

## Shelling out more for eggs

### As egg prices scramble to new heights, farm sets purchasing limit

By TIM FORSBERG

Once thought of as a cheap source of protein, eggs have become an investment. Fortunately, Johnston's own Stamp Egg Farms is helping to crack the case on what's ruffling feathers in the egg market.

According to Brijette Stamp, a family representative of the farm that keeps an eye on the store, coop and more, the rise in egg prices is a result of avian influenza. That flu has affected the egg market significantly.

"Egg prices are definitely on the rise, and that is seen everywhere. It's not just a trend that's happening, it's due to avian influenza," Stamp explained. "So essentially what's happening is the biological process that happens is when a bird contracts the flu, essentially all the surrounding birds are euthanized. Then it will take about six months for another chicken to grow to that same egg-laying size and lay those eggs again."

Stamp further elaborated on the immediate consequences of an egg shortage, which effects egg prices instantly, followed by price increases on food items with egg as an ingredient.

"So that starts with an egg shortage, and since eggs are an essential item, that means that on all shelves that price is immediately going to skyrocket," she said.

Despite these challenges, Stamp Farms has



With eggs-traordinary precision, Brijette Stamp puts the 'egg' in 'egg-spert' as she sorts her farm's finest into different sizes for retail sale. Brijette recently dished out why egg prices seem to be breaking new highs everyday. *Beacon Media photos*

EGGS - PAGE 17



Johnston firefighters brave the icy waters of Johnston War Memorial Pond during an ice rescue training exercise, sharpening their life-saving skills to keep residents safe this winter. *(Beacon Media photo by Tim Forsberg)*

## JFD Trains for Water Rescues Amid Unstable Ice Conditions

By TIM FORSBERG

It was a case of fire meets ice this week at the pond at Johnston War Memorial Park.

Braving cold temperatures and a partially frozen pond, members of the Johnston Fire Department underwent their annual cold-weather rescue

training at the park. Their hands-on exercises focused on ice water rescues, rope knotting, ice walking techniques, and the proper use of specialized rescue equipment.

Battalion Chief Thomas McCormick and Private Donnie Roberts, a firefighter with the department, emphasized the

importance of the training, noting that the entire department would be participating.

"We have to be ready at all times, something could happen in five minutes time in any body of water in town, so we want to be ready for all types of emer-

ICE - PAGE 10

## Zoning Board Meeting Sees Debate Over Fence Installation

By TIM FORSBERG

A contentious discussion unfolded at the Jan. 30 meeting of the Johnston Zoning Board of Review, as a property owner and board members debated the approval of a 6-foot-tall fence at 613 Killingly St.

The request, filed by property owner Robert Pagliarini, came under scrutiny, as the fence had already been installed before a variance was granted. According to town zoning laws for the area, any fence taller than 4 feet requires a zoning variance.

During the meeting, held at the Johnston Senior Center, discussions between Pagliarini and the board were complicated by the fact that the fence was erected following an incident in which an individual's life had allegedly been threatened.

According to Pagliarini's account of the alleged incident, in which he provided evidence in the form of a police report to each board member, a tenant at the property was recently threatened at gunpoint. He believed that the documentation and account of the incident supported the necessity of the fence for safety reasons.

"One of my very close friends, someone who is also a resident in the house, was held up at gunpoint by two masked gunmen," Pagliarini said of the event, which he said occurred last year. In the same encounter, he said, "his girlfriend was mugged and robbed."

Pagliarini said that after the incident, he had the fence installed around the house for security. He told the board that he was unfamiliar with the zoning regulation and sought to rectify the issue by presenting his case before the board. The fence is of vinyl construction, and still needs a gateway put in, but work had stopped pending the outcome of the meeting. The current fence replaced a 4-foot decorative fence.

"You made a mistake that a lot of others have made - they just go out and buy it - but there is an ordinance in effect for this," said Vice Chairperson Anthony Pillozzi.

ZONING - PAGE 17

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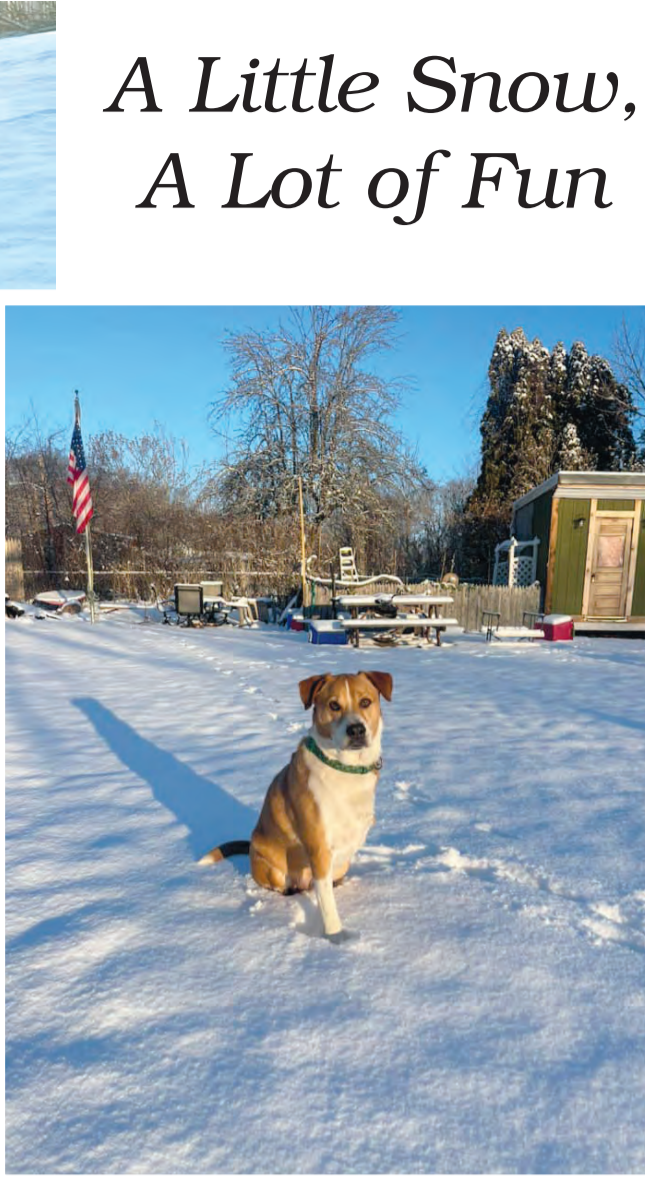
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There may not have been much snowfall, but Monday's dusting was enough to delay area schools and keep crews busy clearing the roads. Pictured is Mayzee Moon, who brought her broom outside to make the most of her snow day. Not to be outdone, our resilient "tripawed" friend Sawyer enjoyed some time frolicking in the fresh powder. (Submitted photos)



*A Little Snow, A Lot of Fun*

**POLICE LOG**

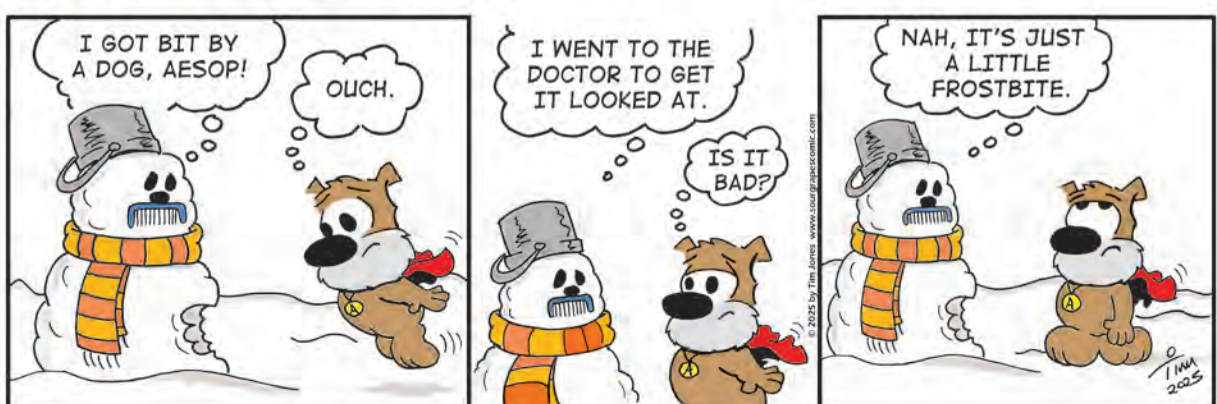
**DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**  
 Patrick Cullen II, 43, of 997 Atwells Avenue Apt. 3F in Providence, was arrested on January 14 at approximately 1 p.m for suspicion of driving under the influence.  
 Officer Thomas Santurri was dispatched to the area of 70 Shun Pike on the above date and time for a report of a vehicle that had driven through a construction site and down an embankment.  
 At the scene the officer observed a Jeep off the roadway and partially in a small water retention pond. Cullen then stepped out of the vehicle and reportedly was unsteady on his feet. He allegedly told the officer that he did not know where he was or how he ended up at that location, stating he left his residence and was attempting to drive to the CVS Corporate office in Woonsocket.  
 Cullen stated to officers that he had left his residence at 7 a.m. and had been driving to Woonsocket. He reportedly told the officer that he had not been drinking that day but had been drinking heavily the day before. He was then asked and consented to partake in a series of standardized sobriety tests led by officers.  
 Based upon the officer's training and experience, it was determined that Cullen was unable to operate a vehicle safely. His car was towed from the scene, and Cullen was transported to police headquarters. There, he agreed to take two breathalyzer tests, which produced blood alcohol content readings of .259 and

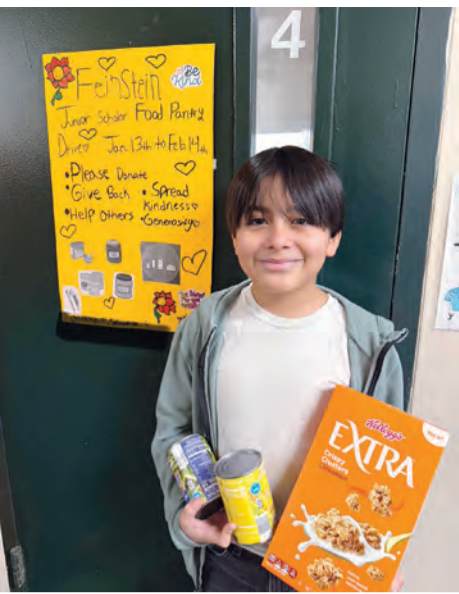
.257 respectively.  
 Cullen was charged with first-offense DUI, .15 or greater BAC. He was provided with a Third District Court notice to appear on January 24.  
 "Oh, yeah that."  
 In connection with a breaking and entering case that occurred at Hometown Pizza & Subs on January 19, police arrested David Dunham, 53, of 776 Hartford Avenue on January 27.  
 According to police accounts, at approximately 6:10 a.m. on Jan. 19, officers responded to the restaurant for a report of an attempted breaking and entering. At the scene, officers met with the complainant who stated that they had received a burglary alert from their alarm company. They responded to the scene to find a heavily damaged front door window, and called police.  
 The complainant stated that access to the interior of the restaurant was never gained and the store appeared in order. Detectives were then called to process the scene.  
 Through the use of surveillance video sharing of the incident on social media, police received an anonymous tip which led to the identity of Dunham based on clothing worn during the incident and his general appearance. A warrant was then drawn for his arrest.  
 On January 27 around 10:30 a.m., officers maintained a post near 700 Hartford Avenue in an attempt to locate Dunham. Officers then spotted Dunham near his camper and made contact with him. He was ad-

vised of his rights and placed under arrest, according to the report.  
 When a detective described the break in for which he was being arrested, Dunham allegedly replied "Oh yeah, that."  
 Dunham was charged with felonious breaking and entering and transported to Third District Court where he was arraigned with no plea entered. He was released on \$5,000 surety. He would be later seen in Superior Court as a probation violator.

