

JohnstonSunRise

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Clock ticking on space at the Central Landfill

Officials emphasize recycling matters, buys time on hill

By BARBARA POLICHETTI

No vacancy. Officials predict that in about 20 years there will be no more room at the state Central Landfill – a place that, unfortunately, most Rhode Islanders rarely think about when they toss something into their household trash.

But the fact is that most of items we throw away – whether it be dirty diapers, a shoe without a mate, old photographers, a broken dish, batteries, mattresses – end up at in the mountainous landfill located off Shun Pike in Johnston.

Officials are studying the site with the goal of coming up with a plan, but all of that is still in the works. The Cranston Herald recently took of a tour of the landfill as well as the other waste management operations that occupy the 1,200-acre Johnston property to see how the state's waste is handled and what options there may be for the future.

● LANDFILL to page 8



Heavy equipment pushes trash into place. The landfill is expected be at capacity in about 20 years.



Donations are already coming in and students are ready to go to work organizing them in collection areas in Johnston High School. Front left to right: Isla Troxell, Gianna Stomberg, Jess Santillan, Sean Connor. Back left to right: Ray DeSimone, Kyle Boswell, Sparrow Katowicz, Tim Liang, Brendon Grace. Submitted photo

March 8 call for donations-by-the-pound

Annual fundraising drive for music scholarship underway

By BARBARA POLICHETTI

Fundraising by the pound has proved to be a successful formula for the Johnston School Music Association (JSMA) and the group is now hoping to best past years' results.

The school-based organization which raises money for student music scholarships recently launched its 2025 clothing and soft goods drive. Under the recycling initiative, which is a partnership with the Savers thrift store chain, the association receives 20 cents for every pound of clothing, linens and other soft goods it donates. And this year they have added books, which will earn 5-cents per pound from Savers.

● FUNDRAISER to page 8

'We're in a big fight now'

From local cuts to tariffs, taxes, Ukraine - Reed urges constituents to speak out

By BARBARA POLICHETTI

U.S. Senator Jack Reed last week decried turbulent and "reckless" tariffs, taxes and government layoffs being perpetuated by President Donald Trump and said that the price will ultimately be paid by average, hardworking Americans.

"So far Trump has shown that his priorities are not the priorities of working families, Main Streets, or even big industries," Reed said at a press conference Friday morning at his office in Cranston.

During the press conference, while responding to a question from the media, Reed confirmed that he will seek re-election next year – largely to try to combat the damage he sees being done by the Trump administration.

The senator, who is in his fourth term said, "There are many factors involved (in his decision) but the one thing I learned at West Point and commanding paratroopers, is that you don't run away from a fight. And we're in a big fight now."

He said the president's sweeping actions will result in higher costs for Rhode Islanders and all Americans. Tariffs are go-

ing to cause increases in the cost of automobiles, homes and more, Reed said. And at the same time, the President and Republican-controlled Congress are getting ready to introduce a spending bill that will increase "billionaire tax cuts" that will mean more money for the richest people in America, he said.

This all comes at a time, Reed said, when the Trump administration is making wholesale cuts in vital assistance program such as

food assistance for families in need (SNAP) and energy assistance for low-income households (LIHEAP.)

Instead, Reed said, Congress needs to be looking at ways to help working class Americans, not the "ultra rich," which he said are "apparently only people Trump listens to."

Reed's press conference comes just a couple of weeks after he, U.S. Representative Seth Magaziner, and Rhode Island education leaders held another

press event to denounce the Trump administration's proposed cuts to the U.S. Department of Education, warning that there would be catastrophic consequences.

Reed said proposals by the Trump administration to dismantle the Department of Education amount to a "war on public education," and the cuts would harm children, particularly those with disabilities, by stripping away federal funding.

"President Trump has said repeatedly he wants to eliminate the Department of Education, and Project 2025 lays out an attack plan to do just that," Reed stated.

Magaziner shared the same concerns, stating "Without federal support, the public education system in Rhode Island would be crippled."

On Friday, Reed acknowledged that Trump is acting so quickly and across so many different fronts, that it is hard to tell yet exactly how these federal actions will directly impact Rhode Islanders – whether it be cuts in direct assistance to families, the loss community action agency programs or the



US Senator Jack Reed held a press conference last week in his Cranston office. Beacon Media photo

● REED to page 9

Laura M. Krohn

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Video on scams earns Johnston student \$2,500

By JOHN HOWELL

“Beware of Scams” is the title of a video that has won Warwick Area Career & Technical Center junior Jonah Johnston second place in a national contest sponsored by the American Bankers Association.

Johnston’s selection was made at the recent ABA conference and online. Johnston and peers at the WACTC Business Academy of Marketing and Management have been working in collaboration with Centreville Bank and Meg Apostolou, the bank’s community development manager, who urged them to enter the contest.

Academy director Sharon Bowen is grateful for the opportunity the bank has provided students to learn business skills and “figure out how they could identify ways to determine unethical problematic potentials in the business world, through the lens of the financial industry.”

“This award provides another opportunity for my students to delve into different aspects of the business world, for a real life problem,” Bowen wrote in an email. She celebrated the award by treating the class to cake.

Johnston, who lives in Johnston and was homeschooled, imagines another opportunity. He said he will put his \$2,500 second-place award toward the purchase of a car, which will probably be a Honda



Sharon Bowen, director of the Business Academy of Marketing and Management at the Warwick Area Career & Technical Center, with Jonah Johnston, second-place winner in a national competition sponsored by the American Bankers Association. Submitted photo

CRV. In addition to the cash prize, as a winner in the Lights, Camera, Save ABA contest, Johnston will also receive an iPad, Apple Pencil, ring light wireless microphone and other devices valued at more than \$500.

Johnston already holds a high school diploma from Penn Foster High School, a for-profit online high school based in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He plans to complete the program at WACTC next year and is thinking of continuing his

education at CCRI.

Asked what he likes about the academy, Johnston said he appreciates Bowen’s “hands-on approach” to teaching. “It’s not just do it my way,” he said. “It’s up to interpretation and creativity.”

“As a high performing school, we maintain cutting-edge opportunities to provide to our students, so that we can maintain our status in the Career & Tech education environment,” Bowen said.

Centreville Bank scholarships available

Centreville Bank has announced the return of three college scholarships to help high school seniors further their education. This year, the bank will award a total of \$50,000 to students in Rhode Island and eastern Connecticut.

