, contact Harold J. Hemberger at hembergerharold@gmail.com. All funds on deposit are managed by The Rhode Island Foundation.

Help OSDRI restock their pantry!

Operation Stand Down Rhode Island needs your help. Their food pantry needs a major restocking. See a list of needed nonperishable items in the photo.

Like many people, OSDRI's clients have been faced with some real obstacles these past couple of years. With your help, they pledge to always be there to give a hand up for veterans and their families in need.

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

Editor's Note: Send submissions to Sun Rise Editor Rory Schuler at rorys@rhodybeat.com or Front Desk Coordinator Ida Zecco at idez@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.

AARP Chapter 2210 Trips

March 13

AARP 'The Ladies Foursome' Trip

The AARP Chapter 2210 will sponsor a trip, "The Ladies Foursome Trip, on Wed., Mar. 13, to the Newport Playhouse to see "The Ladies Foursome." The trip includes a delicious luncheon buffet, the play and a delightful cabaret show after the play. Depart from the Park & Ride, Hopkins Hill Road at Exit 19 in West Greenwich at 10:15 a.m. Approximate return time is 5:30 p.m. Cost is \$134/person. Call Maureen at 401-828-5188 or Anne at 401-263-4274 for reservations or for more information.

May 21

Plymouth Cruise & Lunch

The AARP Chapter 2210 will be sponsoring a Plymouth, Massachusetts, Cruise & Lunch trip on Tuesday, May 21. The trip includes a visit to Pilgrim Memorial State Park, the legendary Plymouth Rock and various other memorials. You will enjoy a 3-course meal at the John Carver Inn then take a 75-minute narrated cruise aboard the Pilgrim Belle. Depart from the Park & Ride, Hopkins Hill Road at Exit 19, in West Greenwich, at 9:30 a.m. and approximate return time is 6 p.m. Cost is \$114/person. Call Maureen, 401-828-5188 or Anne, 401-263-4274 for reservations or for more information.

June 26

Indian Princess Cruise & Lunch Trip

The AARP Chapter 2210 will be sponsoring an Indian Princess Cruise and Lunch Trip on Wed., Jun. 26, at Indian Ranch in Webster, Massachusetts. The trip includes a 90-minute narrated cruise of Webster Lake and a delicious lunch at Samuel Slater's Restaurant overlooking the lake. Depart from the Park & Ride, Hopkins Hill Road at Exit 19, in West Greenwich at 8 a.m. Cost is \$119/person. Call Maureen, 401-828-5188 or Anne, 401-263-4274 for reservations or for more information.

July 23

Foster's Lobster Bake & York, Maine Trip

The AARP Chapter 2210 will be sponsoring the Foster's Lobster Bake & York, Maine trip on Tuesday, July 23. The trip includes a Clambake at Foster's Restaurant, shopping & browsing at Short Sands Beach. Depart from the Park & Ride, Hopkins Hill Road at Exit 19, in West Greenwich, at 8 a.m. and approximate return time is 7 p.m. Cost is \$114/person. Call Maureen at 401-828-5188 or Anne at 401-263-4274 for reservations or for more information.

Sept. 18

Lake Winnepesaukee Turkey Train Trip

The AARP Chapter 2210 is sponsoring a Lake Winnepesaukee Turkey Train Trip on Wednesday, Sept. 18. Enjoy the beautiful scenery along the western shore of the lake during your 2-hour train ride. On the ride, indulge in a turkey lunch provided by Hart's Turkey Farm. Depart from the Park & Ride, Hopkins Hill Road at Exit 19, in West Greenwich, at 8:30 a.m. and approximate return time is 7 p.m. Cost is \$129/person. Call Maureen, 401-828-5188 or Anne, 401-263-4274 for reservations and more information.

Oct. 3

Foliage in the White Mountains Tour

The AARP Chapter 2210 is sponsoring a Foliage in the White Mountains Tour on Thurs., October 3. Enjoy lunch at the White Mountain Hotel, have time to browse the village of North Conway, then continue along the Kancamagus Highway through the White Mountains. Bus pickup from the Exit 19, Park & Ride on Hopkins Hill Road, West Greenwich, at 7 a.m. Return time is approximately 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$129/person. For more information call Maureen at 401-828-5188 or Anne at 401-263-4274.

ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

Billy is a sharp dressed man! This handsome one year old Tuxedo is longing for your love and affection. His eyes sparkle with excitement when you meet him and once he knows you, he's a big mush! Billy is looking for an adult home or a home with older cat savvy children who will enjoy his loyal companionship. He will be your shadow, especially if you have yummy treats on hand. If you'd like to meet Billy to see if he's your purr-fect match, please contact Scruffy Paws Animal Rescue. Visit their website www.scruffypawsanimalrescue.org or email them scruffypawsanimalrescue@gmail.com and maybe you will be the lucky one who takes this beautiful boy home!

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



Photo credit: Animal Talk

Rosie is a young, stunning tri-color mixed breed girl with a smile that will steal your heart! Her astrological sign is Sagittarius born in December, dogs born under this sign are said to have lots of energy and love to be mentally and physically stimulated. Rosie loves to explore; she'd make a great hiking partner! She is just over two years old and is ready to start her life in a loving home! So, if you are active and looking for the perfect companion, please visit Rosie. Once she gets to play and have fun, she also loves to snuggle with you. Rosie needs someone who will be patient, loving and open their heart to her. She has been cooped up in the shelter for quite some time waiting for her perfect match. She loves to catch treats, plays fetch and longs to be loved! If you'd like to foster or adopt Rosie and give her the chance she so deserves, contact EGAPL Heart of RI Animal Rescue League and go meet Rosie. You can call 401-467-3670 or visit the shelter located at 44 Worthington Road Cranston, RI on Wednesdays anytime from 5:00-7:00 or Saturdays from 10:00-2:00. You may need to visit with Rosie a few times to see her full potential and build a friendship with her, but she is totally worth it! Please help Rosie find her forever home by telling her story!

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Real Estate Transactions

Coventry

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
3 Kitty Hawk Ln	Balcazar, Magno E	Grenier, Janet S	12/27	\$142,500
8 Circlewood Dr	Casey, Kathy D and Casey, Thomas R	Carlos, Matthew E and Stabile, Christina B	12/27	\$529,000
12 Northup Plat Rd	Murray, Paul and Ballou, Karen	Jessie, Jack D and Labrie, Jennifer K	12/27	\$1,050,000
21 Milton Ln	Tempo Holdings LLC	Taylor, James J	12/28	\$170,000