**SHOPLIFTING**  
 On January 14 at approximately 1:12 p.m., multiple officers responded to the Home Depot located at 100 Stone Hill Drive for a report of a suspect in custody for an alleged theft.  
 On scene, officers met with store personnel who stated they had a known shoplifter, later identified as Mario Enrique Mena, 53, of 2025 Lavers Circle Apt. D101 in Delray Beach, Florida. Employees alleged that Mena took multiple items from the store, brought them to the customer service desk, and attempted to return them.  
 The return was denied and Mena walked out of the store without attempting to pay for the merchandise. Store personnel then brought him to the security office.  
 Mena was placed under arrest and transported to police headquarters. He was charged with one count of misdemeanor shoplifting. He was later released with a Third District Court Summons.

**SOUR GRAPES** by Tim Jones





## Thornton Elementary Students Lead Charge during Food Drive

The spirit of kindness and generosity is alive and well at Thornton Elementary School, where students have been working hard to make a difference in their community. The 5th Grade Student Council and the Kindness Crew have taken the lead in organizing a school-wide food drive to support the Thornton Food Pantry, and their efforts have already yielded impressive results.

With a heartfelt message of compassion, the young organizers created

colorful posters featuring phrases like "Please donate," "Give back," "Spread kindness," "Help others," and "Generosity" to encourage their classmates and teachers to contribute. The food drive kicked off on January 13 and will continue through February 14, giving the entire school a chance to participate in this meaningful cause.

So far, the students, staff, and families of Thornton Elementary have come together to donate over 200 food items,

a testament to their commitment to helping those in need. The donations will directly benefit the Thornton Food Pantry, ensuring that local families facing food insecurity receive the support they need.

With a few weeks left to go, organizers encourage everyone to keep the momentum going. Every item collected helps make a positive impact, and students are eager to see just how much they can achieve together.

## 90 days on job, airport security boss quits

By JOHN HOWELL

"By any and all measures he seemed to be pleased with his job," Rhode Island Airport Corporation spokesman Bill Fischer said soon after Joseph Perkins abruptly quit his job Tuesday as director of airport security.

Perkins, who took the job to run the 27-member airport police force in September, was undergoing certification to be chief. He did not notify superiors of his decision to leave the job, but according to a WPRI story sent a message to his colleagues that airport management was seeking to eliminate the department. He tendered his resignation to State Police Col. Darnell Weaver.

Fischer said Perkins was present at a department directors' meeting Tuesday morning and apparently went from there to the state police.

"I think we're all surprised," Fischer said.

"We have no resignation letter from him or explanation for his decision. There are no plans to eliminate the RIAC police department and the department is properly staffed and able to fulfill its mission. We have had the same staffing levels over the last decade. The department has been and will continue to be led by Senior Vice President of Operations Duc Nguyen," reads a statement Fischer released.

But Perkins had issues with RIAC operations.

"Unfortunately everything you suspect about RIAC management is true," Perkins wrote in the message, claiming management wanted to get rid of the police department and "most of all the union," WPRI reported.

Perkins offered an explanation in a statement he released to the Warwick Beacon yesterday morning.

"I came from out of state. I knew no one in the state prior to accepting the job and certainly no one at the airport. After 90 days on the job, I quickly surmised that remaining employed at the airport under the current administrative leadership was something I would not do," he wrote.

He continued, "Unlike most professions, law-enforcement decisions and

actions have serious consequences. Walking away and not notifying someone of the issues I observed during my time there is not something my conscience or my professional character and oath would allow. The issues that concerned me are not issues that need to be shared in the media. Based on my experience as a law enforcement professional for over 35 years, I knew the correct way to handle the issues that concerned me - report them to the highest ranking police officer in the state, Colonel Darnell Weaver.

Allegations that RIAC President and CEO Iftikhar aims to drive out the union and replace personnel with contracted services date back to last spring, when the Local 2873 of RI Council 94 AFSCM in a near-unanimous vote turned down a contract. The bone of contention was over language that would have given RIAC the authority to change job designations without the recourse of a hearing or an appeal. A contract has yet to be resolved.

Also last spring, state and local officials as well as news media outlets, the airlines and the Federal Aviation Administration received anonymous letters that there would be a walkout of RIAC staff on Aug. 13 unless the governor made a change in RIAC management. The letters cited the large number of high-ranking personnel who have left the agency since Ahmad was named to the post nine years ago, and also a toxic work environment.

The airport did not close, nor was there a walkout of personnel. At the FAA's insistence, RIAC contracted an outside fire protection service, as the airport would have been forced to close had fire personnel not shown up.

Citing the cost of those services, which were not used, and the black eye the anonymous letters gave the airport, the RIAC board approved Ahmad's request to hunt down the author(s) of the letters and to bring suit. Fischer said Tuesday that investigation is active and ongoing.

Perkins has 35 years of law enforcement experience. He served as chief of the Middleboro Police Department in Massachusetts for 10 years before accepting the job at RIAC.

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# Senior 'Spotlite'

## Etta Campagnone: A Shining Example of Vitality at 98

The Johnston Senior Center's spotlight this week shines on Etta Campagnone, a vibrant and inspiring 98-year-old who proves that age is just a number. With an impeccable sense of style and an ever-present smile, Etta is a testament to the joy and fulfillment that an active lifestyle can bring. A resident of Johnston for the past fifty-five years, Etta now wishes she had discovered the Johnston Senior Center much earlier in life. Since becoming a regular visitor, she has found joy in the friendships, activities, and warm community atmosphere that the center provides. Among her favorite activities are enjoying lunch with fellow seniors, engaging in lively conversations, and—most importantly—playing Bingo, which she credits for keeping her mind sharp.

Etta's story is one of hard work, family, and community. She dedicated twenty-five years of her life working at General Electric in Providence, a job she loved. Beyond her professional career, she has been blessed with a loving family, including two children, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Like many of her peers at the Johnston Senior Center, Etta grew up on Federal Hill before marrying and settling in Johnston. Her journey reflects the experiences of so many others in the community—rooted in tradition, hard work, and an appreciation for the connections made over the years.

The Johnston Senior Center welcomes everyone, no matter when they decide to check it out—even in their late nineties. As Etta puts it best, "Age is just a number." Her enthusiasm and spirit serve as an inspiration to all who walk through the doors of the center.

If you haven't yet visited the Johnston Senior Center, let Etta's story be a reminder that it's never too late to discover new friendships, engaging activities, and a welcoming atmosphere. Come see what makes this special place a home away from home for so many seniors in Johnston.

**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 Spotlite," submitted by the senior center.

## Springfield College Recognizes Fall Semester Dean's List Students

Springfield College has named Cameron Ferrara and Dante Iafrate from Johnston to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Ferrara has a primary major of Communication Sci & Disorders. Iafrate has a primary major of Communication/Sport Journalism.

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 3.500 for the term. Student must not have been barred from Dean's List due to disciplinary action.

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# Opinion

EDITORIAL

## Empowering 'we, the people'

There is no denying that public trust in institutions has reached a new sobering low in the last decade.

This unfortunate reality has been exacerbated by polarized political posturing, profit-driven media conglomerates pushing partisan talking points to capture attention and far too many examples of government officials treating their responsibility to be transparent and open to the public with an air of inconvenienced contempt rather than a pillar of their democratically granted power.

There exists no media entity in the world that flawlessly carries out their mission to provide news to their audience in a manner that is sanitized of all imperfection.

News gathering, and reporting, is (at least for now) a very human process, beholden to the same imperfections that all humans possess innately. Although we certainly try our best to rise above them.

And while this disclaimer holds true for our own outlet, we also try to explore time and time again within these pages that the ultimate arbiter of the success of our local communities is you.

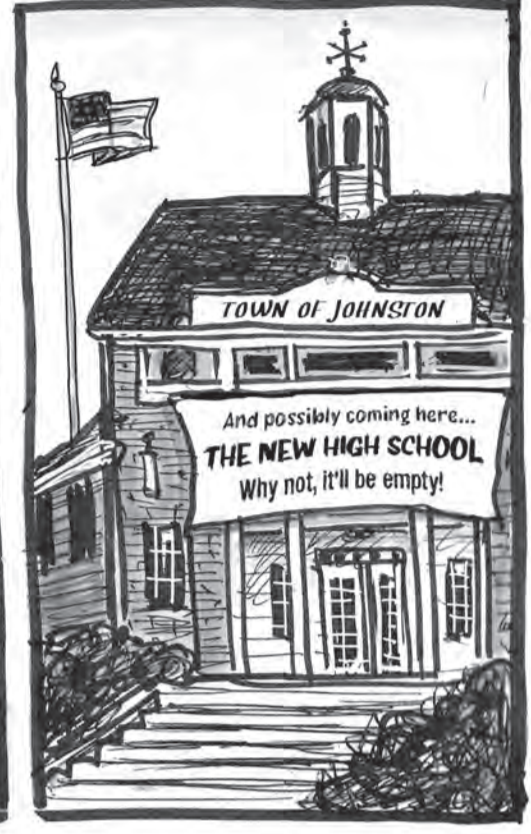
This is why it is so critically important for citizens to not simply take a back seat — whether when participating in the political processes of their community or in how they digest their news.

We are encouraged by the overflow turnout seen at a recent informational meeting held in Cranston by the Rhode Island ACLU, which sought to teach Rhode Islanders how to be active advocates in their communities through the legislative process. It also provided updated information to those who were wary of the uncertainties about ongoing efforts at the federal level to find and deport illegal immigrants — which brings with it a host of legal and moral issues. Seeing a strong desire by so many to become more informed by these big-picture topics was reassuring and heartening.

It is also our sincere hope to see reform pass at the State House this year that would simplify the process for members of the public to access public records from local governments. The current state of public-records law provides too much inherent cover for those who benefit from keeping information hidden from the media and the people of Rhode Island in general. Likewise, the fees that can be incurred for accessing such documents should be reduced.

We all benefit from a more informed public and a more open, transparent and accountable government, regardless of our political leanings. Let's strive to see more of that in the weeks and months ahead.

### MEANWHILE IN JOHNSTON...



### LETTERS

## Eminent Domain, Urgent Vote: A Safety Complex at What Cost?

To the Editor,

On Tuesday, January 28, 2025, a special meeting was held by the Johnston Town Council with a plan to take a parcel of land by eminent domain for a safety complex to be constructed on George Waterman Road.

The meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. By 5:15 the meeting was closed due to maximum capacity. A large group of residents stood outside waiting for an opportunity to be admitted or hoping that the powers that be decided that the same might be continued and taken to a larger venue because the public was invited to attend.

The public stood outside in the cold waiting for an opportunity that never happened. The notice for said meeting was published on Friday, January 24. The attending members of the Town Council voted to unanimously accept the proposal. While there is no doubt that

there were needs that should have been addressed, why this particular parcel of land, and why so very late?

If the public safety buildings had been adequately maintained by the previous administration, or addressed by the current administration, perhaps they would not be in such a state of disrepair. The Police and Fire Departments and their members should be treated, at all times, with courtesy and respect as they are the people keeping the town safe. I have the utmost respect for the members of both departments and cannot for the life of me understand why they had to endure such conditions, as they put their lives on the line every single day.

As for the Town Hall, anyone who has ever gone to pay their taxes in person can see that not much has been done, if anything, to maintain the same in the last twenty years.