The Future Business Leaders scholarship is for high school recipients who demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit and aspire to be impactful business leaders. Many students are interested in owning their own business, and this scholarship fosters that dream while also recognizing the positive impact businesses can have in their local communities. Applicants must submit a business plan to bring their ideas to life. Each year, three recipients will each be awarded a \$5,000 Future Business Leaders scholarship.

The Emerging Community Leader scholarship will recognize students who uplift and support the community through acts of leadership, advocacy and volunteerism. Students may be nominated by peers, teachers, guidance counselors, mentors or any other person who is not a family member. Each year, three recipients will each be awarded a \$5,000 Emerging Community Leader scholarship.

These scholarships are in addition to the Robert O. Pare scholarship, which Centreville Bank has been offering since 2018. This scholarship recognizes students who are dedicated to making a difference through community service. The scholarship is named for Robert O. Pare, who worked at Centreville Bank for 55 years

and was instrumental in its success. Previously the Robert O. Pare scholarship was awarded to two students, and in 2024 the program was extended to three recipients.

Centreville Bank will also award scholarships to employees’ children graduating from high school this year.

In total, \$50,000 will be awarded to promising students who have exemplified behaviors that align with Centreville Bank’s commitment to bettering the communities it serves.

“At Centreville Bank, we believe that scholarships are not just about financial support; they are about recognizing and nurturing the drive, dedication and passion that students have for making a meaningful impact in their communities,” said Paola Fernandez, senior vice president of community development.

Applications and nominations for all scholarships are due April 1 and can be submitted electronically on Centreville Bank’s website.

Recipients must be high school seniors graduating in Rhode Island or in towns in Windham or New London counties in Connecticut who have been accepted to a college, university or trade school for the fall 2025 semester.

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee and scholarship finalists will be presented to the Centreville Bank Charitable Foundation Board for approval in May. Scholarship recipients will be notified by May 9.

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Put to the test

240 students compete at daylong RI Academic Decathlon

By JOHN HOWELL

For an instant early Sunday morning, Secretary of State Gregg Amore got a chuckle from more than 240 students who traveled to Bryant University from as far away as Westerly to compete in the 42nd annual Rhode Island Academic Decathlon.

Addressing the students, who sat nervously at tables, checking notes, quietly rehearsing their prepared speeches, chatting with teammates and munching doughnuts, muffins and chips, Amore congratulated them on their studies that go beyond the school curriculum and for their ambition to learn. He suggested that years from now they may find themselves on “Jeopardy!” That was followed by laughs. Then it was down to business.

Before him were teams from 17 public, private and parochial schools that had found time outside school hours to read up on materials provided by the U.S. Academic Decathlon and engage in discussions and activities promoted by their coaches. Two schools, Warwick’s Toll Gate and Johnston Senior High fielded two teams each.

The Wheeler School, once a decathlon powerhouse that won the state competition



With their coach, Debra Smyth, squatting in front, Johnston students gather for a group photo. Johnston High fielded two teams in the event. *Beacon Media photos by John Howell*

year after year, regained the title for the first time since 2008, scoring more than 34,000 points. East Greenwich placed second with 32,195 points and Toll Gate Team 1 was third with almost 31,000 points. Wheeler will go on to represent the state in the nationals this spring in Des Moines, Iowa.

In the top 10 schools, Bishop Hendricken finished fifth, ahead of Cranston West, and Johnston was seventh. The Hendricken team finished second in the Super Quiz. North Kingstown was first.

Steve Belanger, a decathlon coach for 24 years first at Veterans Memorial High School before it closed, and then at Toll Gate, started the day thinking this could be his next-to-last decathlon before retiring. He had the team revved up. Their two tables were decorated and Belanger brought along student volunteers, distinguishable in their white shirts and black pants or skirts, to assist the team. He was giving team members fist bumps and high fives, telling them to

kick butt and “win some money.”

The House Speaker has traditionally awarded senior gold medalists \$500 scholarships in a State House reception honoring the state champs and senior gold medalists. This year’s reception will be held Thursday, May 22 in the State Room.

Psychological stamina

Nearly 10 hours later in Bello Center – following the Super Quiz, where students answer questions before their peers and an audience – Belanger and his team were just as charged up as they were in the morning. They weren’t alone, as students hooted, yelled and applauded as team members correctly answered questions, and with the same voltage cheered as their members were called up to have bronze, silver and gold medals draped from their necks as winners in each event were announced by Scott Fraser.

How does Belanger get kids to put in the extra hours and get so excited about academics?

“To pull off this year’s finish, I really focused on pushing the positivity and canceling the toxicity. I’ve been very fortunate to always have lots of players, two teams most years, once even three teams at Vets. I recruited well, as did the players, but the players know that they’re in it for more than just medals and scholarships. It’s been learning for the sake of learning, about speaking and communicating better for the sake of that,” he wrote in a text Monday after all the excitement had calmed down.

What makes the decathlon so inclusive is that teams are comprised of A, B and C grade-point average students. It can also make it challenging for coaches to recruit teams.

The academic decathlon’s roots

The academic decathlon was conceived by an American POW flyer captured by the Germans in World War II. After the war,

Robert Peterson went on to become superintendent of Orange County schools in California, where he started the first academic decathlon in 1968. As it grew, he invited schools from across the country to the event. In April of 1983, Hendricken sent a team to the nationals, and their coaches’ enthusiasm for the competition sparked the formation of a group to hold a competition here. In November 1983, the first Rhode Island decathlon was held at the CCRRI Knight Campus with more than 25 teams competing.

In its 42 years, the decathlon has changed significantly. Tests have gone paperless. Essays are written online, submitted and graded before the day of the competition. The first couple of Rhode Island competitions were spread over a week with one day for the event, days for scoring and another day for awards.

But it’s not all high tech.

The speech and interview events are often the most daunting for students who can’t bear being separated from their cell-phones. Being on a team and winning a medal can boost confidence and bring change even for coaches.

Consider Belanger.

“Going into this year I was considering stepping down after next year, my 25th as coach, and I even told Frank Lenox [state director] that, but this keeps me positive and productive, so I’m thinking strongly of just keeping going for a few more years, and maybe even until I retire,” he said.

Academic Decathlon Medalists

Cranston, Warwick and Johnston students winning medals in: (H, honors division; S, scholastic division and V, varsity division)

MATH: Jackson Kretzer, Hendricken, S, bronze; Joshua Holland, Hendricken, V, gold.

MUSIC: Alejandro Quintero Cashone, Hendricken, H, gold; Zachary Leone, Cranston West, H, gold.

SCIENCE: Breton Herman, Hendricken, V, bronze.