Cranston

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
1 Sunrise Rd	Mucci, Raymond R and Mucci, Christine M	14 Prop LLC	12/21	\$327,000
10 East St Lot 108	Gulotta, Michael A	Maletesta, Luigi	12/21	\$150,000
11 Dart St Lot 31	Charles J Nardone Irt and Mihailides, Paul P	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,500
11 Dart St Lot 30	Gladys A Nardone T and Fish, Arlene M	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,000
11 Dart St Lot 32	Charles J Nardone Irt and Mihailides, Paul P	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,500
11 Dart St Lot 33	Gladys A Nardone T and Fish, Arlene M	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,000
11 Dart St Lot 31	Gladys A Nardone T and Fish, Arlene M	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,000
11 Dart St Lot 34	Gladys A Nardone T and Fish, Arlene M	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,000
11 Dart St Lot 32	Gladys A Nardone T and Fish, Arlene M	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,000
11 Dart St Lot 33	Charles J Nardone Irt and Mihailides, Paul P	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,500
11 Dart St Lot 30	Charles J Nardone Irt and Mihailides, Paul P	Imperial Apt LLC	12/28	\$762,500
17 Althea Dr	Oneill, William and Oneill, Patricia	Smith, Deborah J	12/28	\$420,000
33 Loomis St Lot 46	Nancy J Craveiro Irt and Craveiro, Anthony	Reiff, Evan and Reiff, Ashlee	12/28	\$405,000
33 Loomis St Lot 47	Nancy J Craveiro Irt and Craveiro, Anthony	Reiff, Evan and Reiff, Ashlee	12/28	\$405,000
37 Tudor St Lot 2-58	Romano Shirley T Est and Feole-Casinelli, Keri A	Burrows, Natalie	12/21	\$340,000
37 Tudor St Lot 1-58	Romano Shirley T Est and Feole-Casinelli, Keri A	Burrows, Natalie	12/21	\$340,000
43 Macintosh Dr	Gibbons, Stephen J and Gibbons, Tracey A	Omar, Amira and Elhamamsy, Mohamed	12/19	\$650,000
49 Amanda St	Panzitta, Lucille	Goodness, Pamela	12/21	\$425,000
50 Applegate Rd	Petropoulos, Peter and Petropoulos, Georgia	Small, Richard and Small, Margaret	12/22	\$775,000
58 Elton Cir	Panayotti, Clive D	lab LLC	12/22	\$262,500
59 Judge St	Jeffrey, David A	Polanco, Manuel	12/21	\$285,000
65 Stevens Rd	Chouinard, Corey D	Mazza, Anthony J and Mazza, Jessica N	12/20	\$523,000
103 Mason Ave Lot 91	Simen, Jose R	Poulard, Gregory H and Dalce, Widlyne J	12/22	\$440,000
103 Mason Ave Lot 92	Simen, Jose R	Poulard, Gregory H and Dalce, Widlyne J	12/22	\$440,000
116 Westwood Ave	Vasquez Prop LLC	Gold Star Barber Shop LLC	12/26	\$260,000
175 Hoffman Ave Lot 104	Allaire, Shirley A and Allaire, Robert	Burns, Peggy L	12/22	\$265,000
177 Arnold Ave	Acosta, Martiza	Simen Garcia, Jose R	12/27	\$600,000
200 Mayfield Ave Lot E6	Picozzi, Robert T	Silvia, Marissa N	12/21	\$306,100
266 Scituate Ave Lot A2	Clement A Santangelo RET and Ouellet, Mark C	Cocozza Jr, James J	12/28	\$340,000
838 Dyer Ave Lot 2744	838 Dyer Ave LLC	Dyer Exchange LLC	12/21	\$650,000
838 Dyer Ave Lot 2710	838 Dyer Ave LLC	Dyer Exchange LLC	12/21	\$650,000

East Greenwich

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
5 Lenihan Ln	Antonio Giarrusso RET and Giarrusso, Antonio	Loffredo 3rd, Andrew A	12/21	\$2,000,000
152 Crompton Ave Lot 23	Masse, Robert N and Masse, Maureen C	Anthony E Wilson T and Wilson, Anthony E	12/20	\$799,900
186 Pine Glen Dr Lot 186	Buff, Iva M	Esta Cohen RET and Cohen, Esta	12/29	\$660,000
202 Maplewood Dr	Karen H Carlson T and Carlson, Karen H	Lee, Miriam V and Lee, Shane	12/21	\$670,000
275 Moosehorn Rd	Wallace, Jennifer L and Mcevoy, Joanne M	Murphy, Lisa and Claytor, Christian	12/27	\$675,000

Johnston

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
10 Emelia St	Mendez, Christian Y	Vadenais, Colleen J and Menard, Brittany L	12/27	\$340,000
18 Rotary Dr	Yagoubian, Hovannes and Davtjan, Ruzanna	Scott, Aleksander C and Giammarco, Alyssa R	1/2	\$405,000
28 Rosemere Ave	Randall, Christina	Mendez, Christian and Mendez, Gabriel	12/29	\$453,000

Warwick

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
1 Willow Glen Cir Lot 81-8	Grimshaw, Brian R and Grimshaw, Christopher G	Gauthier, Lynn	12/28	\$285,000
4 Hudson Ln Lot 141	Kane, Eric S	Tivey, Ann	12/29	\$354,000
4 Hudson Ln Lot 150	Kane, Eric S	Tivey, Ann	12/29	\$354,000
4 Hudson Ln Lot 149	Kane, Eric S	Tivey, Ann	12/29	\$354,000
4 Hudson Ln Lot 145	Kane, Eric S	Tivey, Ann	12/29	\$354,000
4 Hudson Ln Lot 146	Kane, Eric S	Tivey, Ann	12/29	\$354,000
4 Hudson Ln Lot 140	Kane, Eric S	Tivey, Ann	12/29	\$354,000
35 Nausauket Rd	Poirier, Richard J	Titus, Ashley and Titus, Robert D	12/26	\$350,000
38 Marquette Dr	Nelson, Kristin	Bochichio, Elizabeth	12/29	\$360,000
51 Torrington Dr	Osullivan, Maegan	Fata, Evan	12/28	\$320,000
60 Earham Way	Jarbeau, Courtney and Jarbeau, Jamie	Houtchens, Julianne E and Shoener, Jordan	12/26	\$350,000
93 Carriage Dr Lot 93	Lonardo, Barbara	Weinstein, Mary	12/29	\$490,000
106 Almy St	Gillett, Geoffrey B and Gillett, Gail M	Gillett, William G and Becker, Tamara A	12/28	\$298,000
140 Spencer Woods Dr Lot 140	Dronzek, Jeffrey A	Mullins, Frank J	12/26	\$469,000
179 Gray St Lot 53	Hi Noel Inc	Noel, Joseph W and Noel, Danita L	12/29	\$320,000
179 Gray St Lot 54	Hi Noel Inc	Noel, Joseph W and Noel, Danita L	12/29	\$320,000
186 George St	Cabral, Elizabeth and Cabral, Nelson	Phillips, Denise	12/28	\$300,000
223 Church Ave	Potter, Carolynne A	Brown, Cheryl M	12/26	\$420,000
264 Pine St	Dorsey, John A	Cepeda, Patricia	12/27	\$235,000
324 Potters Ave Lot 535	Lillian N Dovidio Irt and Dovidio, Ellen M	Dovidio, Thomas G and Dovidio, Holly	12/26	\$314,000
324 Potters Ave Lot 536	Lillian N Dovidio Irt and Dovidio, Ellen M	Dovidio, Thomas G and Dovidio, Holly	12/26	\$314,000
400 Narragansett Pkwy Lot C10	Fox, Anne M	Barrie, Alison	12/29	\$360,000

West Greenwich

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
19 Comanche Trl	Elevator Prop Inc	Martin, Andrew	12/29	\$425,000
367 Plain Meeting House Rd	Levesque, Michael	Lapaglia, Giulio and Lapaglia, Patience	12/29	\$409,000