While we stood in the cold there was one very bright spot. The amount of residents who were will-

ing to stand there shivering were steadfast in their desire to know what was going on. While there were a few of us who have attended many town meetings, there were so many young people that it was the one thing that gave me hope. New, younger taxpayers wanting information. They are the future of Johnston. There was no protest.

As for myself, I just wanted to hear the pitch, to find out how constructing a safety complex so far from the center of town was a good idea. I do believe location is very important, and having such a complex near to where the old ones stand is a better fit for the town.

This project will not come without a significant price. That will ultimately be the taxpayers burden.

Sincerely,

Karen Cappelli Chadwick  
Johnston

## Balancing Growth and Community Needs, A Thoughtful Approach to Johnston's Future

To the Editor,

As the State Representative for District 42 in Johnston, I have been following the discussions surrounding the proposed housing development on George Waterman Road with great interest. The recent decision by our Mayor to repurpose the property for a public safety complex instead of a 252-unit housing development is a significant shift, and one that deserves thoughtful consideration by all residents.

While housing affordability is a critical issue for our community and our state, the proposed location of this development was simply not feasible. George Waterman Road is already a narrow and heavily traveled roadway, with many homes situated mere feet from the street.

Adding a development of this size would have caused significant traffic challenges, strained public safety resources, and overwhelmed this section of our town. These are concerns that cannot be ignored when considering the quality of life for current residents.

At the same time, I recognize that Rhode Island is facing a housing crisis. It is increasingly difficult for young families and individuals to afford homes here, and this is a challenge we must confront at both the state and municipal levels. Our workforce housing shortage is costing us some of our most talented people, forcing them to leave Rhode Island in search of opportunities elsewhere.

While I fully support the Mayor's decision to shift the focus of this

particular property, I am committed to working with town officials and state leaders to identify new opportunities for housing that can meet the needs of our community without overburdening specific neighborhoods. We must find a way to balance responsible growth with the infrastructure and quality of life concerns that are so important to Johnston residents.

Housing affordability and thoughtful community planning are not mutually exclusive. By working together, we can address both priorities in a way that benefits everyone.

Sincerely,

Richard Fascia  
State Representative, District 42  
Johnston, Cranston



**John Howell, Publisher Emeritus**

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LETTERS

# Timber expansion bill threatens RI forests

**To The Editor,**  
This year, the Forest Parity Act, H 5098, has been reintroduced in the RI General Assembly.

This bill, if passed, would remove the sales and use tax on logging equipment, thus making logging more profitable in the state and expanding the zoning of where logging can take place to all zoning districts.

Despite the legislation's claiming to be environmental, nothing could be further from the truth.

The bill is being pushed by the RI Wood Operators Organization for the purpose of expanding the timber industry in the state.

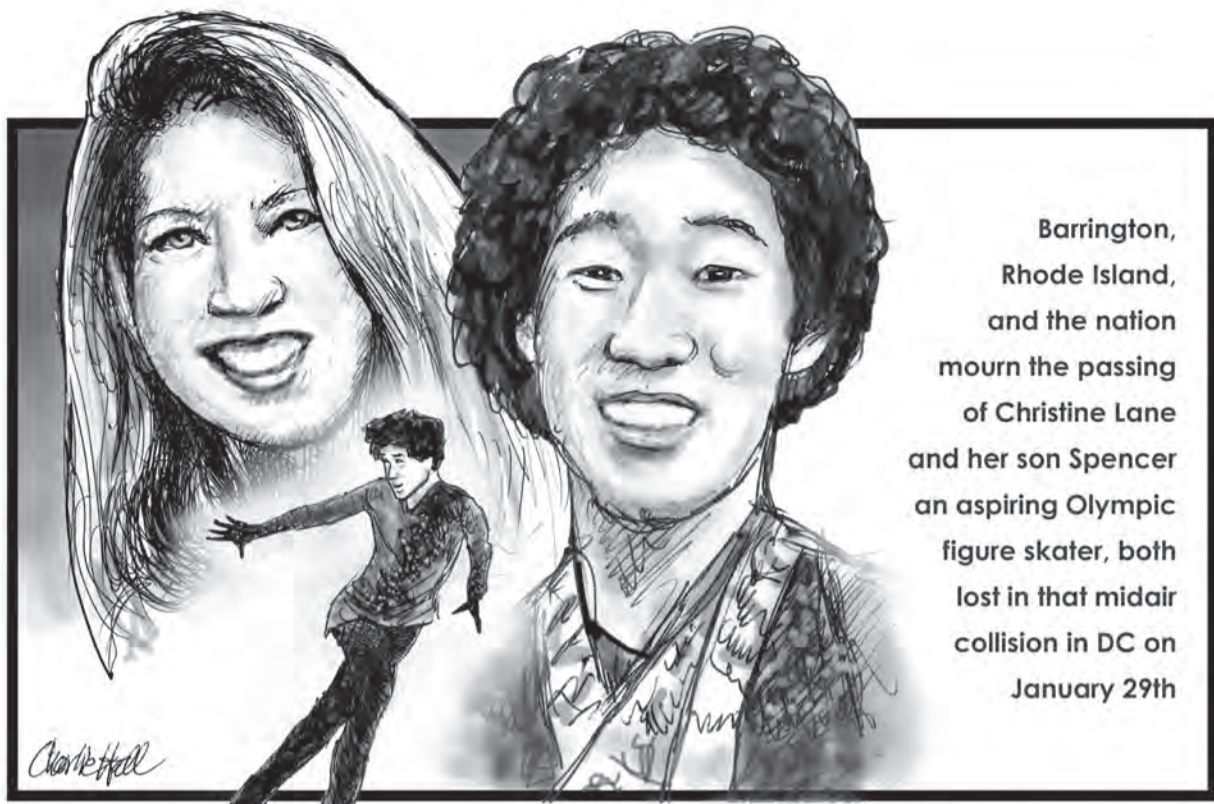
This bill would lead to more of Rhode Island's forests being clearcut, destroying biodiversity, cre-

ating a fire hazard from the flammable wood chips left on the ground after the logging operation, and contributing to climate change through the carbon that would be released from the logged trees.

Also, it does not make sense to remove the tax on logging equipment when the state is dealing with a financial deficit.

Please write to your legislators to oppose this un-environmental bill, and testify against the bill in its hearing before the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee at 4 p.m. this Thursday, Feb. 6.

**Nathan Cornell  
President, Old Growth  
Tree Society  
Warwick**



Barrington, Rhode Island, and the nation mourn the passing of Christine Lane and her son Spencer an aspiring Olympic figure skater, both lost in that midair collision in DC on January 29th

Our thoughts and prayers are with you



## Town of Johnston Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 45-24-53 that the Johnston Town Council will hold a Public Hearing **February 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Johnston Municipal Court, located at 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider proposed **Ordinance 2025-3 (formerly 2024-CP-158)** to amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Official Zoning Map, as summarized here.

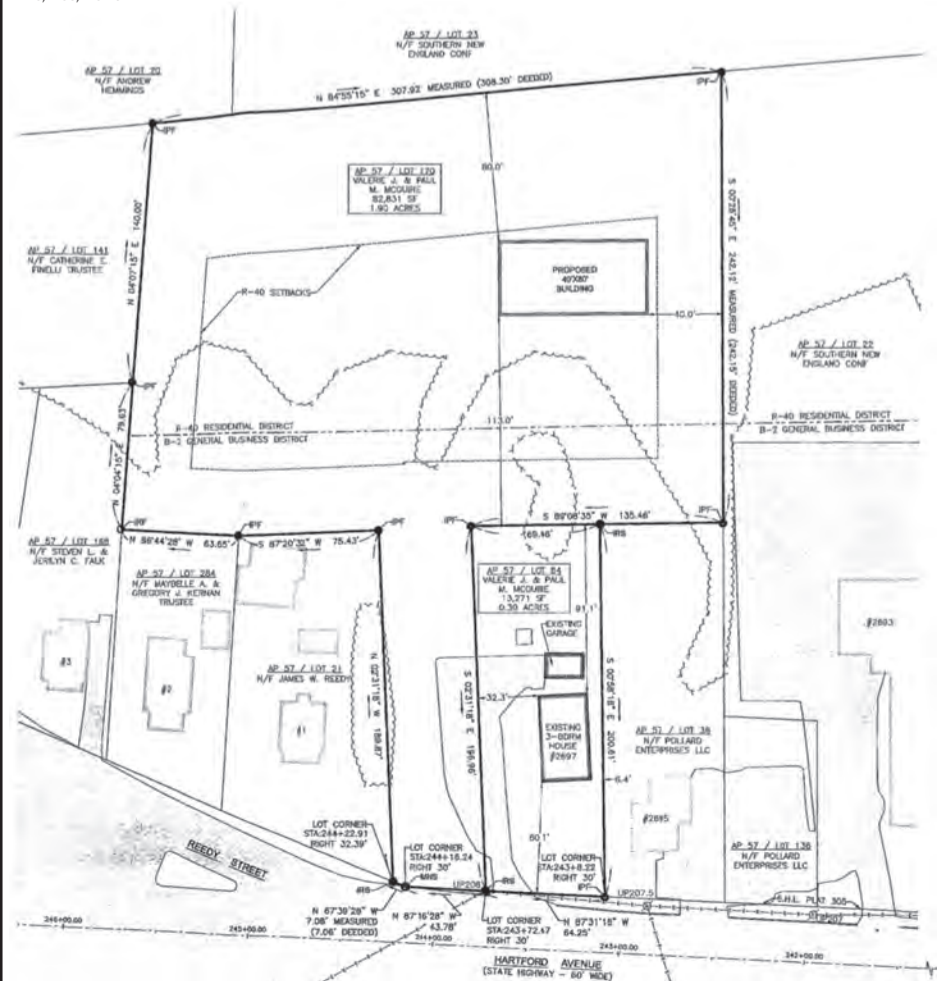
- Applicant:** Valerie J. McGuire
- Assessor's Plat:** 57
- Assessor's Lots** 170
- Present Classification:** B-2 & R-40
- Proposed Change to:** B-2
- Said lot being located on:** Hartford Avenue

The proposed Ordinance may be altered or amended prior to the close of the public hearing without further advertising, as a result of further study or because of the views expressed at the public hearing. Said proposed Ordinance is available at the office of the Town Clerk for examination. Any alteration or amendment will be presented for comment in the course of the hearing. All persons interested in the above application are requested to attend said meeting and be heard. Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the hearing date.

Per Order:  
Robert V. Russo  
Johnston Town Council

Attest:  
Vincent P. Baccari, Jr.  
Town Clerk

1/23, 1/30, 2/6/25



GUEST OPINION

# RhodeRestore: RI's first local roads program

Whether it's Rhode Islanders commuting to work, delivering groceries, transporting students on school buses or responding to emergencies – everyone depends on our local roads. Few issues are as timely or visible as the condition of our local roads, bridges and sidewalks, 80% of which are maintained at the local level. These critical connections are the foundation of our communities, yet for too long, cities and towns have lacked the resources to properly maintain them.

My experience as the executive director of the R.I. League of Cities and Towns and as a former town manager has taught me that, while improving state roads and highways is essential, investing in local infrastructure is crucial for growing our economy and enhancing quality of life across Rhode Island. While recent reports and letters published in these pages and others highlight road conditions based on outdated data, we shouldn't let that distract from the significant investments Rhode Island has made in recent years.

That's why we are proud to partner with the McKee administration to address the issues that impact Rhode Island families most directly guided by the governor's Rhode Island 2030 plan. Together we launched the RhodeRestore program – Rhode Island's first-ever initiative dedicated to directly funding the construction and repair of municipal roads, bridges and sidewalks across all 39 cities and towns. Through the governor's investment of \$27 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds, RhodeRestore has approved over 1,000 projects, improving 673 lane miles of roadways and almost 25 miles of sidewalks. Just as importantly, the program has leveraged \$80 million in municipal matching funds, fostering a collaborative and cost-effective approach to modernizing our local infrastructure.