LITERATURE: Jaylene Le, Toll Gate 1, H, bronze; Rebecca Farias, Toll Gate 1, H, gold; Sam Girard, Toll Gate 1, V, silver.

ART: Neko Mahony, Johnston 2, S, bronze.

ECONOMICS: Briana Lazarte, Cranston East, V, silver; Brenton Herman, Hendricken, V, silver; Sam Girard, Toll Gate 1, V, bronze.

ESSAY: Bailey Hidalgo Stafford, Toll Gate 2, S, bronze; Harrison Hun, Toll Gate 1, V, bronze.

SPEECH: Rebecca Farias, Toll Gate 1, S, gold; Danica Weedon, Toll Gate 1, S, silver; Mona Imrane, Johnston 1, S, bronze; Marcel Johnson-Goncalves, Johnston 1, V, gold; Harrison Hun, Toll Gate 1, V, bronze.

INTERVIEW: Hunter Schobel, Pilgrim, H, silver; Wesley Sanchez, Cranston East, S, gold; Rebecca Farias, Toll Gate 1, S, silver; Ariana Dandy, Johnston 2, S, bronze.



Johnston team member Giuseppe Cucinotta makes a point as he delivers his impromptu speech to judges.



The Wheeler School team celebrates after winning the 2025 RI Academic Decathlon. The last time Wheeler placed first in the event was in 2008.



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Road work ahead: RIDOT to be busy in West Bay

By ADAM ZANGARI

As spring begins, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation is preparing for significant work throughout Warwick, Cranston and Johnston in 2025.

Last week marked the beginning of a new project for RIDOT as well, as work began on the bridges carrying Route 113 over I-95 and I-295.

The bridges, according to RIDOT, were structurally deficient, and work repairing them will continue through 2027.

“Both bridges will be demolished in phases and rebuilt between May and the end of the year,” said RIDOT Chief Public Affairs Officer Charles St. Martin. “Traffic will be shifted onto one side of the bridges while demolition work is taking place. Once the new bridges are rebuilt, traffic will be shifted onto the new bridges.”

I-295 North will see work beyond its expansion to three lanes between Route 37 and Route 6 in January.

All of I-295 North will be restriped by the end of this week, according to St. Martin. That striping, however, will be temporary, as there is still more work to be done on the highway.

“The section [of I-295 N] from Route 37 to Plainfield Pike will be striped this Thursday,” St. Martin said. “This is temporary striping. RIDOT will do a final paving on this section of the highway and install permanent striping by the end of the summer.”

Route 37 is expected to see some significant improvements throughout 2025, including the completion of bridge work in progress for multiple years.

Those improvements include the completion of five bridges in the Cranston section of the highway, according to St. Martin. Those bridges include the northern halves of the bridges over I-295 North, I-295 South, Cranston Street and the Washington Secondary Bike Path, as well as the completion of a new bridge from Route 37 East to I-295 North.

“[By the end of the year], travel lanes [over these bridges] will be restored to pre-construction conditions,” St. Martin said.

The third phase of the project is also planned to begin later this year, according to St. Martin.

“The third phase of the Route 37 projects will replace and rehabilitate six bridges carrying Route 37 over local roads, arterials and rail lines,” St. Martin said. “It also will right-size the highway corridor to ensure it meets Rhode Island’s transportation needs today, as Route 37 was overbuilt as part of a proposed highway expansion project that was never constructed.”

That right-sizing will consist of replacing the bridge carrying the route over its eastern terminus at Post Road with an intersection with the road, similarly to its western end at Natick Ave. Its completion will mark the end of the Route 37 project, which RIDOT began work on in 2020- although RIDOT’s website said that completion is not expected until 2028.

The third phase work expected to occur this year, St. Martin said, will consist of work on the bridge carrying Route 37 over Oaklawn Avenue.

Later this year, RIDOT will also begin work on replacing the bridge that carries I-95 over Jefferson Boulevard.

This is being done as part of the DOT’s “I-95 15” project, according to St. Martin, which will involve the replacement of 15 different bridges along I-95 in Providence, Cranston and Warwick. The project launched last year with the replacement of the bridge carrying the highway over Elmwood Avenue in Providence, and is expected to conclude in 2031.

Warwick’s southern border will also see work begin this year with the construction of a new bridge to connect Route 4 North with I-95 South.

Asked whether RIDOT was concerned about the current uncertainty over federal funding delaying any of the department’s projects throughout the state, St. Martin said that there was no concern within the organization.

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Johnston police IBPO Local 307 game dinner

Sunday, Feb. 16 at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet was the setting for 300 guests at this year’s International Brotherhood of Police Officers dinner.

This feast was put on by Johnston police with Joe Scichilone and Arthur Petteruti organizing a full meal with wild game food catered by Ralph’s Catering of Cranston.

This organization has three events a year, a game dinner, cigar dinner and golf tournament. They raise funds for three main charities, Operation Stand Down, Steven Shaw Memorial Fund and Johnston Youth Sports.

There were many donated prizes to raffle off. The



Submitted photo

main ones were a smoker, a smart TV, cigars from Dad’s Place, a sports basket from Spirit of Hope and lo-

cal merchant donations. There was also a 50/50 raffle that paid very well.

Bay View announces second quarter honors

St. Mary Academy-Bay View principal Dr. Marcela Rossi is proud to announce that 173 students made the honor roll for the second quarter. This academic distinction recognizes the dedication of students in grades 6 through 12 who demonstrate exceptional performance in their studies.

Students who earn all As for the quarter grading period receive the distinction of

highest honors. Students who achieve As and Bs for the quarter grading period are recognized with “honors.”

St Mary Academy-Bay View is proud of the academic excellence these young women have achieved.

Johnston

Honors: Sophie Roda, Grade 11

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Opinion

EDITORIAL

We're approaching the 'find out' phase

A popular phrase among the younger generations today goes like this:

"Mess around and find out."

We've cleaned up this phrase to make it printable and, consequently, less alarming to readers whose tolerance of alarm has been severely tested in recent weeks. We're sure you can guess which word was substituted, and what the actual word is.

Essentially, the phrase invokes a sense of karma. It means that actions have consequences. But even further, it specifically warns that actions made with knowing, arrogant disregard for their consequences are likely to blow up in your face (the "find out" part of the phrase).

Many Americans who thought it would be fun to mess around are, unfortunately, about to find out.