West Warwick

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
17 Aldrich St	Fordham, Charline J	Greg-Lapomerry, Ted S	12/29	\$375,000
33 Ethel St	Myers, Daverlyn M	Mandeville, George	12/28	\$220,000
47 Revere Ave	Fontaine, Roger G and Fontaine, Joyce	Zuckerman, Mikayla and Zuckerman, Carol	12/29	\$325,000
89-91 E Main St	Sousa, Joseph and Sousa, Paul	Magill, Tara and Leone, Cory	1/2	\$412,000



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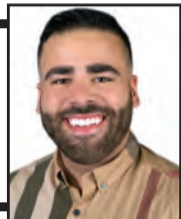
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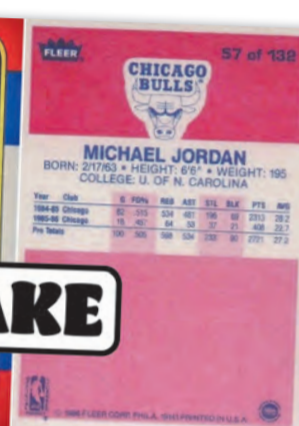
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ANTIQUES • COLLECTIBLES • CONSIGNMENTS • ESTATES • VINTAGE

A Southern California Journey



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



When I arrived at the consignors address in San Diego and initially saw the collection on the table, the presentation was perfect. Every card in the box within its own hard case; the Brady's were beautiful, the LeBron, too... but then there was the Jordan alongside a Patrick Ewing rookie. Unfortunately, the Jordan was instantly recognizable as a fake/reproduction card, especially when compared with the real Patrick Ewing. I was devastated, and it was certainly not fun to break that news. It's never fun to crush someone's dreams, and I don't want to be a dream crusher!

How did I know it was a fake as soon as I saw it? The print was pixelated with a consistent dotting throughout, and the Fleer logo and small print on the back was blurry. What sealed the deal was taking the Jordan and Ewing cards out of their cases to compare and show the differences, which were obvious. In about 9 minutes flat, a beautiful ride down the California coast ended in sadness, especially for the consignor.

Don't get me wrong, the collection will still be a joy to handle; but a once potential \$6,000 to \$9,000 collection is now perhaps \$1,000 to \$1,500 before grading. The point of this story is you must be careful in this hobby. Whether it is comic books, trading cards, or toys, people are always creating fakes and trying to deceive. That is why when collecting at any level provenance is important!



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OR e-mail to: Classifieds@rhodybeat.com

JHS capped with crazy to remember their lost friend Rachel Carson

By PETE FONTAINE

There were acts of caring and sharing last Friday throughout Johnston High School.

It was Crazy Hat Day, named in honor to remember the late Rachel E. Carson, a beloved member of the sponsoring JHS Music Department, who played bass clarinet in the band and acted in various shows until her sad passing on Jan. 14, 2018.

Thus, many students — as well as faculty and staff members — donated \$2 each during the entire school day to raise money for the now prestigious Rachel E. Carson Memorial Scholarship. In the spring, a boy and girl will receive \$500 each in some of the 2024 grants.

By day's end, the JHS community collected upwards of \$500 for the scholarship that Ron Lamoureux, director of JHS' national award-winning music department said "today's collection will help fund this year's grants and we've got other exciting events coming up."

In the three previous years since Crazy Hat Day began, the JHS student body has been on top with total donations, but this time around the teacher's won the day and as Lamoureux wanted it known "We want to thank everyone for their generosity and helping make the say a special success."

"The kids from the music department were very generous in their donations," Lamoureux emphasized. "Also, our local Tri-M Music Honor Society members were at the school a 6:30 a.m. to set up refreshments for the faculty and staff to enjoy at the start of the day."

Moreover, many students, faculty and staff also purchased the annual Rachel E. Carson Memorial button, which Lamoureux said has a "new look every year as we remember an exceptional student who meant so much to our music department before her passing."

Lamoureux also explained that the Johnston School Music Association Department (JSMA) administers the annual Carson scholarships and will benefit from several upcoming events.

The music department's annual Soft Goods Drive will be held in the coming months and Lamoureux said "we are counting on a record collection this year to help boost the Carson scholarships and several other scholarships the JSMA offers each year."



HAPPY HATS: Among those JHS music department students who helped make Crazy Hat Day a super success are, from left: Carson Cabrera, Shylah Soto, Trinity Edith Angell Blondin and Carl Taglianetti. (Sun Rise photos by Pete Fontaine)



FUN(D)RAISERS: Some of the talented musicians who helped raise money for scholarships and wore special Crazy Hats last Friday at JHS are Landon Costello, Chelsea Maranhao, Joshua Edward, Katie Loffler and David Pagliarini.



FANTASTIC FRIENDSHIP: The late Rachel E. Carson (left) and her classmate Emily Gaye, who recently worked with the music department in the brief absence of Choir and Chorus Director Matt Gingras, back in their days as students.

ratives and Negotiations: Agency, Religion, and the State," Lexington Books, 2015; and articles in the "Historical Journal of Massachusetts" (Winter 2007), and the "New England Journal of History" (2015). Her book, "Democratic Repairman: The Political Life of James Howard McGrath" was published by McFarland Press in May 2019.

Her articles on "the New England Crime Castle" and "J. Howard McGrath and the Wiretapping Case of 1939-1940" have most recently been featured on the website smallstatebighistory.com.

Mulligan is currently working on a manuscript tentatively titled, "Between Two Worlds: Rhode Island's Little Italies, 1880-1930," a forthcoming publication (Rhode Island Publication Society, 2025), the subject of her upcoming presentation in Johnston.

"In this presentation, I will briefly trace the journey of southern Italians to Rhode Island," according to Mulligan. "Although Federal Hill served as the main conduit for the Italian community, many outlying neighborhoods such as Thornton and Simmonsville in the town of Johnston among other outlying villages were diverse, ethnically vibrant communities that adopted traditions they learned from their original Paese in Italy."

Italy

(Continued from page 1)

"Who is an American?" Mulligan writes. "Italian immigrants arriving on America's shores in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries grappled with this question. Pouring in from southern Europe, they looked upon this so-called land of opportunity to lift them from the poverty of their former life in Italy."

Mulligan is Professor of History at Roger Williams University.

A Rhode Island native, Mulligan received her Master of Arts and Ph.D. in History from Providence College. She taught a variety of courses in East Asian, European, and American history at Roger Williams University since 2001 and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame and serves as President of the national History Honor Society, Phi Alpha Theta.

Her publications include a chapter in the two-volume study: "The Cultural History of Reading" (Greenwood Press, 2009), Lexington Books: Chapter, "Soul Libertie and the Sons and Daughters of Eire," in "Nar-

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RESOLUTIONS

Planning a Year of Gratitude

2023 is done - and now we're into 2024. Time feels like it's flying, but part of that, I think, has to do with a sense of missing time. We lost precious years once Covid hit.

Months and months of social isolation, holidays coming and going without festivities, and the simple joys of getting together with friends and family a distant memory. Covid isn't as frightening anymore, but we're still living with the threat of isolation and an abrupt halt to our activities if infected or exposed.

So with four years of living in this altered universe, what's next? History has shown us that there has always been upheaval, disruption, and difficulties. People have lived through plagues and pandemics, through wars, scarcity, natural disasters, and uncertainty. Whatever times we're born into, we will face our trials. There's so much we cannot control.

But what do we have control over? Our thoughts, our actions, our choices. In this time of New Year's resolutions I want to make gratitude one of mine, and curiosity, and simple kindness, too.