Unlike traditional programs that focus only on state highways, RhodeRestore improves the infrastructure closest to home. Roads that take you to work, sidewalks your children walk to school on and bridges that connect neighborhoods are

finally receiving the attention they deserve. This program isn't just about repairs – it's about ensuring that every community has the foundation it needs to thrive. The governor, working with the General Assembly and the League of Cities and Towns, is addressing the issues that impact Rhode Island families most directly.

Since its launch last year, RhodeRestore has made a tangible difference. Municipalities across the state have been able to undertake projects that would have otherwise been delayed or shelved. For example, Warwick's longest municipal road, Jefferson Boulevard, has been completely repaved; the Main Street and Weeden Street bridges in Pawtucket have been restored; Woonsocket is upgrading Highland Corporate Park to attract new businesses; and Providence is improving over 15 sidewalks throughout the capital city. This work is not just about fixing potholes; it's about creating pathways for opportunity, reducing long-term costs through coordinated planning and fostering a sense of pride in our communities.

With guaranteed funding from the state, municipalities can dedicate more time and resources to thoughtful planning. I've heard firsthand in my role at the league that programs like RhodeRestore have motivated communities to modernize transportation improvement plans and expand mapping of local roads, setting the stage for smarter, more efficient infrastructure upgrades.

The success of RhodeRestore is already helping Rhode Island gain national recognition. This year, we climbed twelve spots in CNBC's infrastructure rankings, a testament to the progress the state is making in modernizing our roads, bridges and sidewalks.

I was thrilled to hear the governor's commitment in the State of the State address to making RhodeRestore permanent. I look forward to collaborating

*Submitted by Randy Rossi, executive director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns*

# Johnston Seniors Take Steps Toward Better Health at 'Ask the Experts' Event

Johnston seniors took advantage of an opportunity to improve their health and well-being during the recent "Ask the Experts" event at the Johnston Senior Center. The event featured representatives from various health and wellness fields, who set up information tables throughout the center, offering valuable resources, expert advice, and even some fun giveaways.

One of the key experts on hand was Dr. John Miale, a respected local podiatrist, along with a member of his staff. Dr. Miale provided attendees with essential information on foot care, emphasizing the importance of proper footwear, routine check-ups, and strategies for maintaining mobility as they age.

The event served as an interactive way for seniors to engage with professionals in a relaxed environment, asking questions and gathering insights on a range of health-related topics. Experts in nutrition, fitness, and preventive care were also on hand to provide guidance tailored to the needs of older adults in the community.

The Johnston Senior Center continues to be a hub of activity and support for its members, offering programs and events aimed at promoting a healthier, more active lifestyle. Events like "Ask the Experts" underscore the center's commitment to ensuring that seniors have access to the knowledge and resources they need to lead fulfilling lives.

For more information about upcoming events and programs at the Johnston Senior Center, residents are encouraged to visit the center or contact its staff.



# Union ramps up effort to oust airport CEO

## Police, firefighters cast unanimous vote of no confidence in Iftikhar Ahmad

By JOHN HOWELL

Days after the abrupt departure of a veteran law-enforcement officer selected to be chief of police at Green Airport, airport police and firefighter members of the local union unanimously took a no-confidence vote against Rhode Island Airport Corporation president and CEO Iftikhar Ahmad and airport management.

"The recent resignation of Public Safety Director Joseph M. Perkins speaks to the hostile work environment created and condoned by CEO Iftikhar Ahmad," reads a statement released Thursday by Steven Parent, president of Local 2873, RI Council 94 American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO.

Parent, who was fired by RIAC last fall, continues to represent union members working at the airport in negotiations that have yet to reach a contract. The parties are hung up over wording that would give RIAC the power to change job classifications without recourse.

After attending a RIAC directors meeting last week, Perkins tendered his resignation to State Police Col. Darnell Weaver. As reported by WPRI, Perkins messaged his co-workers he was leaving and that RIAC was looking to dismantle the department. RIAC denies it is looking to drive out the department and the union.

The vote of no confidence is the latest in stories about Ahmad's management style and the departure of high level employees since he came to Rhode Island from Louis Armstrong Airport in New Orleans nine years ago.

"Under CEO Ahmad's tenure, over 60 non-union employees were terminated or left RIAC, had over four different police chiefs, and the Police Department is running 10 officers short in violation of a grievance settlement. CEO Ahmad's hostile churn and burn management must cease," reads the union release.

RIAC spokesman Bill Fischer responded to union allegations:

**'Pure theater,' says RIAC**

"The union's no confidence vote is pure theater intended to generate leverage at the negotiating table and

nothing more. We have been negotiating in good faith for many months. It's time that union leaders put forth a meaningful effort to finalize a contract," Fischer asserted.

The statement goes on to call the vote a public-relations stunt that won't "pressure RIAC to make poor decisions at the negotiating table."

Fischer said, "RIAC management remains focused on its mission and will not be distracted nor impacted by baseless and untrue accusations."

He added, "RIAC's union employees are compensated extremely well in both pay and benefits."

Parent disclosed that the union filed a class-action grievance to contest the Airport Police Department's persistent understaffing. In an interview he said the department had more personnel before the pandemic. He said it was reasonably reduced during the pandemic and now 17 officers are covering not only the terminal but all RIAC buildings, garages and property. Usually a shift calls for a lieutenant, sergeant and four patrol officers. He said the department sometimes operates with only two officers even though, as RIAC reported last week, passenger traffic at Green has exceeded 2019 levels.

Parent hopes the vote of no confidence will bring public awareness of what happening at the airport.

"We want to make sure public safety is upheld at the airport," he said.

If RIAC is not overseeing law enforcement at the airport, who should?

"We would have more comfort with the Rhode Island Department of Public Safety," Parent said.

### 'Illegal acts,' says union

Michael McDonald, President of Council 94, is quoted as saying, "CEO Ahmad's illegal acts of releasing confidential personnel records, termination of a union president, unfounded accusations against employees and bad faith are unacceptable."

McDonald's reference to the release of confidential records refers to an Oct. 1 press conference in which Ahmad disclosed the RIAC board had hired an attorney to hunt down the author(s) of anonymous letters to

public officials, airlines, FAA and media calling on the governor to terminate Ahmad or union employees would walk off their jobs on Aug. 13 effectively closing the airport.

To support his claims that employees voluntarily left their jobs or were justifiably fired, Ahmad pointed to a bundle of personnel files and invited reporters to go through them.

"While Local 2873 members will continue working so that airport operations run smoothly, the union will increase communicating RIAC's bad-faith actions to the public, RIAC board members and political leaders. Council 94 will continue to fight to ensure CEO Ahmad provides a fair contract, dignity and respect to our members in all available forums," McDonald said.

Parent was fired Oct. 29, 2024 for allegedly discouraging a prospective applicant from applying to the airport Fire Department, gaining access to an unauthorized area at the airport and having "criminally trespassed" on Nov. 1 when he went to his former desk to obtain his personal copy of the union contract.

Council 94 represents more than 10,000 active and retired state, municipal and private-sector employees.

Putting a positive spin on the RIAC release, Fischer wrote, "The good news is Rhode Islanders can and should have every confidence in the leadership of the Rhode Island Airport Corporation. Every single metric confirms the airport is headed in the right direction. Rhode Islanders have more direct flight options than ever before and at competitive rates. The airport is fiscally sound with strong management as indicated by various rating agencies. Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport is coming off a record year with over 4 million passengers boosting Rhode Island's tourism and economy."

He said there would be an announcement this week of international flights at Green.

# Karpinski to retire as head of the state retirement system

The Employees Retirement System of Rhode Island (ERSRI), which provides retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to more than 60,000 active and retired state employees and participating municipal employees, today announced that its Executive Director, Frank Karpinski, is set to retire on June 30, after three decades of distinguished public service.

Karpinski is widely recognized as a leading authority on state and municipal pension matters. He came to ERSRI in May 1994, served as Director of Finance for seven years before becoming ERSRI Director in February 2001.

"Frank's tenure and contributions to ERSRI and the state have been remarkable," said General Treasurer and ERSRI board chair

James A. Diossa. "His unparalleled knowledge and insightful guidance have been essential in ensuring our continued focus on serving ERSRI members and all Rhode Islanders. We are incredibly grateful for his dedication and leadership throughout his tenure, and we look forward to ensuring a seamless transition as we search for a new Executive Director."

## Obituaries

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

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

— Thank you

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

M	A	C	A	O	C	H	E	F	E	L	I	S		
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- Sat. Feb. 8- ASSADOS, Smithfield 12pm
- Fri. Feb. 14- LIONS CLUB Val. Day, Pawt.
- Sat. Feb. 15- RIVER FALLS, Woon. 4:30
- Sun. Feb. 23- NEWP. PLAYHOUSE (matinee)
- Sun. Mar. 2- 579 BENEFIT. Pawt. 2:30pm
- Sat. March 15- COURTHOUSE CNTR, King.
- Sat. April 5- O'ROURKE'S, Cranston 5pm
- Sun. April 6- CHELO'S, East Providence 12pm
- Sun. April 27- CHELO'S, Providence 12pm

Please reserve online at [agingdisgracefully.net](http://agingdisgracefully.net)

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**401-732-3100**



The entire school dressed in red, white and blue to celebrate Catholic Schools Week. (Submitted photos)

# St. Rocco School Celebrates Faith, Learning, and Community

By TIM FORSBERG

Although it was an illness shortened week at St. Rocco School, the students there still celebrated Catholic Schools Week (CSW) in high style.

CSW is an annual celebration of Catholic education that typically takes place during the last week of January. This week is part of the nationwide commemoration organized by the National Catholic Educational Association. The week highlights the contributions of Catholic schools to students, families, and communities through a variety of events and activities.

Normally celebrated at the school for five days, this year's event was a bit curtailed due to illness. To prioritize student health and well-being, school officials canceled classes on Friday after several days of fun-filled activities.

"Out of an abundance of caution we will not have school on January 31, 2025 or any practices for sports. We hope to cut down on the spread of germs while doing a deep clean of our facility also," St. Rocco Principal Melissa D'Amico said through a Facebook post announcement. "This measure is a proactive approach to keeping our school community healthy and vibrant as many viruses are traveling throughout our state."



The school looks forward to re-scheduling missed events, such as their Snowball event, and continues to celebrate everything that makes their school special. Principal D'Amico expressed gratitude for the school community's understanding.

During the week, students at every grade level made the most of the week's activities, which included a reptile display with slithering snakes and interesting iguanas, a mystical magician and their magic

show, a career day filled with job opportunities, and a patriotic red, white and blue day. The students even had a special visit from the older students at Bishop Hendricken High School, who brought them outside to play some fun games.

Schools like St. Rocco also used the week to welcome prospective families. As seen in these wonderful photos from the week's celebration, St. Rocco continues to shape future leaders through faith and learning



As part of the celebration students designed "Thank You for Your Vocation" projects for those who work for the Catholic Church.



A magician and his rabbit came out and put on quite a show for the kids.



Kids dressed up in their finest in celebration of Career Day.

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# Catholic Schools Week



Celebrating Catholic Schools Week by creating "I Love St. Rocco School" compositions and artwork.



Even Hendricken students joined in the fun by interacting with the students outdoors.



The snake and iguana show was a giant hit as kids were able to interact with the animals.

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**Dinner-Comedy Show Friday, February 14 - 6:30 pm**  
 With singing sensation Steven Palumbo performing during dinner!  
 Plus 5 comics! \$69pp includes buffet, coffee & dessert, show, tax, & tip.