As the barrage of monumental, life-altering decisions continues to flood the nation from wholly undemocratic actions in Washington – whether through the president's vague and overreaching executive orders, or through arbitrary funding decisions made by an unelected billionaire with unfettered access to the nation's data – people who have cheered on this chaos as a panacea to what they view as ineffective government bloat are about to realize just how important many of those government programs actually are.

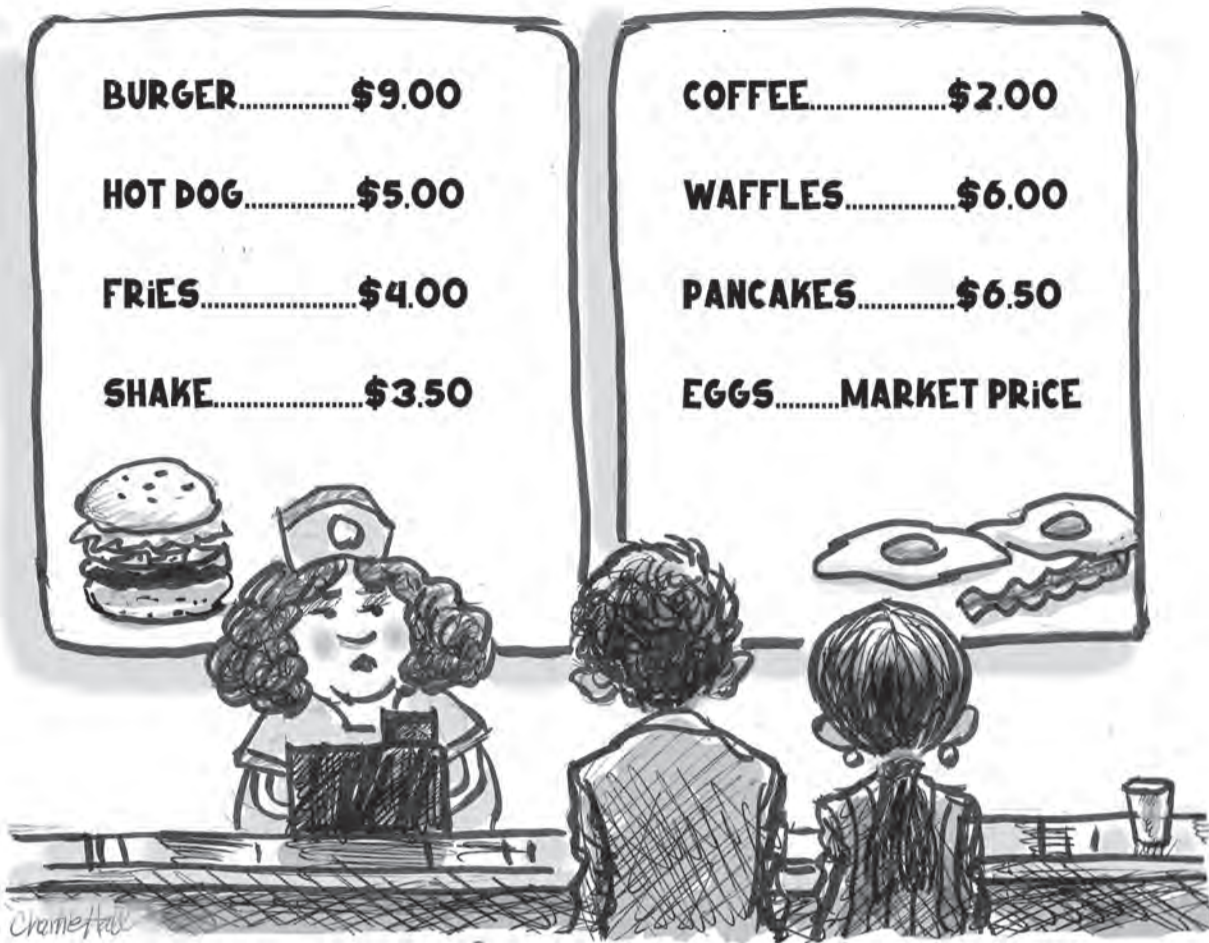
The resources being targeted, or at least caught up in the haphazard approach being taken to rein in "wasteful" spending, are the ones that help people with low incomes come closer to meeting the cost of living. In our communities, this is the work of agencies like the Comprehensive Community Action Program, West Bay Community Action, and Tri-County Community Action which administers such basics as heating assistance, workforce development, and dental care.

CCAP, whose reach into the lives of 44,000 people in Cranston, Warwick and three smaller communities nearby, also includes Head Start, the federally funded early-childhood program that supports school readiness for infants, toddlers and preschool-aged kids from low-income families – a program whose casual destruction would do nothing for Rhode Island's future.

It is no secret that government has long had a public relations problem in not being able to convey effectively how the money we pay in taxes goes to things that actually help people in our communities. But these kinds of local service organizations are the backbone of a system that produces so much assistance for the money we invest in it.

Undoubtedly, there is waste and fat that can be trimmed from any budget, never mind one as gigantic as the United States of America's. But what we are experiencing now is a real-time lesson in why a foundational civics education is so important. The one area where a centralized government is truly necessary is in providing services to individuals who need them. Not for profit, but because it's the moral thing to do. Because nobody else will.

If things continue trending this way and the government's role in helping people who need help is slowly suffocated, it's not just the needy who will find out. It will be all of us.



LETTERS

There's one thing that hasn't been discussed

To the Editor,

With all this talk of the proposed assault-weapon ban from the governor and legislators, there's one thing that hasn't been discussed; the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the funding it brings to the state.

This longstanding federal act imposes an excise tax on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment, directing these funds to state wildlife agencies for conservation efforts. This has been instrumental in preserving habitats and supporting wildlife management nationwide.

Over the last decade, Rhode Island has received about \$70 million in total funding from the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act. This estimate is based on the consistent annual apportionment of around \$7 million to the state. These funds have supported land acquisitions, habitat restoration and outdoor recreational opportunities, including the acquisition of a 61-acre parcel of forestland near Big River Management Area.

However, the state's new assault-weapon ban threatens this vital funding source. By restricting the sale of certain firearms, the ban will lead to store closures and reduced sales,

which will mean fewer excise tax dollars flowing into Rhode Island's conservation programs. This decline could significantly impact the ability to maintain and expand wildlife management efforts.

The connection between firearm sales and conservation funding is clear. As sales decrease, so too will the resources available to protect and preserve Rhode Island's natural habitats. If the assault weapons ban passes, that funding will dry up.