Gratitude for being able to see, to hear, to move, and to think. Gratitude for good health, and for doctors and medicines when we need them. It's easy to take our routines for granted, but Covid gave us a lesson in appreciating the rhythms of our days.

I'm grateful for my family and for friends, and for waking up each day being able to experience the newness of the morning and riding its wave into the afternoon and evening. We can be grateful for big things, like an upcoming trip, or getting a promotion, or buying a house. Or for little things, like morning coffee, or feeling the warmth of the sun, or watching the moon rise, or hearing a baby's first giggle, or reading a really good book.

I used to write down five things I was grateful for at the end of each day. I did it for a year and decided I was done and tucked that collection away in a drawer. But I think it's also good to try to be present in each moment and to be consciously thankful and aware throughout the day. I can appreciate the day itself and view it as a precious gift - and then simply notice its blessings.

I can breathe fresh air, walk in the presence of trees, listen to birds, notice plants and flowers, and be grateful for the oxygen that nature provides so that I might live. Mostly I'm grateful for good health - sending a quiet "thank you" out into the universe.

Curiosity - I hope I never lose that quality. There is so much wonder in this world. So much that amazes me. The workings of our eyes, ears, and brains are nothing short of miraculous. Every organ in our bodies, every single cell simply knows what to do - created in a mere nine months so that we may experience this world and all its wonders.

I recently took a class on the mysteries of trees and was astonished to learn that trees can communicate with each other, sending out distress signals alerting other trees about disease, etc., through their root systems. How amazing is that?! I learned about the complexities of their chemistry and anatomy, their diversity, their longevity, and how alive they are in their stately silence.

I also took a class on the folk group Peter, Paul, and Mary, wanting to know the stories behind the singers I've loved listening to since my teen years. And a class on Buddhism and Mindfulness caught my interest this past year, too.

I wonder about the stars. They've intrigued me since childhood and I've never lost that

MEMOIRS
by SUSAN DEAN



intense feeling of massive awe whenever I gaze up at the night sky. The years have sped by, the world has changed, but the constellations are still up there right where they've always been, sparkling down on us timelessly - witnesses to our world and to our history. I want to continue to cultivate curiosity in all things, not only in 2024, but right through to the end of my days.

Kindness is another resolution - starting with the power of words. Words can hurt in the moment and harm for life. I want to be mindful, always, with my words - to know that whatever I choose to say does no harm, but instead uplifts.

Being kind in thought is another choice. If someone cuts me off in traffic, I can be angry, or I can choose to wonder. Did the person simply make a mistake? Are they rushing to the hospital? Have they just left a dying relative? Or is it one of a million other possible scenarios? Even if it's just plain rudeness, I can choose to send the driver a ray of positive energy - a beam of light carrying a loving wish that their day softens.

Years ago when I was a single mother with three small daughters, I took a walk one afternoon when my girls were with their father. It was a cold, gray day - a day that fit my dreary mood. I was lonely and sad, fearful about finances, and feeling overwhelmed and miserable. I was walking with my head down, not noticing much of anything around me.

Seemingly out of nowhere, a much older man - I was in my thirties and he appeared to be in his late eighties - was walking towards me and was only a few feet away when I finally noticed him. He stopped, and so I stopped, too. He was

bent over, using a cane, wrinkled, and arthritic. He gave me the biggest smile, raised his arms up, cane and all, looked around at our surroundings, looked at me with sparkling, bright, friendly eyes and said,

"Isn't this the most glorious day ever? It's so good to be alive!"

I just stared at him and he started to laugh. I started to laugh, too, and I answered that yes, it was a glorious day. And then he moved past me and went on his way, still laughing. Watching him slowly shuffle down the street, I wondered how he could be so positive and joyful, given that he was so physically compromised and most likely nearing the end of his years.

But he uplifted me that day. The day wasn't looking so bleak anymore, and neither was my future. I realized that I had many blessings - including three healthy daughters - and that all it took was changing my outlook. I'd be okay and I could choose to be grateful to be alive and well on this day given to me.

Whoever this wonderful soul was - this man who chose to hand me a bit of kindness with a smile and a few words of heart-centered wisdom - he made a difference. I've never forgotten that twenty second chance encounter. You just never know what positive impact you might have on someone's life just by sharing a small kindness.

2024 will have its share of tough times, challenging days, and bumps in the road, but if I can practice mindful gratitude for all the moments that I have the gift of life, and fill my days with wondrous curiosity, and share kindness in ways both big and small wherever and whenever possible, then it will not just be a good year. It will be a great year.

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Banned Words and PHRASES 2024



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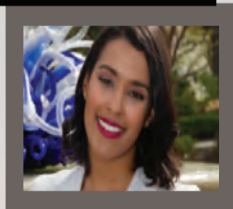
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For 2024 my list of banned words and phrases once again includes some from my readers and from other sources. As previously, some of my choices come from Lake Superior State University. This year Frank Bruni has also provided contributions. Not surprisingly, some are “gifts” from Joe Biden or politics in general. One is a word I banned in 2021 but folks persist in using it, so I’m banning it again. Hope springs eternal. (Maybe I’ll ban that phrase next year...) Here are my ten entries for 2024.

Let’s begin with my repeat word: “woke”. It appeared on many lists for 2021. Unfortunately, there was little agreement on what it means. Some said it meant you paid attention to social and racial justice issues, but the meanings of those depended on your politics. As a result the word was hijacked by extremes on both the right and the left. I’m continuing to advocate for banning it altogether.

The COVID pandemic was the source of a phrase that I find useless: “quiet quitting.” Many people chose to work from home to stay safe. Once the danger was over, they didn’t put in the same effort at the office as they had before they discovered how much they preferred working at home. Managers describe this reduced work ethic as “quiet quitting.” I say, get rid of the phrase by removing the employees if they’re not carrying their fair share of the workload.

Next we have one of Joe Biden’s favorites. I’ve included several of these in previous lists. This one was provided by a reader. “Look” is what Biden often uses when what he really means is “listen.” Or maybe even stop and listen.

Another reader suggestion is “impact” or “impactful.” Since this is not a word of my choosing I’ll just assume that its inclusion will have an impact on some of you.

Keeping in the political lane, I’m tired of hearing “time is of the essence.” Time is always of the essence when it comes to happenings in DC but essence of what? This was particularly true in 2023 when it came to negotiating the roadblock over the federal budget to prevent a government shutdown. It took Republicans 15 ballots to elect their new speaker. Time wasn’t part of their essence and we we’ll deep six that phrase.

On a more positive note, I’m retiring “inflection point” because I want to preserve it for the singular use of describing President Biden’s Inflection Point Address on October 19, 2023. It’s been called the

most significant of his presidency. An inflection point is a moment when leaders can have a significant influence on shaping the future for decades. Biden skillfully connected Russia’s criminal war in Ukraine with Hamas’s terrorist attack on Israel to buttress support for the US position on these conflicts.

I’ve never been quite sure what qualifies something to be an “unforced error”. I sort of get it when I listen to tennis play-by-plays. But lately it’s been showing up in critiques of political activity and candidate’s speeches. I really don’t understand what makes something a forced error, so I’m certainly not in a position to label one unforced. It makes sense to just ban it.

My next two selections are motivated by activities that I’d like to banish along with the words. Political activists are practicing “grouphink” in the extreme. Their attitude is to ban any independent thinking or creativity among their adherents. This tends to shut out new arrivals and ethnic minorities. In their quest for consensus, group thinkers practice “it’s my way or the highway.” Escape them via the nearest highway off-ramp.