- 2/15 Maven's Delicatessen-Pawtucket**  
7pm \$60pp includes dinner, show, tax, & tip. Headliner Linda Belt.
- 2/20 O'Rourke's Bar and Grille**  
6pm \$55pp includes Prime rib, baked stuffed shrimp, & more! Plus 4 comics!
- 2/21 The Rally Sports Bar & Grille**  
6:30pm Enjoy a fabulous buffet! Plus 5 comics! \$50pp includes buffet, show, a complimentary glass of house wine, tax, & tip! Help John Perrotta celebrate his birthday!
- 2/21 The Event Factory Kitchen and Stage**  
8pm RI comedy legend Poppy Champlin performs! \$35pp includes show & 1 drink.
- 2/23 Boomerangs Roadhouse**  
6pm With the hysterical Stephanie Peters! \$10pp.
- 2/24 Olneyville NY System**  
7pm With our "6 All The Way" Comedy Show! \$20pp.
- 2/27 Lemongrass-Warwick**  
6pm With Boston comedy great Steve Sweeney! \$50pp includes buffet, show, tax, & tip.

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# ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Paw Print Studio

## Tucker

Hi I'm Tucker, king of the "sploot" well sort of, I sit sploot!! I've been described in many ways, a meatball, a goof, playful, big softie, couch potato and a snuggler! My coat is snow white, I'm about three years old and I enjoy playing with toys, leash walks and yummy treats! My best home would be an adult home with a fenced in yard, that's my dream home! I promise to be your loyal, loving buddy and in return all I ask is that you'll love me too! If you'd like to meet me in person, please call the Exeter Animal Shelter at 401-294-2754 and be sure to bring me some yummy treats, that's the way to my heart!

If you are thinking of adopting or know of an animal in need, please contact Karen directly at [animaltalk1920@gmail.com](mailto:animaltalk1920@gmail.com)



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Leashed, well-mannered dogs are welcome.

Learn more at [Rlpetnetwork.org](http://Rlpetnetwork.org) or scan QR code



# Ferri Jaguars have Dominant Season

The Ferri Jaguars completed their second undefeated season in a row with a 66-53 win over Deering Middle School last Thursday.

Jordan Diclo led the team with 38 points, scoring more than half of his team's total score. Michael lafrate is now 21-0 in the regular season as Ferri's head coach.

The team has shown a great ability to play basketball, blowing out almost every opponent they've faced. Their toughest matchup of the season came against De La Salle, where the Jaguars won 55-48. The opposite was true against the Hope Highlands Huskies on 8th-grade night, Ferri dominated with a 69-38 victory.

It was a great game for the Jaguars and a perfect example of how they've been playing this season. Jordan Diclo is determined to lead the Jaguars to a state championship this year after coming so close last season, falling to Cole in the state semifinals. He is the Jaguar's best player and scores over double digits every game. Though he is their leading scorer he is also a selfless player always passing to his team-



mates and giving them scoring opportunities.

Some other big names on the Jaguars team are Ethan Archambault, Eric Ferrara, and Zeke Sonaike. However, it's not just these five players that make this team so great. This Jaguars team has one of the best benches in the league, they could swap out their starting five

and still could have gone 10-0 this season.

You should look forward to watching this Ferri team in the playoffs, with their style of basketball and their resilience to win they are a fun team to watch.

Written by Matthew Duquette-Siswick, part of Johnston High School Media.



Firefighters set up equipment before venturing onto the ice at Johnston War Memorial park.

BELOW: Rescue Lt. Joe Pingitore suits up before going onto the icy cold water.

## Ice (Continued from page 1)

agencies, including this," said McCormick. "We have two zodiac boats, so we're prepared for water rescues all year long."

While weather plays an important part in the training, with some years colder than others it can make training for all circumstances challenging.

"We try to do this training every year, if not every other year," Roberts said. "We're lucky enough this year where we have an ice shelf out there, so we can simulate things differently."

A key component of this year's training was the use of an ice rescue sled, which was made possible due to the presence of a stable ice layer on half of the pond.

"Last year and the year before, we had open water

because of the temperatures," Roberts explained. "So this year, we can utilize the sled. It's a little bit different of a technique, and it's nice to go through it and get a refresher on things to keep up with our skills."

While firefighters honed their rescue techniques, the department urges residents to exercise extreme caution around frozen bodies of water.

"Right now, no ice in town is safe," Roberts warned, citing guidance from the Department of Environmental Management.

Despite these warnings, individuals have been spotted ice fishing on Oak Swamp Reservoir, raising concerns about potential emergencies.

"We get calls weekly that there are people on the ice," Roberts said. "That is up to their discretion, but it's not our recommendation to be out there. We're not really confident that the ice is going to be full thickness all the way through."

According to Roberts, ice needs to be at least four inches thick to safely support a person's weight. With fluctuating temperatures and recent reports of open water at the center of Oak Swamp, the fire department urges the public to err on the side of caution.

As winter conditions continue, the Johnston Fire Department remains prepared for potential emergencies, thanks to rigorous training sessions like these. However, they stress that prevention is key and avoiding risky ice conditions is the best way to stay safe.

The JFD does get some calls regarding animals that may be stuck out on the ice. If it is a domesticated animal, JFD recommends giving them a phone call. If it is a wild animal, they recommend contacting the Department of Environmental Management. Fortunately, the JFD do not get many ice rescue calls involving people during the winter.

"But we're always ready for them, just in case," said Roberts.

In the event someone finds themselves in a situation where they see someone has fallen through the ice, the JFD has solid advice.

"Call 911. Unless you have some type of rope or equipment that you think can help. But you can turn yourself from a rescuer into a victim, so just call 911," said Battalion Chief McCormick. "Don't make yourself a victim, you're taking your life in your hands."



# RhodyLife

## New CEO Places Trust In Culinary Experts

By **BARBARA POLICHETTI**

If executive Mick Lamond wants to meet someone for a business lunch, it shouldn't be too difficult. As the new president and chief executive officer of Newport Restaurant group, Lamond has some of the most popular restaurants in the state to choose from – including Avvio Italian restaurant in Cranston, Hemenway's seafood in Providence, and the picturesque cliffside Castle Hill Inn in Newport.

It's more likely, however, that during lunch the low-key Lamond will be at his desk at the company's headquarters in Warwick doing what he does best – strategic planning and financial management of the restaurant group known for its eclectic cuisine and attention to detail.

"I like what I do...and I'm fortunate to be surrounded by wonderfully talented people," says Lamont who joined the Newport Restaurant Group in 2005 as its Chief Financial Officer. He rose to become its executive vice president, and now succeeds the company's long-time CEO, Paul O'Reilly who will stay on to act as a special advisor to Lamond, the company said in a press release.

The restaurant group proudly declares itself "100-percent employee-owned," and Lamond will oversee its portfolio of 17 restaurants in Rhode Island and Massachusetts with an eye toward continued growth.

A Cranston native, Lamond 55, sat down at Avvio Ristorante in the Garden City shopping center last week to talk about his new role, the goals he has for the company and his appreciation for the employees who have made the Newport Restaurant Group a success story. It was clear that the unassuming Lamond was not entirely comfortable being the center of attention.

As its CFO nearly 20 years, he has been responsible for all financial functions of the company and its subsidiaries, as well as the management of the employee stock ownership plan which owns 100-percent of the company stock. A graduate of Bryant University, Lamond has a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in taxation. He is a member of the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) and the RI Society of CPAs (RISCPA).

He said that one of his main goals is to plan the company's future and keep an eye out for expansion opportunities. Another is to make sure that the restaurants continue to make the experience of their guests a top priority.

He credits the management and the staff at each restaurant for the work they do. "I am surrounded by people who are passionate about what they do," he said. "We are all about a commitment to excellence and our people take pride in what they do."

Lamond said that maintaining that commitment to excellence is the result of hiring good people, the culture of being employee-owned, and the fact that each manager is given autonomy in running their respective restaurants.



Mick Lamond of Cranston is the new President and CEO of the Newport Restaurant Group. (Beacon Media photos by Barbara Polichetti)



Hart Boyd, executive sous chef at Avvio restaurant working near the wood-fire grill.



The company is proudly employed, a factor that Lamond says helps contributes to its success.

# LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

## Dreamland Learning Center

Where play and learning happen all day long

**FULL & PART-TIME POSITIONS AVAILABLE**



**Dreamland Learning Center**  
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**NOW ENROLLING**  
 6 Weeks - 12 Years Old

By JENNIFER COATES

with art projects. Centers are set up for imaginary play, arts & crafts, building, science, music, and story time. The outside playgrounds provide the perfect place for youngsters to run off all that childhood energy. The after-school room is set up with long tables for homework time.

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

The curriculum and staff-to-child ratio requirements here meet the strict

standards of the state while all staff are licensed and CPR certified. The staff here work as a team with one goal in mind and that is to enrich the lives of the children over whom they have been given this special stewardship. The center is also highly "Bright Star" rated.

The team at Dreamland is always vigilant in their efforts to stave off all sicknesses. All common spaces are regularly sanitized with an emphasis on frequent hand washing! You can be assured that your child is in a safe, secure, and happy place!

Dreamland Learning Center is accepting enrollment for children ages 6 weeks through age 12 years of age. After school programs are in session. The center is located at 1253 Hartford Avenue. For more information, to discuss your questions or concerns, call the office at 401-280-1400 or visit their website at [www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com](http://www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com). Rhode Island state subsidies are accepted!

Be sure to check out the other Dreamland Learning Centers in West Warwick (401-828-8200) and Pawtucket (401-655-1000).



Be sure to check out the other Dreamland Learning Centers in West Warwick (401-828-8200) and Pawtucket (401-655-1000).

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# Sports

## Ferri girls advance to quarters

Top-seeded Jaguars roll to victory in prelims

By ALEX SPONSELLER  
Sports Editor

The undefeated Ferri Middle School girls basketball team kept its season rolling when it beat Gallagher 46-25 in the preliminary round of the playoffs on Tuesday night. The Jaguars were led by Caylee Allen with 11 points, followed by Jenae Smith and Jalah Pincince with 10 each. Daylin Allen also scored seven points in the win.

After being upset in last year's playoffs, the Jaguars returned this season with high hopes and a championship or bust mentality as it has a core of four eighth graders.

"That's all they talk about. When I came in I told them that we are go-



Ferri's Caylee Allen (left) and Daylin Allen (right). Beacon Media photos by Alex Sponseller

FERRI - PAGE 15



Johnston Athletic Director Justin Erickson. Submitted photo

## Erickson named RIIAAA Athletic Director of Year

By ALEX SPONSELLER  
Sports Editor

In just his third year in Johnston, Justin Erickson was named the Rhode Island Interscholastic Athletic Administrator Association's Athletic Director of the Year for his recent work in the town's sports scene.

After spending time as Cranston's middle school athletic director, Erickson would make the move to Cherry Hill and has made his presence felt at both the high school and middle school. In the past year, he has helped give the Ferri Middle School gym a facelift while also leading the charge in the high school's standing as a Unified Champion School for Special Olympics. He has also been a driving force behind girls flag football inching its way toward being a varsity sport, among other initiatives taking place in the town.

"It's a big accomplishment, I'm pretty excited to get it.

ERICKSON - PAGE 16



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# Funding NOAA is good for fish, good for economy

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Last week President Donald Trump put a hold on federal spending and then rescinded the order as Americans were outraged at the number of people and institutions that the executive order would impact negatively. The order put the brakes on funds approved by Congress including grants, loans and other financial assistance programs.