Richard Petrillo Jr.
Cranston

Analysis needed before cutting programs

To the Editor,

I am writing to share my reflections on a recent sermon that resonated deeply with me. During Tuesday's 7:30

a.m. Mass, the guest pastor's homily included a call for prayers for our nation, drawing a parallel to the prayers offered for Russia during the 1950s. This comparison prompted considerable thought.

While the pastor's intention was undoubtedly noble, the analogy between the current political climate and the religious suppression in 1950s Russia requires careful consideration. The invocation of prayer for our country should not be conflated with opposition to specific policies or the current administration. Furthermore, the assertion that service eliminations are solely attributable to the current president overlooks the complex realities of budgetary constraints and program effectiveness.

My personal experience as a 30-year veteran of the U.S. military and a disabled combat veteran underscores the challenges faced by many Americans. I have not benefited from social-assistance programs, and my perspective is shaped by a firsthand understanding of the complexities of the real world, free from idealized notions. However, concerns about the mismanagement of certain programs are valid and should be addressed through constructive dialogue and responsible oversight, rather than solely through prayer. Anecdotal examples, such as individuals using luxury vehicles to collect food aid, while concerning, do not necessarily represent systemic failures that justify a wholesale condemnation of all such programs. A more comprehensive analysis of program efficiency and resource allocation is warranted.

John Cervone
North Providence

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What's on your mind?

The Johnston SunRise encourages letters to the editor. It's part of our mission to reflect a multitude of perspectives on everything from community news to national politics. In the interest of including as many viewpoints as possible, we ask that you hold your letter to 250 words. We can accommodate a longer piece on a complex topic as an op-ed, preferably with a local focus and a maximum of 750 words. With your letter or op-ed, we ask that you include a phone number (not for publication) where we can reach you to confirm authorship. We'd like to hear from you.

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iii RISLA

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LETTERS

Trump doing what he said he'd do

To the Editor,

"Energy in the executive is the leading character in the definition of good government."

— Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 70

President Donald J. Trump is energetically doing exactly what he said he was going to do. Why do you find that so surprising? ("This isn't 'efficiency' — it's casual destruction," Feb 20)

Perhaps it is because you have be-

come accustomed to career politicians like Joe Biden who will say one thing and do another once elected? Or possibly you're more comfortable with a congressional relic like Jack Reed whose primary goal is preserving political power?

I find it refreshing that Donald Trump does not operate in the mode of a crooked Joe Biden or a fossilized Jack Reed. Trump tells you what he's going to do and he does it. Trump gets things done.

President Trump, aided by Elon Musk, is striving mightily to clean up

the terrible mess left us by the disastrous Biden administration. Your histrionic editorial only serves to make that task more difficult.

Donald Trump, our patriotic president, is vigorously working to make America great again. You may have a problem with that, but I sure don't.

A.H. Liddle
Warwick

A request of Rep. Magaziner

To the Editor,

As a resident of Warwick, I'm asking Representative Seth Magaziner to do more to prioritize our health, climate and future. This includes:

- Stopping efforts to repeal the Inflation Reduction Act's climate and clean energy policies. These will put us on a path to cut climate pollution by 40% by 2030, create millions of jobs and lower energy prices.
- Blocking the administration's efforts to cut vital government programs and staff to pay for tax cuts for the

wealthy.

• Resisting attempts to eliminate critical environmental protection laws.

As a resident of Warwick who deeply cares about the natural environment of our beautiful state and the future of our children, I urge Representative Magaziner to continue to speak publicly, vote and do whatever he can to protect our environment and our children.

Sr. Diane Dube, RJM
Warwick

Lawlessness in Washington is attack on democracy

To the Editor,

I am 69 years old and I lived through Vietnam, Nixon and the Reagan years, but I have never seen an attack on our democracy like this.

In the past, there was bipartisan opposition to lawlessness. Elected officials did not all vote for tyranny based on political party. Why is the unelected Musk running the show? Why is he getting access to our personal informa-

tion? This is a coup because Musk and his followers were not elected to any public office and there is no office that would give him the authority to take these actions.

It is all illegal and its intended effect is to undo democratic practice and violate human rights.

Jeneane Lunn
Cranston

'Jack and Sheldon aren't with us'

To the Editor,

Let's be clear. We are in a war with billionaires and their collaborators. It's a fight that started with Ronald Reagan's first budget — remember trickle-down economics? — and it's an attempt to steal what working people own.

Elon Musk's effort to dismantle our federal government and suck up its assets is the most savage and frightening attack yet, and we need the help of our elected representatives to fight back and keep ourselves from losing everything we've strived for.

Seth Magaziner says he will fight.

Gabe Amo seems open to the idea. Jack Reed says no, it's up to the courts to duke it out, and Sheldon Whitehouse is MIA and not saying much at all.

War is confusing, and it's not always easy to identify friends and foes, but when you're being attacked, it's obvious who isn't on your side because they're the ones who aren't helping you.

It's plain to see that Jack and Sheldon aren't with us. We elected them to stand up for us, but that's not happening, and worse, their passive silence is handing our attackers an easy

path to victory.

Do Jack and Sheldon understand what's at stake? It's hard to say, but we do. And we're growing more agitated every day as we see more and more of what belongs to us being taken away.

It's time for Jack and Sheldon to figure out how serious this is for Rhode Island workers, business owners, families, veterans, retirees and every person in our state — and to step up, do their job and fight.