A by-product of grouphink is “cancel culture”. If proponents of grouphink don’t like the behavior or attitudes of celebrities or other public figures, they encourage their own followers to withdraw all support for those figures. The worst part of this is that what’s considered “socially acceptable” is what the group thinkers decide it is. As a result, some creative culture gets cancelled before it’s had its day in the sun.

The efforts to redevelop the land on Maui and parts of California after the devastating wildfires have led me to ban another activity along with a word. We should find ways to help those whose homes were destroyed to be able to rebuild them. Instead wealthy investors are gobbling up the land and gentrifying previously affordable neighborhoods. Fie on “gentrify!” And fie on the other nine entries on this year’s list!

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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

What You Need to Know About Social Security Scams



AARP - RHODE ISLAND
by CATHERINE TAYLOR

We at AARP want to make sure you have all the information you need to protect yourself and your family from scams. This month, I want to tell you about a favorite of identity thieves: Social Security scams.

A common scam involves someone posing as a representative of the Social Security Administration (SSA) contacting you about a supposed problem with your Social Security number — for example, that your number has been linked to criminal activity and suspended. They ask you to confirm your number so they can reactivate it or claim they can issue you a new one for a fee.

Or an impostor may contact you to “activate” your cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), claiming you must pay a fee or verify your name, date of birth and Social Security number to receive an increase in benefits.

These are lies: The SSA does not suspend Social Security numbers, and COLAs are applied automatically to your benefit payment.

Once scammers have your identifying information, they can ask the SSA to change the address, phone number and direct deposit information on your record, thus diverting your Social Security payments.

How do scammers contact people? Robocalls are the most common way scammers reach out, often threatening to seize your bank account due to illicit activity supposedly tied to your Social Security number or offering to help transfer your money for safekeeping. Impostors also reach out via phishing emails, texts, social media messages and paper mail.

To feign legitimacy, some use the real names of Social Security officials, recite “badge numbers,” or stamp mailings with phony SSA letterhead. They may even send you counterfeit versions of credentials to “prove” they’re on genuine Social Security business.

A large-scale, multifaceted effort by the government to spread the word about these scammers — and stop them — includes warnings about tell-tale signs of a Social Security scam. If someone contacts you claiming to be from Social Security, you can be sure it’s a scam if they:

- Threaten to suspend your Social Security number.
- Warn of arrest or other legal action.
- Demand secrecy.
- Pressure you to take immediate action, such as making a payment or providing personal information, to avoid consequences.
- Ask for payment by gift card, prepaid debit card, cryptocurrency or by mailing

- cash.
 - Threaten to seize your bank account.
 - Offer to move your money to a “protected” account.
 - Promise to increase your Social Security benefit if you provide personal information.
 - Direct message you on social media.
- The real Social Security Administration will never do any of these things.

What should you do if you spot a scam? If you are targeted by a Social Security scam, report it to the SSA’s Office of Inspector General (www.oig.ssa.gov/report/) and the Federal Trade Commission (www.reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/).

Join us at the State House

We have two exciting AARP events coming up I hope you can attend. As the 2024 General Assembly session begins, our advocacy volunteers be busy on Smith Hill, representing Rhode Islanders 50+ on key issues such as housing, financial security, and caregiving. If you have considered becoming an AARP advocacy volunteer, I urge you to take advantage of these events to learn more about our work.

ADU Design at the State House - January 25, 3 p.m.

AARP Rhode Island teamed up with some of the brightest minds in architecture and design to explore ways to build a better Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU.) Rhode Island School of Design student teams participated in a November ADU design charrette, the results of which will be exhibited at the Rhode Island State House. Join us to see the designs and hear from the students about how they worked to create these options for people to age in their communities.

2024 Legislative Reception - February 8, 3 p.m.

Our annual meet-and-greet with state lawmakers is an opportunity to speak with your senator and representative in an informal setting in the State House’s beautiful State Room. Discuss issues important to Rhode Islanders 50-plus and let your voice be heard.

Refreshments will be served at both events. Registration is required at aarp.org/RIEvents.

Finally, I would like to extend best wishes to you and your family as we welcome in 2024.

Here’s hoping for a prosperous New Year.

AARP JANUARY EVENTS

- January 10, 1 p.m. - Everybody Dance!
- January 18, 4 p.m. - RI Healthy Cooking Demo
- January 23, 4 p.m. - Tai Chi/Qi Gong
- January 24, 6 p.m. - Laughter Yoga
- January 25, 3 p.m. - ADU Designs at the State House*

Save the Date - February 8, 3 p.m. - 2024 Legislative Reception*
**In-person event*

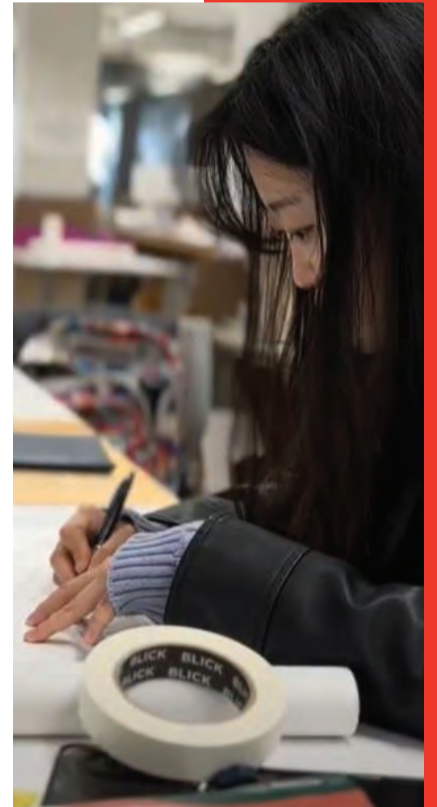
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ADU designs on display at the State House.

AARP Rhode Island asked the brightest young minds in architecture and design to present the public, as well as state lawmakers, with many ways to build a better Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). Come see how Rhode Island School of Design student teams met our challenge. Join us January 25 at 3 p.m. at the Rhode Island State House to see the designs, including models, and hear from the students about how they envisioned these options for people to age in their communities.

Register at aarp.org/RIEvents.



Did you know?

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that as much as 5 percent of older adults living in the general community are suffering from clinical depression. Those figures are even higher among older adults who are hospitalized (11.5 percent) and those who require home health care (13.5 percent). The National Council on Aging reports that older adults are at an elevated risk of developing depression, though there’s no single, specific cause increasing that risk. Chronic conditions, which the CDC estimates affect as much as 80 percent of older adults; decreased functional ability; reduced mobility; loneliness; and financial issues related to retirement are among the potential causes of depression in older adults. As difficult as depression can be, the NCOA notes that treatment has been found to be just as effective for seniors as it is in younger populations. Aging individuals or those concerned about an aging relative are encouraged to visit the American Psychological Association website at psychiatry.org to learn more about the many ways depression can be treated. TF232676

Happy New Year!
I wish you all good health
and success in 2024

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The Cottage at Briarcliffe Gardens

A State-of-the-Art Memory Care Assisted Living Residence

By JENNIFER COATES

When the plans were being drafted for Briarcliffe Gardens, a memory care assisted living residence tucked away on Old Pocasset Road, just off Central Avenue in the shady woods of Johnston, owner Akshay Talwar, and his team poured over every detail. Every design decision was based on thorough dementia research and experience. Every detail, from the amount of light that bathes the community rooms to the placement of furniture, was implemented with the intent of enhancing the quality of life and the safety of the residents of this busy center.