The order was vaguely written and had the potential to impact a wide range of federal funding for states, universities, institutions, and nonprofits. Fisheries related programs our industry relies on to drive our state economies in Rhode Island and Massachusetts would have been impacted greatly and are still being hurt by efforts to reduce funding for NOAA Fisheries and dismantle research programs pertaining to sea level rise, warming water, ocean acidification, shifting stocks, and other impacts.

According to Fisheries Economics of the United States, recreational fishing in Massachusetts contributes \$931 million in sales impact to the economy annually and in Rhode Island recreational fishing sales impact is \$419 million annually.

NOAA Fisheries, empowered by the fishing law of this nation, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, has a job to do. Its normal funding for 2025 has not been approved yet, never mind funds for 2026. The rescinded executive order is just an example and the tip of the iceberg as important fishery research relating to shifting stocks, warming water, sea level rise and other climate related impacts have been cut or promises have been made by the Administration to cut such funding and it is a mistake.

Massachusetts and Rhode Island rely heavily on recreational fishing to drive our state economies. Recreational fishing is big business in our states, and it is being hurt by reduced and staggering funding of NOAA Fisheries and badly needed research and stock assessments.

To achieve sustainable fisheries, we need to invest in NOAA Fisheries, the federal agency that oversees the recreational and commercial fishing businesses. This is particularly true today as sea level rise and warming water is changing our shoreline, habitat, and the fish available to catch in our area.

NOAA Fisheries, with its mission to produce fisheries science



John Migliori with his first fish of 2025, a golden trout caught at Melville Pond, Portsmouth. The Department of Environmental Management stocked thirteen waterways with trout and salmon in January. Submitted photo

and conduct sustainable management, has a significant impact on our fish populations—from producing high quality stock assessments to keeping catch at sustainable levels, to protecting and restoring fish habitat. It is critical that NOAA has the funding needed to fulfill its stewardship and management role as well as capacity for ecosystem-based fisheries management, enhanced research and stock assessments due to warming water and the geographic shifts in bait and fish stocks.

We need to provide NOAA Fisheries with full funding for both 2025 and 2026. Appropriations support is needed along

with support for funding initiatives that will lead to long-term sustainable management as it readies our fisheries for the impacts of warming water and sea level rise. Fully funding NOAA Fisheries will keep this recreational fishing economic engine running.

Fortunately, our Congressional delegations from Massachusetts and Rhode Island have been very supportive of NOAA Fisheries' budget. I urge anglers, recreational industry businesses and all members of Congress and the Administration to support NOAA's budget and related fisheries research.

We need to do this for fish, and the economy.

## Freshwater fly tying classes

The Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA) will hold four classes under two separate registrations on freshwater fly tying on Feb. 25 and March 4, followed by a second class on March 25 and April 1. The class will use natural or synthetic materials to mimic the organic food of the fish. Classes will allow students to learn the techniques and skills to tie streamers, nymphs, emergers, and dry flies.

The classes start in Hope Valley, RI at 3:30 p.m. and run 90 minutes. The classes run for two consecutive weeks on Tuesday's, Feb. 25th and March 4th

or March 25th and April 1st. In case of severe weather, the instructor will make a judgement on the side of safety and reschedule the class to April 8th.

Classes are restricted to ten students, aged 12 years and older. Registration is required and it closes the first day of class. The cost for two classes is \$33.85 and can be paid online upon registration.

Lead Instructor Jeff Perry is past President of United Fly Tiers of RI, a Lifetime member of Trout Unlimited, a Certified Casting Instructor and a Bronze Certification Tyer for Fly Fishers International, an active member of Rhody Fly Rodders, a volunteer instructor for the RI Dept of Environmental Management Aquatics Education Division, a L.L. Bean Casting Instructor and he holds a Masters in Education.

To register, visit Events | WPWA and for information email Kassi@wpwa.org.

## Where's the bite?

Cod. Party boat fishing and a few smaller charter boats continue to fish for cod south of Cape Cod and off Rhode Island waters. Fishing Machine Charters, Pt. Judith, RI at [www.fishingmachinecharters.com](http://www.fishingmachinecharters.com) has been hooking up with cod in the Cox Ledge wind farm area and is running open boats so you might be able to get a single spot on the vessel. Larger party boat vessels generally sail between 5 a.m. and 7 a.m. and return in the afternoon. Visit [www.islandcurrent.com](http://www.islandcurrent.com) and [www.francesfleet.com](http://www.francesfleet.com). Fishing. Full day rates for party boat vessels are generally \$130 to \$135 per adult and around \$80 for those under 12 years old.

Freshwater fishing. For a complete list of trout stocked ponds in Massachusetts visit Mass Wildlife at Trout stocking report | [Mass.gov](http://Mass.gov). The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) stocked thirteen waterways last week for updates visit Designated Trout Waters | Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.

*Dave Monti holds a master 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](mailto:dmontifish@verizon.net) or visit [www.noflukefishing.com](http://www.noflukefishing.com).*

# Koppen named head football coach at La Salle

## SPECIAL TO THE SUNRISE

Br. Dennis Malloy, FSC, President of La Salle Academy is thrilled to announce Dan Koppen as the new Head Coach of the La Salle Academy Football Program. Coach Koppen was chosen to lead the 116-year-old football program, after a nationwide search led by a committee that represented the La Salle Academy community and family.

Coach Koppen brings an incredible depth of football knowledge and experience to the vaunted maroon juggernaut program. A two-time member of Super Bowl winning teams, the former center, said, "During my 11 years in the NFL, I had the privilege of working alongside some of the most talented players and coaches in the sport. Being part of these great teams taught me invaluable lessons about leadership, teamwork and perseverance. I

am eager to bring these experiences and values that I've embraced to La Salle Academy where my coaching philosophy aligns seamlessly with the school's commitment to excellence both on and off the field." Koppen added, "As existing members of this school community, we chose this exceptional school for our kids based on its academics and community, long before the coaching position was an opportunity."

Josh McDaniels, offensive coordinator for the New England Patriots offered this about Coach Koppen, "He embodies so many of the incredible traits that a successful football coach must have. He was a flag carrier for our culture... He was one of our hardest workers. He is unselfish and put the team first in everything he did. He is an elite communicator who helped all others do their jobs well around

him."

Bill O'Brien, Head Football Coach, Boston College, emphasized, "Dan would be a great head coach at La Salle because he would have a unique ability to connect with the kids on the team. He has experienced so many different things in football at every level and he would be able to impart all of this wisdom in his players. Dan would have a great impact on their lives and he would be an asset to La Salle Academy."

Coach Koppen's thoughtful approach impressed the search committee with his desire to create a space for athletes to learn high quality football. Koppen added, "I want to build a program that has a high set of standards, clear expectations and strong work ethic. I believe in being a physically and mentally tough football team and we can start establishing that culture

in our state-of-the-art weight room. I am excited to get started."

E.G. Morse '88, La Salle Academy Board Member, retired Partner at Goldman Sachs, Princeton Football Alumnus and Providence Journal 1988 Schoolboy Athlete of the Year shared, "If I were sending my son to La Salle Academy or any high school for that matter, Dan Koppen with his strength of character, commitment to excellence and development of the whole student is THE Coach and man I would want my son to play for."

A graduate of Boston College, Koppen is the second Boston College alum to be appointed head coach of the La Salle Football Program. Jack Cronin, another Boston College graduate whose impact at La Salle was such that all the fields at La Salle are named after him, was head football coach for 45 years.



Jenae Smith boxes out. *Beacon Media photos by Alex Sponseller*

**Ferri**  
(Continued from page 13)

ing to play every game like it's a championship game. I have set very high expectations on them because for us to achieve our goal, we need to give 300 percent, not 100. Our foot has been on the pedal since the beginning," said first year coach Kathy Hernandez.

Hernandez is an assistant with the high school team and is looking forward to building a feeder system moving forward, as the Ferri roster has been getting contributions from all three classes in this big campaign.

"I tell (the high schoolers), 'you guys have a good group coming in from the

sixth graders up to the eighth graders.' They're coming in hungry and they want to be a part of something bigger, they'll be right there with you," said Hernandez.

With the win, the Jaguars will move on to the quarterfinals and host Portsmouth on Thursday evening.

Although the goal is to win it all, Hernandez has also stressed the importance of staying in the moment and enjoying the ride.

"There's a huge target on our back. What people will see is that we are going to attack every single game like it is our last game. It is full force, full energy. I'm also trying to teach the girls to be humble because not everyone gets these opportunities," said Hernandez. "They need to stay humble and have fun."



Amyra Stec takes the ball up the court.

# Pezza earns LEC weekly award for second time

**FROM STAFF REPORTS**

Rhode Island College freshman Quiana Pezza (Cranston) was named the Little East Women's Rookie Field Athlete of the Week for her performance at Boston University's John Thomas Terrier Classic on Friday. It is the second time this season that Pezza has received this award.

Pezza finished 14th in the triple jump (10.82m), 29th in the long jump (4.45m) and 69th in the 200m open (26.94). It was an individual meet with no team scoring and featured mostly Div. I and II competition.

**Reed earns LEC honors**

Rhode Island College freshman Taryn Reed (Pascoag) was named the Little East Women's Swimming Rookie of the Week for her performance in the Anchorwomen's, 136-101, win at UMass Dartmouth on Saturday. It is the second time this season that Reed has received this award.

Reed finished first in the 100-yard backstroke (1:16.34) and second in the 400-yard medley relay (5:53.22), 200-yard backstroke (2:40.12) and 400-yard freestyle relay (4:30.40).

**Edjang shines in Boston**

Enrique Edjang (Providence R.I.) finished 13th in the weight throw (15.43m)

as the Rhode Island College men's track and field team competed at the John Thomas Terrier Classic, hosted by Boston University on Saturday afternoon.

Senior Garrett Jones (Beacon Falls, Conn.) finished 16th in the triple jump (12.71m). Sophomore Gabriel Dosunmu (Providence) finished 18th in the long jump (6.38m) and 107th in the 200m open (23.74).

Freshman Nicholas Lamoureux (North Smithfield) finished 23rd in the high jump (1.76m), 85th in the 400m open (53.34) and 113th in the 200m open (23.82). Junior Isiah Briggs (Providence) finished 27th in both the long jump (5.68m) and the 60m open (7.33) and 91st in the 200m open (23.38).

Freshman Trevor Morgan (Smithfield) finished 27th in the weight throw (12.78m). Sophomore Will Schiller (North Smithfield) finished 30th in the 400m open (50.30) and 63rd in the 200m open (22.90).

Freshman Owen Schenck (Warren) finished 92nd in the 800m (1:59.14) and 242nd in the mile (4:32.81). Junior Benjamin Lockwood (Saunderstown) finished 130th in the 800m (2:02.48) and 263rd in the mile (4:38.91).

Sophomore Andrew Frezza (Johnston) finished 203rd in the 3,000m (8:56.37)

In upcoming action, Rhode Island College will compete at the Coast Guard Winter Invitational on Friday, Feb. 7.

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**■ Erickson**  
(Continued from page 13)

I wasn't expecting to get it, I was just happy to be nominated. It made me feel like the king of the world and it gave me confidence that I'm credible as a young person doing this job," said Erickson.

As a young athletic director, Erickson admitted that he had a thing or two to learn when he made the move from Cranston, and thanked those in the town, specifically the coaches, for helping him along the way.

"There were (a few) things I didn't know, some were the policies between Cranston and Johnston and how they were different. I also wasn't expecting the hours that would be put in," Erickson said. "Things are improving, this award isn't just for me, it's a culmination of the work

between me and our coaches. They're the ones with the boots on the ground."

Erickson and his staff are looking to stay active in the year 2025. Whether it is providing improvements to the facilities, new uniforms and other amenities, Erickson hopes to retain student-athletes in the town's public school system and give them a reason to be proud.