Wil Gregersen
Providence

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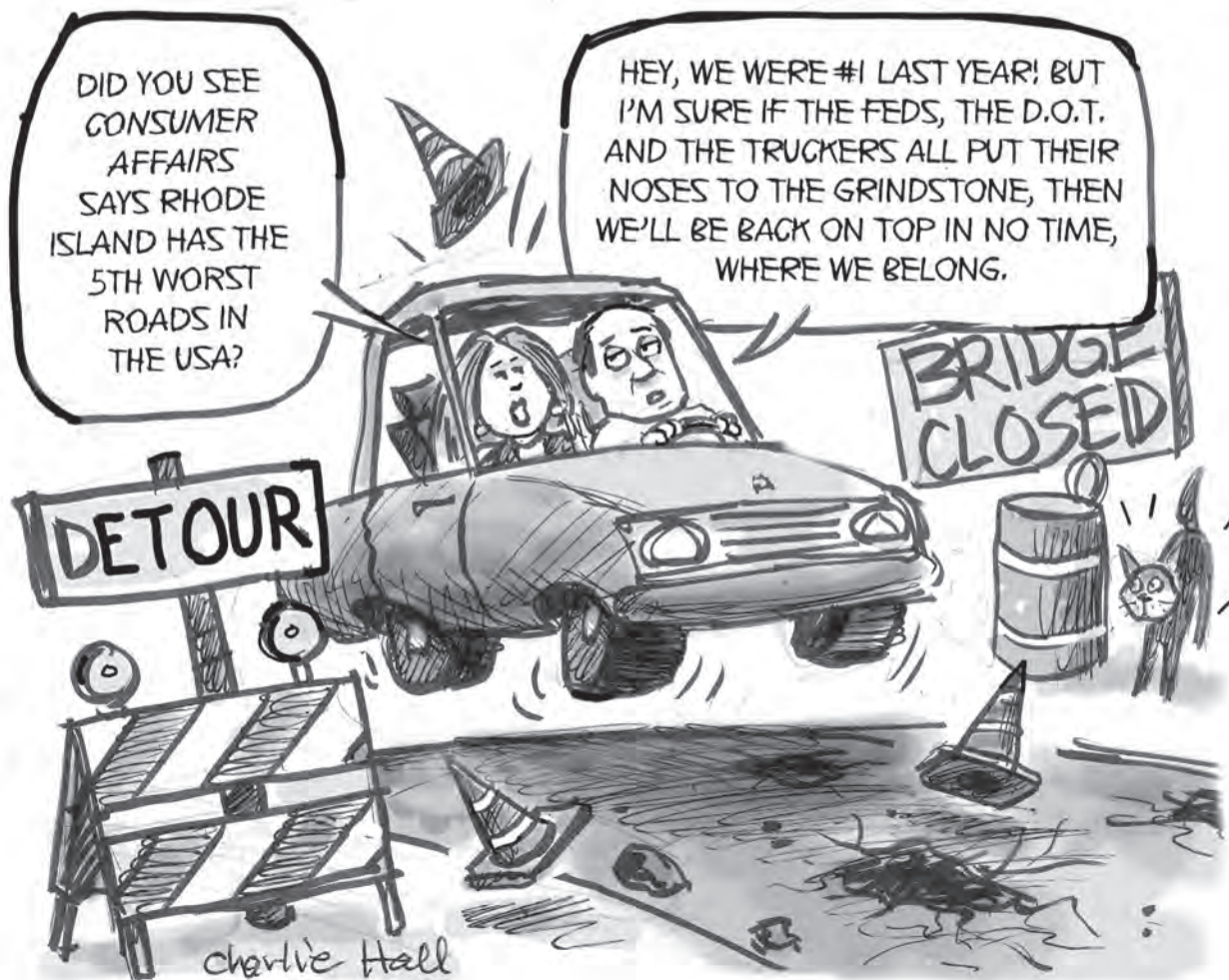
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Sharp pool skills marked friendly competition

By BARBARA POLICHETTI

They were all winners. Pool players from the Johnston and Cranston Senior Centers faced off against each other to test their skills – but also to make friends and have a good time.

And although it was a good-natured tournament with only bragging rights on the line, it was clear that the players keep their skills sharp. There was not a lot of talking during play, and the predominant sounds in the second-floor pool room at the Cranston Senior Center were the clack of pool balls and the squeak of chalk cubes on cue tips.

The players encouraged each other though, regardless of which teams they were on with “Good shot, good shot,” a common refrain.

Sky Marcos, Programs Director at the Cranston Center, made sure the competitors were well fed during the tournament which lasted about four hours. There were muffins, coffee and more in the morning, and there was hot pizza and hearty sandwiches for lunch.

“I loved it,” said Marcos who was instrumental in putting the tournament together. “It was great seeing them all get together and just have fun.”

Oh, and which team won after rounds of playing in pairs?

Bragging rights go to Cranston.



The Cranston team won, but when it came to having a good time both teams considered themselves winners and said they are ready for a rematch anytime. *Beacon Media photos by Barbara Polichetti*



I would have gone for the side pocket. Kenny Rawlinson (right) analyzes a game while talking to Johnston teammate Rick Pace.



Watching the action. Kenny Rawlinson from the Johnston team waits for his turn at the table.



Rack 'em up. Bob Piscione, the Johnston team captain and operations manager at the Johnston Senior Center, gets ready for another game in the round-robin style tournament.

Scholarship invites students to transform their communities

Three years ago, Mariam Kaba, a Woonsocket teenager, dreamt of living in a community brimming with opportunities. Today, aided by Papitto Opportunity Connection’s Transform Rhode Island Scholarship, Mariam’s vision of restoring her village is coming to life.

Empowering Rhode Island high school students like Mariam to become agents of change in Rhode Island, is the vision behind the Transform Rhode Island Scholarship. Mariam was the inaugural winner of the TRIS Scholarship, which now enters its fourth year with the opening of the applicant portal recently on Feb. 3.

How to apply

To apply for the 2025 Transform RI Scholarship, students must simply answer one question:

If you had \$1 million to improve the lives of those who need it most in Rhode Island, how would you do it?

The Papitto Opportunity Connection will invest \$1 million to make the winning idea come to life and will also receive a \$25,000 scholarship to fuel their future. Nine other finalists will be awarded scholarships worth \$5,000 to \$15,000.

“Young people are eager to share their ideas and make a difference but often lack platforms to do so,” said Barbara Papitto, founder of the Papitto Opportunity Connection. “The Transform Rhode Island Scholarship empowers teens to drive

meaningful change, positively impacting both the scholarship recipients and our communities that need it the most.”

TRIS winners make a difference

Supported by a \$1-million investment from the Papitto Opportunity Connection, Mariam has worked tirelessly with Leadership Rhode Island to create real change in her hometown of Woonsocket. Aware that many in her community suffer from food insecurity and 69% of the city students rely on free school lunches, Mariam put her vision into practice, implementing a food pantry and access to a refrigerator at Woonsocket’s Harbour Youth Center.

The pantry now services five different school communities in Woonsocket. She also collaborated with school leadership to create the “Think Tank” at Citizens Elementary School, which addresses mental illness and provides a safe space for young children. In addition, she has spearheaded job fairs, career development workshops, donation drives, financial literacy workshops, professional development seminars, supported small businesses, expanded reading resources, and increased accessibility to healthy food. She has also worked to beautify the community by cleaning up parks and adding murals at public spaces and schools.

2024 winner and Classical graduate Sebastian Connolly’s innovative tutoring programming is designed to recruit students from Rhode Island high schools with the most resources/best educational out-

comes to tutor their peers at underserved schools. 2023 winner Siya Singal, from Wheeler, is fostering cultural pride in students at an early age. In a brief period, these students are making a difference and implementing real change in the Ocean State.