As soon as one walks through the doors of Briarcliffe Gardens, these research-based design features are immediately apparent. Nothing here looks haphazard or unplanned. Visitors and residents alike experience a "sensory journey" as they tour the residence. There is a feeling of spaciousness, light and openness here which appeals to all the senses and which dispels the feeling that one is in a secured environment.

To start, Briarcliffe Gardens is built entirely on one floor with dining and living spaces in the center, forming the social core, much like one's own kitchen. On any given day, this warmly-lit open space area is filled with residents who are being guided through crafts, games or socialization experiences. In adjoining rooms, it is not uncommon to see residents engaged in therapeutic activities such as seated yoga, tai chi, pet and music therapy.

The single-occupancy bedrooms all have outside windows and line the perimeter of this common center space. Numerous skylights provide diffuse sunshine during daytime and natural and artificial lighting are balanced to create a seamless transition between daylight and nightfall. The colors, light, and air temperatures throughout are all coordinated in a concerted effort to comfort residents who might be prone to agitation or irritability.

As the tour continues, one will find a 24-hour retro-design diner, a movie hall, specially adapted recumbent bikes, a Wi gaming center, a hair salon/barber, a sunroom for meditation and, in the spring/summer, a courtyard with fruit-producing trees, walking path and patio. The caregivers and administrators of this progressive memory care center have considered every aspect of their residents' lives and work diligently to anticipate their every need.

From the time when the first ground was broken on Briarcliffe Gardens, this state-of-the-art memory care assisted living residence's primary mission has been to provide a secure, nurturing and vibrant community for its many residents.

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

To schedule your personal tour of Briarcliffe Gardens, call 401-944-2450. For more information, you can also visit them at www.briarclifferi.com or visit their Facebook page, Briarcliffe Gardens Assisted Living.

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You Want Answers?

Are You a True Rhode Islander?



MY SIDE OF THINGS

by LARRY GRIMALDI

One benefit of writing a column is that comments on your musings often lead to the next column. With a tip of the hat to my friend Lynne, New Hampshire-born but now a Rhody resident, I'm revealing the answers to last month's column, "Are You a True Rhode Islander?"

Question 1: The banquet hall at Rocky Point: The Palladium.

Question 2: Thousands of political "times" (fundraisers) were held at the 1025 Club on Plainfield Street in the Silver Lake section of Providence.

Question 3: If you've inhaled "three all the way," a coffee milk, and french fries at Olneyville's New York System and had a Del's Lemonade afterward, award yourself all eight points for intestinal bravery.

Question 4: Gladdings, Shephards, Peerless, and City Hall Hardware were all located on Westminster Street, converted to Westminster Mall in the 1970s, and later returned to its street origin. The Outlet was on Weybosset Street, currently the site of a Johnson & Wales campus; Harris Furs was at the corner of Westminster and Empire Streets; and Muffets Music Store was on Empire Street.

Question 5: The first WJAR TV studio was located in the Outlet Company.

Question 6: McGarry's Restaurant, diagonally across from Providence City Hall, was a popular after-school gathering spot for high schoolers waiting for RIPTA buses.

Question 7: The Shipyard Drive-in was located in the urban canyon off Allens Avenue in Providence.

Question 8: St. Francis Chapel was next to the Outlet Company and served an eclectic population for many years before leaving Providence.

Question 9: The RKO Albee Theater was situated next to the Grace Church on Westminster Street. I'm probably one of the few survivors that saw *Day of the Triffids*.

Question 10: Five bowling alleys are Legion Bowl (Cranston), Town Hall Lanes (Johnston), Dudek's (Warren), Hearthside Lanes (Smithfield), and the East Providence Lanes.

Question 11: Wedding receptions, anniversaries, graduations, etc. were standard events at St. Bart's, Prudence, and Rosario Halls in Silver Lake. These celebrations are a relic of an era long gone.

Question 12: A "double shower" is a money grab designed to line the coffers of a prospective bride and groom by raiding the pocketbooks of friends and relatives. This "tradition" gave rise to the "Family Black Book of Reciprocal Contributions." Thankfully, this is also a relic of the past!

Question 13: Very few Rhode Islanders have ventured from Woonsocket to Westerly. Curiously, these same wary travelers would board a bus or train for Christmas shopping in Boston or New York.

Question 14: Johnston Hummock's Restaurant was located on Allens Avenue, a few blocks from "Downcity."

Question 15: In bygone days, *The Providence Journal* had dozens of reporters covering local and national news. The sports cartoonist was Frank Lanning.

Question 16: The original name for the now-defunct Al-macs on Eddy Street in Providence was the Big Chief Market.

Question 17: Five costume jewelry factories were Coro's, Victory Plating, Briar Manufacturing, Antonelli Plating, and Speidel (naming just a few).



Question 18 & 19: The Narragansett Brewery and carriage barn were located on Cranston Street, a short distance from Providence's Armory District. The seven-ounce "stubbie" was very popular at picnics and other celebrations.

Question 20: the Yacht Club Soda Company is in North Providence. It has been in operation for years. The company began operations in 1915.

Question 22: The Providence train station was originally located at the edge of Kennedy Square and Bonanza Bus Terminal was across the street from the rear of *The Providence Journal* building.

Question 22: The oldest shopping mall in America is the Arcade in downtown Providence.

Question 23: Lido's and Olivo's were located at the far end of Scarborough Beach. Shawmut Beach stretches along Warwick's Conimicut Point.

Question 24: The old Industrial National Bank had its offices in the Superman Building.

Question 25: The CVS's original name was Consumer Value Store. Adams Drugs could be found in Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket. Adams Drug eventually morphed into Brooks Pharmacies located in Warwick and East Providence, among other locations.

Question 26: The Rhode Island Auditorium occupied a small lot on North Main Street in Providence. A fence marker at the current parking lot memorializes the location. The Rhode Island Reds American Hockey League team made their home at the Auditorium and Sunday night games were a tradition.

Question 27: The letters UTC signified the United Transit Company. (The forerunner of RIPTA).

Question 28: Strangely enough, Warwick Shoppers World was located on Warwick Avenue, outside of Providence's Edgewood section.

You can now determine if you are a true Rhode Islander based on the previously-disclosed scoring system:

- One to 20: You probably just moved to Rhode Island, have been out of state for several years, are age 45 or younger, or slept longer than Rip Van Winkle.
- Twenty-One to 40: You have minimum knowledge of local lore and legend.
- Forty-One to 60: You have average knowledge about Rhode Island history.
- Sixty-One to 79: Congratulations! You have earned a dozen Dunkin' Donuts, an eight-pack of Sauge hot dogs, and three free Awful-Awfuls at Newport Creamery. (Just kidding about the prizes).
- Eighty-One to 100 or 100 plus: You are a true Rhode Islander who has earned the coveted Rhode Island Red Ribbon with Johnny Cake Cluster and a plaque in the "I Know a Guy" License Plate Hall of Fame. An induction ceremony will be held in Usquepaug on Rhode Island Independence Day (June 4).

Good luck!

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

Estate Planning for the New Year

Your Most Important Resolution

LAW ADVICE

by DON DRAKE
CONNELLY LAW OFFICES, LTD.