"Everyone is buying in and buying into the community. We want our kids to be student-athletes first and we want to have one of the best athletics departments in the state both on the field and in the classroom," Erickson said. "Working hand in hand with our middle school and high school principals, getting new uniforms, the kids want to look good and feel good. We want to give them the best experience they can get."



Justin Erickson proudly waves a Johnston High School flag.

# Real Estate Transactions

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE	ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
<b>COVENTRY</b>					<b>WARWICK</b>				
25 Sunset Lake Cir Lot 25	Westwood Const Inc	Messina, Laurence J and Messina, Kathleen L	1/14	\$689,900	Owens St Lot 488	Cathcart, Joann	Dibenedetto-Leon, Joanne C	1/13	\$155,000
26 HighlandAve	Johnson, Regena	Johnson, James R	1/13	\$450,000	110 OverlookDr	Bagley, David	Schmeltz, Jeffrey A and Lawrence, Melody R	1/8	\$805,000
3-A TorchLn	Poli, Francine	Chabot, Steven and Pelletier, Barry	1/17	\$198,000	125 ShawometAve	Burke, Jeffrey	Terrazas, Jacqueline and Terrazas, Samuel	1/13	\$292,500
31 CantaberryLn	Vaughn Jr William F Est and Vaughn, Neil P	Metivier, Laurie	1/13	\$135,000	1577 W ShoreRd	Jarvis Jr, Keith and Jarvis, Amanda	Cosmo Prop LLC	1/9	\$300,000
3491 Flat RiverRd	Therrien, Steven R and Therrien, Donna M	Watrous 2nd, Richmond E	1/15	\$430,000	1577 W Shore Rd Lot 36	Jarvis Jr, Keith and Jarvis, Amanda	Cosmo Prop LLC	1/9	\$300,000
<b>CRANSTON</b>					<b>WARWICK</b>				
133 Fordson Ave Lot 4	Agnoli, Steven J	Sanchez Perez, Maria I	1/13	\$215,000	1577 W Shore Rd Lot 37	Jarvis Jr, Keith and Jarvis, Amanda	Cosmo Prop LLC	1/9	\$300,000
1351 Pippin OrchardRd	Igliozzi, David V and Iglizozzi, Mariessa R	Ruehmer, Christopher J and Kirkland, Kelly A	1/15	\$890,000	179 CanfieldAve	Ri Custom Bldrs LLC	Pena, Arison M	1/8	\$541,130
188 OrchardSt	Scanlon, Paul M	Lambert, Benjamin J	1/15	\$378,750	200 Post Rd Lot 504	Kean, Joseph E and Kean, Warren E	Russell, Mark	1/10	\$2,600,000
29 PaliottaPl	Vianello, Erika L	Moll, Robert E	1/13	\$510,000	25 WalkerRd	Schofield, Sandra B	Mchale Sr, James S	1/9	\$300,000
31 CornellSt	Blago Irt	Catalfomo, Elvera A	1/13	\$1	256 Lake ShoreDr	Pelkey Deborah R Est and Mccaffrey, Michael J	Burke, Jeffrey and Burke, Nancy	1/14	\$395,000
60 MelroseSt	Felino, Carol A	Rosario, Joshua A and Montanez-Montoya, Ivan J	1/13	\$275,000	256 Lake Shore Dr Lot 253	Pelkey Deborah R Est and Mccaffrey, Michael J	Burke, Jeffrey and Burke, Nancy	1/14	\$395,000
75 TallmanAve	Hurley, Ryan K and Hurley, Kelley A	Montecalvo, Aaron G and Montecalvo, Kristen L	1/13	\$508,000	258 TennysonRd	Degoosh, Katie E	Fleming, Matthew	1/10	\$355,000
80 ForestAve	An, Longzi	Fonseca, Carmen and Rodriguez, Genevieve	1/13	\$468,000	263 Country ClubDr	Lgc Hm Improv & Masonry L	Dinghaus, Petra and Pistel, Matthew R	1/10	\$568,500
83 HolburnAve	Swanson, Samantha A	Walker, John and Walker, Ariella	1/14	\$365,000	33 BirchwoodAve	Lsf9 Master Participation and Us Bk T Na	Miller, Elizabeth A and Miller, Marc	1/14	\$339,900
85 CrestDr	Byron Devcomm Inc	Odess, Dennis M and Odess, Elizabeth A	1/14	\$1,250,000	39 FairfieldCt	Giansanti, Dennis and Giansanti, Gary	Mowry, Thomas E and Linhares, Kimberly	1/14	\$375,000
9 Gray Coach Ln Lot 909	Patriot Bldrs Inc	Bairos, Jose B and Bairos, Mary B	1/13	\$349,900	40 Mill CoveRd	Sciscento, Stephen	Penny, Deborah L	1/8	\$640,000
96 FerncrestAve	Mccracken, William L and Mccracken, Angela R	Sheridan, Brendan P and Winn, Nicole A	1/15	\$410,000	43 ChesterAve	Greenwood, Christopher J and Greenwood, Paula S	Gerken, Alek and Gerken, Renee M	1/13	\$415,000
97 ChestnutAve	Boulay, Jason M and Boulay, Melissa L	Lin, Jintan and Chen, Rong	1/13	\$430,000	44 OwensSt	Cathcart, Joann	Dibenedetto-Leon, Joanne C	1/13	\$155,000
<b>EAST GREENWICH</b>					<b>WEST GREENWICH</b>				
110 Hillside Ct Lot 10	Carolyn B Salk RET and Salk, Jeffrey D	Omer Fret	1/10	\$1,050,000	44 Owens St Lot 487,	Cathcart, Joann	Dibenedetto-Leon, Joanne C	1/13	\$155,000
12 Duke St Lot 12	Pals At Division LLC	Monti, Alexa M and Pissios, Christos	1/10	\$849,900	49 Van ZandtAve	Federal Natl Mtg Assc	Greenwich Cap Prtn LLC	12/11	\$130,000
342 CedarAve	Madden, Joseph J	Slaven, Rachel	1/10	\$869,000	51 WhippleAve	Provonsil, Kenneth R	Pro Bldrs Ri LLC	1/14	\$240,000
<b>EXETER</b>					<b>WEST WARWICK</b>				
11 WindroseCir	Ginis, Isaac and Ginis, Iriana	Axford, Michael E and Axford, Patricia J	1/16	\$1,200,000	59 DarlingSt	Straus, Matthew D and Kendall, Kristin N	Heneman, Iacob M and Broschat, Rebecca E	1/14	\$495,000
52 E ShoreDr	Plante, Cory J and Plante, Sammi-Jo L	Dennis, Andrew W	1/16	\$385,000	716 PostRd	Conley, Thomas B	Conley, Thomas B	1/8	\$250,000
65 PinecrestDr	Callaci, Christopher	Adam, Daniel G and Cotner, Stella	1/17	\$385,000	752 Quaker Ln Lot A210	Delfino, William	Harwood, John R	1/9	\$241,000
<b>JOHNSTON</b>					<b>WEST WARWICK</b>				
1 CottageSt	Dorsey, John A	Live Living Invesment LLC	1/13	\$336,000	85 WesleyanAve	Irzyk, Adam T and Irzyk, Edward	Byers, Jazmine	1/9	\$370,000
114 WatermanAve	Seymour, Cathrine	Pace, Richard H and Pace, Helene B	1/15	\$426,250	91 Waverly St Lot 91, HashWay	Geralyn C	Karian, Vivian M	1/13	\$390,000
1160 Hartford Ave Lot 1160	Rebovation Boomers LLC	Wade, Phyllis D and Jones-Dixon, Andrea R	1/15	\$277,000	85 ReginaDr	Gaumitz, Rodney and Gaumitz, Rebecca	Belanger, Justin L and Belanger, Brittani N	1/14	\$750,000
16 BurattiRd	Solitro, Gloria and Pennacchini, Elena	Solitro, Michael M	1/15	\$305,000	<b>WEST WARWICK</b>				
30 MillSt	3-Tree Dev Group LLC	Smith & Oak Developmnet C	1/13	\$350,000	Flat Top Condo Lot 3D	Padula Builders Inc	Johnston, Helena	1/15	\$375,000
					108 Ayda Rose Ave Lot 108	Cote, Amanda D and Cote, Michelle J	Tramontano 4th, Vincent	1/21	\$390,000
					22 WakefieldSt	Elevator Properties Inc	Cabrera, Claudia	1/17	\$624,000
					25 RotaryDr	Magno William J Est and Magno, Patricia A	Roberts, Keonte A	1/17	\$391,000
					41 AngellSt	Mcguire, Timothy W	Savinova, Daria	1/13	\$190,000
					45 Greenbriar Rd	Pro Builders Ri LLC	Tavares, Alexis	1/16	\$460,000
					59 W Valley Cir Lot 59	Residences At West Vly In	Damon A Diraimo RET and Diraimo, Damon A	1/13	\$470,150

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## Zoning (Continued from page 1)

Pilozzi also questioned Pagliarini regarding police being called to the property due to the fence allegedly being constructed inadvertently on a neighbor's property. While Pagliarini acknowledged those incidents led to a police response, he said he believes those property-line issues have been resolved with the neighbor amicably. He said he did get a survey of the property to assure proper placement.

"What I'm looking for is a hardship, so explain to the board, and the people in the audience, what the hardship is. Is it for security? Why do you want to go up 2 more feet?" said Pilozzi, who voiced a concern that the fence could hide business equipment.

Pagliarini reiterated that he hoped that the police report with guns involved would satisfy the board. He said he has also taken further security steps, such as spotlights and cameras. He said a 6-foot fence is going to stop someone from coming into his yard better than a 4-foot-tall one, and added that he does not plan to store business equipment on the property.

"I think it's a hardship," said Joseph Ballirano, the board's solicitor. "How many times does someone come in with a police report, where they're doing something like this in defense of life? Twenty years I've been representing this board, never has there been a defense of life."

In order to receive the variance, Pagliarini agreed to place caution signs on both signs of the fence near the entrance of the driveway as it is a high-traffic area with a sidewalk involved. No member of the public spoke for or against the proposal. The motion was unanimously approved by the board.

While this was the only matter listed on the board's public agenda, they did go on to conduct other business, including making a motion to reaffirm the position of each member on the board. There were no other nominations. There was also Pilozzi's nomination to represent the board on the Johnston Land Trust, which was approved.

A call to the town clerk's office after the meeting indicated these measures may have been taken up inadvertently and, if so, will be publicly announced and taken up again during the Feb. 27 meeting.



Robert Pagliarini addresses Johnston's zoning board during the January meeting in reference to a fence variance request following a security issue at his property.



Bob Stamp of Stamp Farms, pictured in this file photo with one of his nearly 3,000 hens, owns the farm that produces several thousand eggs a day. His family recently placed a daily limit on how many dozen eggs a customer can buy due to possible "egg hoarding."

## Eggs (Continued from page 1)

maintained its biosecurity efforts to protect their flock. Visitors are not allowed into the coop, and strict guidelines to protect birds' health are in effect.

"Although our birds are completely safe and we're totally contained and we practice very heavy biosecurity, the market prices and the competition are still what drives us to set our prices the same way," Stamp stated.

The farm has also begun to implement a limit on egg purchases due to increased demand, a historic occasion for a farm that's been open since 1937.

"This is the first time in all of my years that my dad has ever set a maximum on how many eggs that you can buy. We have a limit of three-dozen eggs for purchase in person, then we have an online ordering where it's a four-dozen limit," she said, adding that customers seem to be treating eggs like gold. "He said that people are hoarding eggs."

Brijette also shared that the farm has witnessed an increasing trend of people attempting to buy large quantities, with some customers requesting as many as 15 dozen eggs at a time. In addition to retail sales, Stamp Farms serves a large wholesale market, including breakfast restaurants.