Miriam, Siya and Sebastian each received a \$25,000 TRIS scholarship and the Papitto Opportunity Connection has invested \$1 million to make each of their ideas become a reality.

Since TRIS was established in 2022, the Papitto Opportunity Connection has invested more than \$3.5 million in Rhode Island high school students. Twenty-six students from public and private schools have received Transform RI Scholarships.

Each applicant can submit an essay, video, or multimedia presentation until March 31, 2025.

To learn more and apply visit: <https://pocfoundation.com/transformri/>

Legal Notices

Public Auction Legal Notice

To: Harouriou Hovhannesdian 460 Charles St, Providence RI. A public auction will be held at 100 South St, Johnston RI on March 8, 2025 at 900 am. The vehicle a 2013 Infiniti JN1CV6AR1DM767520 belonging to the above. The auction being held is to satisfy towing and storage fees.

3/6/25

Say you saw it in the Johnston SunRise

David M. DiPaolo

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY 2018 March 5 2025



Gone are the days we used to share, But in our hearts you are always there. The gates of memory will never close, We miss you more than anyone knows. With tender love and deep regret, We who love you will never forget.

Lovingly - Mom & Step-Dad Walter

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- Thank you

● **LANDFILL** from page 1

The operations, which include recycling and wastewater pre-treatment, are managed by the Rhode Island Resource Recover Corporation (RIRRC), a quasi-public agency formed by the General Assembly in 1974. The tour was educational and eye-opening. Some people may call the landfill a mountain of garbage and it is messy work, but strict rules govern almost every aspect of the operation. Environmental regulations include mandated daily coverage of the active areas of the landfill, litter control, leachate drainage, and the subterranean collection of gasses that in the past created noxious odors and contributed to the smoldering of trash buried deep within the landfill.

Lou Vergato, Executive Director of RIRRC, said the corporation likes to give public tours of the site to help educate the public on the challenges of properly managing the state's trash, the work involved, and the progress that has been made over the years.

According to state reports, about 750,000 tons of waste are buried at the landfill annually. It's labor-intensive work, Vergato said, noting that regulations require that the site be kept relatively clean and litter free at almost all times – not an easy task when plastic bags that should have been recycled are blowing in the wind. Mitigating measures, such as wind fences, are erected around areas where trash is being dumped, he said, and crews regular fan out to pick up rogue debris that has escaped the fences so it can be properly buried.

The corporation has about 150 employees, about 80-percent of whom work out in the field, in all kinds of weather.

Recycling matters

Twenty years is not necessarily a long time considering the work that will have to go into coming up with a solution for what to do with Rhode Island's trash when the landfill is full. When asked what the state's plans are for an alternative, Rhodes said that there is no easy answer, but that sufficient and study and planning must be done to come up with viable options.

Key factors that will be considered, he said, include costs, changing technologies, and recycling rates. Current state law does not allow an incinerator as an option for the RIRCC, he said, adding that further expansion of the current landfill will be an "option to be considered."

One key message that RIRRC wants to get across to the public for the sake of the future, he said, is that "recycling matters."

While some nation and international reports question the effectiveness of recycling, Rhodes said that removing recyclables from the waste stream helps buy precious time for the limited landfill space and also benefits the environment.

"Extending the life of the landfill is all about reducing the amount of material that requires disposal," Rhodes wrote in response to questions that RIRRC asked to be sent in writing to the corporation. "(We) suggest focusing on maximizing the impact that the State's current recycling laws and existing mixed recycling program can have in reducing Rhode Island's disposal demand."

He said that a 2022 report shows that "when Rhode Islanders take the time to participate in the (recycling) program and do so correctly they return real benefits to



Fences are put in place where crews are working to catch flying debris. Anything that escapes has to be picked up by work crews.

themselves and their neighbors."

He noted that the mixed recycling program resulted in roughly 70,000 tons of recyclables being sold back into commodity markets in 2022 -- preventing that tonnage from having to be landfilled.

"To put this in perspective," Rhodes said, "70,000 tons is roughly the same amount of waste that the City of Providence disposed of at the landfill over this same time frame. So, in other words, every year the program performs to this level it saves another year's worth of disposal capacity for approximately 140,000 Rhode Islanders.

"Recycling definitely matters."

By the numbers

Of the roughly 1,200 acres the RIRRC oversees in Johnston, the landfill takes up about 290 acres and is permitted for 390 acres, the corporation states on its website. Elevation-wise, it rise about 250-feet from its base to the top, and its peak is about 560-feet above sea level. The slopes of the areas that are no longer active have been "capped" with layers of vegetative material that is green even in winter. The other areas are covered daily with loose earth.

The daily operations can get muddy and messy but heavy equipment helps compact the trash, and Vergato said on clear days, the elevation affords crews and visitors views of Providence, the Fall River landfill, the Jamestown Bridge and the Newport Bridge.

Despite some locals derisive claim that the state's highest point is a heap of garbage, that is not true, the RIRRC is quick to point out. The highest point in Rhode Island

is Jerimoth Hill in Foster at about 812 feet above sea level.

One of the key facilities that RIRRC operates adjacent to the landfill is the state's recycling center, the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). Referred to informally as the "Murf", the cavernous building houses a labyrinth of conveyor belts and sorting mechanisms. Since Rhode Island accepts "mixed" recyclables, paper products, cans, and bottles arrive in a jumble at the facility and have to be separated so they can be bundled for transport to facilities in the U.S., Canada and overseas where they can be made into new products. On average, about 385 ton of recyclables are sorted at the MRF every day.

The sprawling RIRRC property also includes composting sites, a wastewater pre-treatment plant which treats the leachate that is drained from the landfill through an underground collection system, and an Eco-Depot where the public can safely dispose of hazardous household materials such as propane tanks, lighter fluids, pesticides, and automotive and rechargeable batteries. On average, the wastewater facility pre-treats about 300,000 gallons of leachate per day. It is required to bring the landfill discharge in compliance with standards that allow it to be accepted by the Narragansett Bay Commission for further processing.

Vergato and Jared Rhodes, Director of Policy and Programs at RIRRC, said the corporation is always working to try to educate the public on the proper disposal of items and on the importance of recycling. Its outreach efforts include regular visits to schools throughout the state.

● **FUNDRAISER** from page 8

The funds earned from the collection drive will go towards the Rachel E. Carson Scholarship Fund and the school music association's other scholarship awards. Last year, the association gave out nine scholarships totaling nearly \$5,000.