As we approach 2024, it's really time to start thinking about your goals and resolutions for the upcoming year. While many people tend to focus on health and fitness goals, such as joining a gym or beginning a daily jog routine, it is equally important to consider financial and estate planning goals. Estate planning can seem like a daunting task, but it is crucial to secure your future and protect your loved ones.

Such planning is not just about planning for death. It is also about planning for life - including retirement, illness, disability, young children, college, and other important life events. If you aspire to retire early, it is essential to ensure that you have good disability insurance and adequate life insurance coverage in case of any unforeseen circumstances, and such planning is not just for older people, as many believe, but also for people in their prime years of life who are looking to secure their future. By planning for such life events, you can ensure that you have a solid backstop for your future early retirement.

An Important Resolution

Planning and organizing your estate is essential to ensure peace of mind and achieve your financial objectives. Therefore, resolve this new year to prioritize estate planning and take the necessary steps to secure your future. Here are some ways to achieve your goal:

Evaluate Your Financial Situation

To start organizing your finances, create a detailed inventory of all your assets and debts. This inventory will help you better understand your current financial situation and help you calculate your net worth.

When creating your list, consider including assets such as your bank and investment accounts, personal property such as jewelry, collectibles, and motor vehicles, any retirement plans you have, life insurance policies, and any real estate you own.

When listing your debts, include credit cards, auto, personal, student loans, and mortgages. Having a comprehensive list of your financial assets and debts can help you make informed decisions about your finances and future plans.

Update Your Estate Plan

If you have already created an estate plan, review and update it periodically, preferably at the start of each new year. Your life circumstances are continually evolving, and it is crucial to ensure that your estate plan reflects those changes. Take some time to consider any significant life events that occurred in the past year, such as the birth of a child, a death in the family, a marriage, or a divorce. These events can significantly impact your estate plan, so ensuring that your will, trust, or other estate planning documents accurately reflect your current wishes is essential.

If you have any doubts or questions about your estate plan, it is always a good idea to consult with a qualified estate planning attorney who can help guide you through the process. Remember, keeping your estate plan up to date can help ensure that your assets are distributed according to your wishes.

Review Any Trusts

One of the essential tools used in estate planning is trust. A trust is a legal agreement enabling you to hold and manage your assets while alive and distribute them to your beneficiaries after death. This tool is particularly useful if you have significant assets or complex family dynamics.

Trusts provide many benefits, such as offering more control over how your assets are distributed and protecting your privacy. With

a trust, you can determine how and when your assets are distributed to your beneficiaries. This means you can create rules to ensure that your loved ones receive the funds when they are ready and mature enough to handle them. Additionally, trusts can help you avoid probate, which is a court process that can be lengthy, costly, and public.

A trust is an excellent option for anyone who wants to protect their assets and ensure their loved ones are provided for after death. It is a powerful tool that can help you maintain control over your assets and avoid probate, making it a smart choice for those with significant assets or complex family situations.

Review Your Will

Creating a will is crucial in ensuring your assets are distributed according to your wishes after death. A will is a legal document that outlines the details of how you want your property to be divided among your beneficiaries and assigns an executor to oversee the distribution process. If you do not have a will in place, the state law will determine how your assets are distributed, which may not align with your wishes. Therefore, it is vital to take the time to create a will that reflects your wishes.

The beginning of a new year is an opportune time to think about creating or updating your will. If you already have a will, review it periodically to ensure that it is up-to-date and reflects your current wishes.

Getting Ready to Retire

Consider retirement planning as a critical component of your overall estate plan. One of the most important steps you can take is to ensure you contribute enough to your retirement accounts, such as a 401(k) or IRA, and take advantage of any employer-matching contributions. This will help you build a solid foundation for your retirement years.

If you are nearing retirement age, have a well-thought-out plan in place for using your retirement funds. This may include creating a retirement income plan that considers your expected expenses, sources of income, and any potential risks. You may also want to consider long-term care options, such as purchasing long-term care insurance or setting aside funds for future care needs.

Another consideration is planning for potential healthcare costs. As you age, the likelihood of facing costly medical expenses increases. You may want to explore options for Medicare supplement plans or other healthcare coverage to help reduce your out-

of-pocket costs. By taking a proactive approach to retirement planning, you can help ensure that you are prepared for the future and have the financial resources you need to enjoy your retirement years.

POAs and Advance Directives

It's a time to prepare for unforeseen medical emergencies with documents known as advance directives. These documents include a living will and powers of attorney, which can be essential if you cannot manage your affairs after a significant injury or illness.

A medical power of attorney enables you to appoint someone you trust to act in your best interest if you need medical care and cannot communicate your wishes. This person can talk to your doctors on your behalf

about the treatments you would (or would not) want to receive. This document may also be referred to as a healthcare power of attorney in some states.

You can choose a trusted person to handle your financial matters if you cannot do so. For example, if you fall ill, you may want to focus on getting better rather than managing your bills. You can appoint someone to manage your financial tasks, such as paying your bills. This is known as your durable financial power of attorney.

Sitting With the Family

Having an estate plan in place is vital to ensure that your assets are distributed according to your wishes after your death. However, it is not enough to have a plan in place. Having open and honest discussions about your estate plan with your loved ones is equally important. This can help avoid any misunderstandings or conflicts between family members after your passing.

Discussing the estate plan can provide an excellent opportunity to address any family dynamics or potential conflicts that may need to be dealt with in your plan. For instance, if you have children from a previous marriage, it may be wise to ensure that your current spouse is taken care of while still ensuring that your children receive their fair share of the inheritance.

In 2024, having an effective estate plan guarantees that your loved ones are protected and your assets are distributed correctly. By preparing your estate plan sooner rather than later, you can have peace of mind knowing that you and your family are well taken care of.

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6 Ways to Build Lasting Healthy Habits

FAMILY FEATURES

Starting on a path toward healthy habits is often easier than maintaining them long term. This year, you can avoid a major pitfall of healthy resolutions and build healthy habits that stick by working small, positive steps into your daily life.

In fact, healthy habits are the first suggested treatment strategy for people whose blood pressure and cholesterol levels are creeping higher than normal, according to an American Heart Association scientific statement.

“The current guidelines for managing high blood pressure and cholesterol recognize that otherwise healthy individuals with mildly or moderately elevated levels of these cardiovascular risk factors should actively attempt to reduce these risks, and increasing physical activity is a great place to start,” said Bethany Barone Gibbs, Ph.D., chair of the statement writing group and chair of the department of epidemiology and biostatistics at West Virginia University School of Public Health.

These six ideas from the American Heart Association’s Healthy for Good Habit Coach can help.

Bust Common Habit-Building Myths

You may be surprised to learn the truth about creating and sticking to healthy habits. One myth is getting healthy means doing things you don’t like. Research shows positive emotions make habits stick, so set your intentions on something you enjoy. Another misconception is big results require big changes, which may lead to overly ambitious habits. However, the simpler the routine is, the more likely it is to become habit.

Work with Your “Brain Loops”

Your brain creates “loops” for habits made up of three things: a cue, a routine and a reward. Each time the loop is repeated, it becomes more routine and may become automatic. Knowing this, you can design cues for developing new, healthy habits, such as setting walking shoes by the bed to start a walking habit. The routine is putting on the shoes and walking around the block, and the reward is the pleasant sensations and brighter mood from a morning stroll.