"We do have a very large wholesale business, so most of the time when a customer is, say, a breakfast restaurant, we have to know if they're getting boxed eggs or loose eggs, there's really big difference and a price difference too. Loose eggs mostly go to restaurants, and all our boxed eggs go to retail customers," she explained.

Despite the market challenges, Stamp Farms' 3,000 Rhode Island Reds remain healthy, with no signs of avian influenza among their flock. Their farms sees that their free-roaming chickens live happily in the same spacious, cage-free indoor coop, enjoying a vegetarian diet free from hormones and steroids.

Every egg is picked, packed, and delivered fresh—often within a day of being laid—so they stay fresher longer. In some cases, if stored correctly, eggs can last up to two months or longer.

Stamp also wanted to reassure customers about the future of egg supplies.

"I would say that there's no need to hoard eggs. There's not going to be a day when we're all just going to run out. I think people are fearing that all the chickens are just going to die, and the news is making it seem so dramatic," she said. "You should really get only as much as your family needs and that would also help with that skyrocketing price. Because the more people that are hoarding them, the higher the price is going to rise."

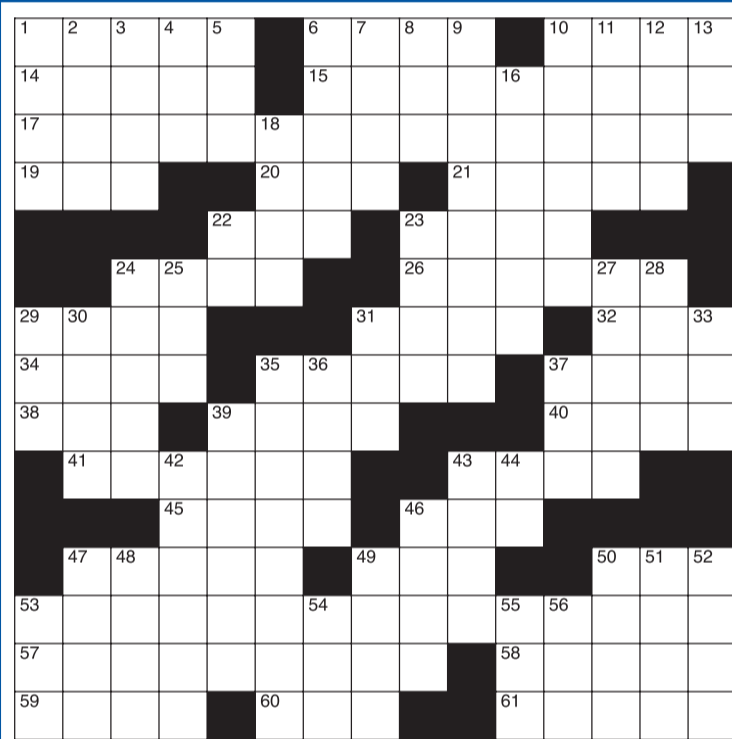
Stamp emphasized the safety of their contained birds, and wanted it known that their farm is taking the avian flu as seriously as they can.

"Readers should definitely know that contained birds are probably the safest of them all," she said. "We're free range, but we're indoors, we're contained."

As the price of eggs continues to rise, with prices starting at the farm starting at \$7.25 for a dozen large brown eggs, Stamp Farms encourages consumers to buy responsibly and avoid panic buying to help stabilize the market.

For more information about Stamp Farms and their store hours, visit [www.stampeggfarms.com](http://www.stampeggfarms.com).

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



### CLUES ACROSS

1. "The Las Vegas of the East"
6. Cook
10. Manning and Wallach are two
14. Chameleon
15. A way to fill up
17. What MLBers hope to play in
19. Unhappy
20. Indefinite period of time
21. Excites
22. Males
23. Mongol leader Genghis
24. Turfs
26. Soda comes in them
29. Not nice
31. Professional organization
32. Part of a play
34. Sea eagle
35. Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
37. Beige
38. Mental sharpness

39. Valley
40. Alcyone's husband
41. A place to gamble
43. Flightless Australian birds
45. Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
46. US spy group
47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour
49. Swiss river
50. Disfigure
53. Have surgery
57. Formal withdrawal
58. Early English council
59. Square measures
60. 2,000 lbs.
61. Siskel and \_\_, critics

### CLUES DOWN

1. Mouths
2. Buffalo
3. You plug it in
4. Each
5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)

6. King of Thebes
7. English name meaning "mythical hunter"
8. Indicates near
9. More herbaceous
10. Gas-powered cars need one
11. Dishonest individual
12. Systems, doctrines, theories
13. The woman
16. The whole of one's holdings
18. Witnesses
22. Doctor
23. Paul \_\_, Swiss painter
24. Kids look for him on December 24
25. Single
27. Competitions
28. Predict the future
29. Cage for trained hawks
30. Musician Clapton
31. Frozen water
33. Semiformal men's

- evening attire
35. Most worn
36. Common soap ingredient
37. Former EU monetary unit
39. Provisions
42. Book parts
43. Republic of Ireland
44. Partner to "Pa"
46. Sammy \_\_, songwriter
47. Dutch colonist
48. Clare Booth \_\_, American writer
49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
50. Minute arachnid
51. From a distance
52. Monthly apartment cost
53. Young women's association
54. Tourist destination
55. "Woman" in Ojibwe language
56. Pointed end of a pen

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# Ghosts, gags and the bard at Barker

By IDA ZECCO

*I Hate Hamlet* is a sharp, delightful comedy that has all the right ingredients: a dash of Shakespeare, a pinch of New York theater world satire, and a whole lot of snark. Paul Rudnick's script delivers zingers faster than you can say "to be or not to be," with a cast of characters so charming, you almost want to hang out with them, if only to witness more of their deliciously self-absorbed banter.

This play, currently at the Barker Playhouse, centers on a young, TV actor, Andrew Rally, played by David Sackal, who is disgusted by the idea of playing Hamlet in a prestigious New York production. His loathing for the role—combined with his newfound obsession with the ghost of John Barrymore, portrayed by Tim Bric, is the kind of setup that screams for both laughs and existential pondering. It's as if Shakespeare's ghost and Broadway's ego had a baby, and that baby had a few drinks at a party thrown by Noël Coward.

Sackal as Andrew delivers an engaging performance. He captures the character's confusion and vulnerability with ease. His charm brings the role to life, making Andrew's journey of self-discovery both humorous and endearing.

Bric is a captivating mix of grandeur and wit to the role of John Barrymore, embodying the legendary actor's eccentricities with flair. Bric's performance exudes both humor and gravitas, making Barrymore's ghostly presence both a comic and poignant highlight of the play.

Deirdre McDavey, Andrew's girlfriend, is played by Rebecca Bernardo-Hartley. She delivers a sweet as syrup performance, balancing the character's mix of ambition and romantic longing.

The role of Lillian Troy, played by Carole Collins, is a sharp-witted character commanding presence. She has some of the best comedic lines in the script, however, it was difficult to hear most of them at the back of the house.

Ramon Hernandez plays the character of Gary Peter Lefkowitz, a cocky, pompous television producer, who has given Andrew his first big break. Hernandez balances brash, comedic arrogance with an undeniable charm, making him both amusing and ingratiating.

Felicia Dantine, Andrew's real estate agent, who claims to be able to speak to the dead is played by Kira Santos. Her over-the-top enthusiasm and belief in the supernatural is both endearing and comical. When done well, Santos adds a delightful spark to the play.

In the words of the legendary actor Edmund Gwenn, "Dying is easy, comedy is hard."

It takes more than a funny script (which this is) to give birth to a successful comedic play. The most difficult role of all to achieve this is the part played by the director. Gia Yarn provides noteworthy blocking and moves the characters around the stage with ease.

Some of the special effects, such as Barrymore's entrance, added both humor and excitement. What was missing was overall comedic timing. There is as much a cadence and rhythm to comedy as there is to Shake-



Tim Bric as Barrymore and David Sackal as Andrew in 'I Hate Hamlet.' (Submitted photos by Samantha Hudgins)

spear's pentameter/iambic pentameter. Delivering either of these styles, and misplacing the emphasis or rhythm, denies the meaning of the phrase or the landing of the joke. Pauses and silence are considered part of the rhythm, too.

This is not bad acting. It is how to deliver or direct the line to get the most out of it. This production is funny and entertaining. It could be funnier and more entertaining with a better understanding of comedic rhythm.

Lastly, there were a few costume choices that might be reconsidered for the characters of Gary and Felicia: Gary's evening jacket and Felicia's sweat suit. Barrymore's requires men's ballet slippers, or something cloth that slips onto the foot. Modern tie-shoes spoil the authenticity of the genre.

The beauty of "I Hate Hamlet" lies in its clever self-awareness. It pokes fun at everything we hold sacred about theater, including its pretentiousness, its eccentricities, and even the very art of acting itself. What's not to love about a play that lets you chuckle at the

absurdities of *Shakespeare*, all while cleverly reminding you why we still put on these ridiculous performances in the first place?

So, yes, Andrew might hate Hamlet. But for the audience, this production is a good romp through the glories and groan-worthy pitfalls of acting, identity, and—of course—some extremely dramatic ghosts.

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Mixing it up at the Avvio bar.



Avvio employee David Rivoli making pizzas.

## ■ Restaurant (Continued from page 11)

The group employs about 1,700 people during peak season and its restaurants cover a wide variety of cuisines and many of them are eclectically mixes of different cultural culinary influences. In Newport, its venues include Castle Hill Inn, Bar'Cino, The Bohlin, The Mooring, 22 Bowen's Wine Bar & Grille, Aurelia, La Vecina, and Smoke House. In Providence, it owns Hemenway's and Waterman Grille, and other restaurants include the Boat House in Tiverton, Avvio in Cranston, Celeste in Narragansett, and Iron Works in Warwick. In Massachusetts, it owns Papa Razzi in Wellesley, and Bar 'Cino locations in Brookline, Watertown, and Westwood.

Asked if he has favorite, Lamond says, 'no,' but acknowledges that the historic Castle Hill Inn is a special place that draws visitors from around the world.

Reilly said he has total confidence that Lamond is the right person to lead the Newport Restaurant Group forward. "I am confident that Mick possesses the necessary leadership, vision, and financial acumen to drive the company forward in a thoughtful and strategic way," Reilly said in a statement.

Lamond, who grew up in Cranston's Stadium neighborhood off Park Avenue, says his family growing up didn't go out to eat much when he was younger. And even now, he it would not consider himself a "foodie," or epicurean adventurer.

Fortunately, that is not an impediment to his job, he says, because the



Lamond at Avvio Ristorante in Cranston, one of 17 dining locations owned by the restaurant group.

restaurant group has top chefs and a culinary director who manage the kitchen side of operations. That does not mean, however, Lamond said, that he is completely hands off. He enjoys patronizing the restaurants when he can, and admits to loving "steak, Italian food and dessert."

"There is so much creativity in this business," he said. "And I think we are always our own harshest critics. We are always looking to see what we can do better."

The father of four grown children, Lamond and his wife, Gloria, now live in western Cranston, not far from where Avvio is located, and he says they do enjoy stopping by occasion-

ally for dinner or lunch.

And if he has an opinion on a menu item he like to see added or changed? For the most part, Lamond says he's likely to keep that to himself, reiterating the fact that the autonomy of each individual restaurant is one of the Newport Restaurant Group's greatest strengths.

"I have been fortunate to participate in (this company) and experience its growth and success over the last 20 years," Lamond says. "I really enjoy being part of a great company."

For more information about the Newport Restaurant Group and its venues, visit [newportrestaurantgroup.com](http://newportrestaurantgroup.com).



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