Photos courtesy of Getty Images

Create Cues That Work for You

Most successful health habits begin with a cue. The cue can be external in your environment or internal in terms of your mindset. The more consistent the cue, the more likely it is to trigger the habit. Hacking your brain’s reminder system can help you remember your cue. Some examples of visual cues are placing a sticky note where you’ll see it often, keeping a water bottle on your desk or refrigerating fresh veggies at eye level.

Build a Routine That Supports Your Goals

Positive and consistent habits are important to achieve your personal goals. Small habits done consistently can add up to big results. To create a new healthy habit, think through the steps that could lead to your desired outcome. Ask yourself whether you want to do it, if it’s easy and if it’s high impact. It’s important to choose habits that make a difference and move you closer to your goals.

For example, if one of your goals is improving your heart health, a meaningful habit might be to move more. Increasing physical activity can help lower blood pressure and cholesterol along with many other health benefits, Gibbs said.

“Every little bit of activity is better than none,” she said. “Even small initial increases of 5-10 minutes a day can yield health benefits.”

Use Rewards to Make Habits Stick

Start by choosing a habit you enjoy that’s rewarding by itself. If you’re more of a dancer than runner, increase your physical activity with an upbeat dance class. You might also look for a more enjoyable version of a new habit, such as getting more fruits and veggies by sipping on a delicious smoothie.

Understand Resets are Part of the Process

New habits are experiments. If they don’t stick, you haven’t failed. Instead, you’ve learned what doesn’t work, which is useful. Get curious and ask yourself which part of the habit didn’t work for you. Maybe the cue was ineffective. Maybe the steps of the routine were too ambitious and you need to split them into smaller, easier steps. If you realize you don’t enjoy the habit, stop doing it and try something else.

Find more inspiration and ideas to jumpstart healthy habits this year at heart.org/habits.



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Maneuvering and Dining at Foxwoods



ACCORDING TO DON
by DON FOWLER

Gender Reveal and Jack & Jill

Joyce and I, and our daughter and son-in-law met Joyce's brother and his wife at Foxwoods for dinner.

If you have been to the Connecticut casino you know that you could walk for miles without leaving the premises.

We made quite a group: me with my cane pushing Joyce in her complementary wheelchair, daughter Robin riding her scooter to support her broken foot and cast, and Uncle Bob trying to maneuver his rented electric wheelchair.

Long corridors with rugs that make it a challenge for wheels, crowded elevators, casino guests stopping in the middle of walkways to chat or trying to figure out where they were and wanted to go all proved a challenge to six senior citizens.

We looked in all directions and quickly discovered that we were not alone. Wheelchairs of all makes and models were zooming by us as we zoomed by a parade of walkers.

We were in senior heaven. When we finally found our restaurant, Guy Fieri's Kitchen and Bar, we discovered that there were two sets of stairs leading into the establishment.

What to do?

Finally, a nice young lady beckoned us to a secret door that led up a steep ramp (It seemed steep to me as I was pushing a wheelchair). After an awkward game of who is sitting next to who, we settled in.

Celebrity Chef Fieri has made a name for himself on TV. His Foxwood location attracts his fans who are willing to shell out \$20-\$28 for a hamburger or \$18 for a half dozen chicken wings.

The meal served as a venue for three couples to get together and catch up on our advancing lives.

Getting out of the casino was as much fun as getting in. Finding the right parking lot for the Pequot Tower was challenging, but we managed to end up in a Sel-Park lot in the catacombs of the sprawling super structure.

We located an elevator, got off at the wrong floor, walked around to another set of elevators, went to another wrong floor and eventually asked someone with a badge for directions.

After long goodbye's, we returned our wheelchairs, got in our cars and returned to the comfort of our own homes.

When the time came, I dropped Joyce off at the hospital, paced around the waiting room and waited for the doctor to come out and tell me "It's a Girl". And a few years later, "It's a Boy".

Times have changed.

We recently received an invitation to Granddaughter Tara's Gender Reveal party, a grand celebration held months before the delivery date where the gender of her first child would be revealed in balloons, fireworks and a gigantic cake.

Only the baker of the cake knew the identity of the baby before the fireworks filled the room and blue streamers shot from the cake.

For those who could not attend, the party was beamed live on Zoom, and recorded for posterity.

Photos of the fetus were also revealed.

Joyce had baby showers when our kids were born.

Friends and relatives gathered at the house for coffee and cake, bringing baby clothes and toys.

The men gathered at the local bar.

Today, many expectant parents gather at venues for a Jack and Jill baby shower, complete with a catered meal, games, the opening of gifts, and in more elaborate gatherings, a band or DJ.

No escape for the men, who were forced to sit through the gift opening and miss the Big Game.

Of course, the father will be there for the delivery and possibly cut the cord.

Tara's baby will grow up in a different world, one filled with mass shootings, artificial intelligence, cell phones and COVID.

Hopefully, it will be a world of peace and love.



National Walk Your Dog Month



EXTRA BONDING TIME – When you walk your dog, it’s a great chance to give your undivided attention to your dog and let them know that you care for them. This is quality time spent together that can lead to greater trust and joy.

GOOD EXERCISE – Did you eat too much over the holiday season? Walk Your Dog Month is the perfect opportunity to get in shape and shed off those extra pounds – for both you and your dog. A recent study found that 56 percent of dogs were found to be clinically overweight. This can reduce their life expectancy, overall quality of life and cause a multitude of other health issues. Good exercise not only has physical benefits, but it is also great mental stimulation and can decrease stress for both you and your pup. Additionally, it helps energetic dogs dispel some energy, which can make them calmer and prevent them from getting destructive out of boredom when in the house.

SOCIAL ACTIVITY – Walking the dog means you are much more likely to meet other people in your neighborhood who are also out and about with their dogs. Both you and your dog have the chance to make new friends! Socializing your dog with other people and canines alike will help ensure no aggressive tendencies are developed.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY – Walking your pup provides ample opportunity for training. A walk is a great time to focus on your dog and practice learning to heel, sit, stay or follow other basic commands. Practice makes perfect, so incorporating walks and practicing these skills during their everyday routine will make them even more successful.

Take a few extra steps to stay safe:

1

Warm up and cool down, such as stretching or walking in place, to prepare and restore your muscles before and after a workout.



2

Pick the right clothes. Dress in several layers of loose clothing to trap warm air between them. Wear a waterproof coat or jacket if it’s snowy or rainy, and don’t forget a hat, scarf, and gloves.



3

Be extra careful around snow and icy sidewalks so you won’t slip and fall. Wear sturdy shoes to give you proper footing.



4

Learn about the signs of hypothermia, a drop in body temperature that can cause serious health problems.



5

Check the forecast. If it’s too windy, cold, or wet outside, consider an indoor workout instead using an online video or your own routine.



January is Walk Your Dog Month. Get up off that sofa, get moving, and don’t let those sub-zero winter temperatures drag you down. Dogs need plenty of exercise throughout the year and the best way to keep them active in winter is to take them for regular walks. Even a short walk around the block on a cold day makes a big difference. So, begin this year with a pledge — better health for you and your dog!

HISTORY OF WALK YOUR DOG MONTH

Walk Your Dog Month is a perfect time to blend exercise with bonding time for you and your pup. The Association of Pet Obesity Prevention released a clinical study in 2017, stating that 56% of dogs in the United States are obese. That equates to over 50 million dogs across the country.

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