"We started this event years ago as a way to keep Rachel's Scholarship going in perpetuity and as a way to honor the person she was," said Ronald Lamoureux,

chair of the music department at Johnston High School.

"We (the JHS music faculty and JSMA) are all happy to help the students appreciate recycling efforts and giving back to the school community."

Donations will be accepted over the next week or so, Lamoureux said, and the goods are scheduled to be delivered to Savers in Warwick on March 13.

Students and their families, and members of the community are encouraged to bring in any soft goods and books they are not using. (Soft goods include clothing, towels, pocketbooks, curtains and blankets.)

Hardcover and softcover books will be accepted but not textbooks, magazines or encyclopedias.

The collection campaign has brought in more than 10,000 pounds of clothing the past few years, Lamoureux said, and they are aiming for two tons (including the books) this year.

He said the music association is grateful for the support it has received from Paul Shabo at Atwood Carwash and Neighborhood U-Haul on Atwood Avenue. Shabo donates whatever vehicle is needed to get the goods to Savers.

To make it easier for members of the community to participate, a drop-off site will be set up at the high school (on the auditorium side) this Saturday, March 8, from 9 am to 1 pm. Student volunteers will come right to the vehicles, so donors do not have to even leave their cars, Lamoureux said.

The association is also looking at the possibility of arranging pick-ups. For more information on how to donate, Lamoureux can be contacted at rlamoureux@johnston schools.org or by calling 401-233-1920, ext. 2102.



Paul Shabo (left), pictured here with Ronald Lamoureux, chair of the music department at Johnston High School, has consistently helped the annual campaign by donating a rental truck big enough to carry all the collections to Savers where they are exchanged for a per-pound donation to the Johnston School Music Association. Submitted photo



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Shekarchi pursues more housing with 12 bills

By **CHRISTOPHER SHEA**
Rhode Island Current

After introducing a record 15 housing bills last year to address Rhode Island's housing shortage, State House lawmakers are taking a more modest approach to encourage new home construction: only a dozen bills.

House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi unveiled the chamber's latest legislative package at a State House press conference Thursday afternoon — the last day state lawmakers could introduce a bill without having to give the chamber advance notice.

"This is the fifth consecutive year that I have announced a package on housing legislation," Shekarchi, a Warwick Democrat, said. "We've made historic investments, hundreds of millions of dollars, and we've made incredible progress — and yet here we are."

Shekarchi said most Rhode Island families still can't afford homes, mostly because there aren't enough homes. And existing home prices are out of reach for many. In an October 2024 report by the Rhode Island Department of Housing, 41% of renters said they would like to buy a home but couldn't. Of those, 75% said they could not find homes in their target price range.

The average home price in Rhode Island last year was \$425,000, according to HousingWorksRI. To afford that, a family would need an annual income of \$143,687.

The median household income is \$74,489, according to the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training.

Reducing costs, but how?

So what can the state do to reduce those costs? En-



House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi, right, looks over the House Lounge ahead of a press conference unveiling the chamber's proposed package of legislation to address Rhode Island's housing crisis on Thursday, Feb. 27. On the phone is Larry Berman, communications director for the House Speaker. At left is Deputy Director of Communications Emily Martineau. Photo by Christopher Shea/Rhode Island Current

courage more construction, Shekarchi said.

One bill sponsored by Shekarchi would expand electronic permitting to include applications from developers to the state Department of Environmental Management, the state Coastal Resources Management Council, and the state Department of Transportation.

Another bill from the speaker would amend the state's building code by centralizing duties of the various state officials, commissions and boards related to building- and fire-code permitting.

The 12 bill-package also includes legislation from other lawmakers that would make it easier to subdivide oversized lots, allow vacant or unused state-owned land to be developed, and encourage municipalities to convert vacant commercial space into homes.

Rep. June Speakman, a Warren Democrat who chairs the Special Legislative Commission to Study Housing Affordability, said the package represents "more pieces of the puzzle" in addressing the state's housing crisis.

"When we started this work, the puzzle table was

an incoherent mess of pieces," Speakman said. "That picture is starting to take shape; it's a good picture."

There is one notable piece keeping the state from completing that puzzle: ensuring each of Rhode Island's 39 municipalities is on board with the state's plan.

Shekarchi emphasized that each bill is meant only to encourage development, not mandate it.

"Those decisions remain and should be made on a local level," he said.

Some towns have been more enthusiastic than others. To get those naysayers on board, Shekarchi said there needs to be a shift in attitude about affordable housing — which he said can be achieved by partnering with the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns.

Local reforms preferred

League Director Randy Rossi said the organization would be reviewing each of the bills and supports any proposal that enables municipalities to reform local zoning and land-use laws rather than a blanket mandate from the state.

"We recognize that housing is a barrier for Rhode Islanders across the eco-

nomie spectrum and has an impact on economic development, which is why municipalities have been focused on striking a balance between new development and the needs of existing residents and businesses," Rossi and East Providence Mayor Bob DaSilva, the league's president, said in a statement.

If municipalities block development through restrictive ordinances, Shekarchi said it is possible the state could freeze aid to those communities. But the speaker said he does not believe any formal penalties against resistant communities should be established in the near future.

"We'll just have to take a wait-and-see attitude and see what happens," Shekarchi said. "Hopefully they will see the light."

Christopher Shea covers politics, the criminal justice system and transportation for the Rhode Island Current. The Current is part of States Newsroom, the nation's largest state-focused nonprofit news organization.

● REED from page 1

elimination of support for much-needed scientific and medical research.

"On the local level, it's very difficult to know right now," he said. "There is massive chaos and confusion." Reed said his office is in regular contact with state and community agencies trying to figure out exactly what funding losses they are facing. He said that any constituents with worries or looking to get answers can call his office. "We will do our best to get answers," he said.

On the international front, Reed sharply criticized Trump's handling of the war in Ukraine, saying that the president is trying to undermine efforts of Ukraine people to defend themselves against an unprovoked attack from Russia. He said the fact that the president is trying to say that Russia did not invade Ukraine is another example of Trump dealing in falsehoods rather than reality.

Later, after news broadcasts of Trump's meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Reed doubled down on his criticism of the president.

"Today's spectacle in the Oval Office was a political ambush and a shameful failure of American leadership," he said in a press release "President Zelenskyy and

the people of Ukraine are fighting for their very lives and existence."

"Furthermore, today's cruel and callous display does great harm to U.S. standing in the world," Reed stated. "Trump and Vance are communicating to the world that the United States is not to be trusted. Adversaries and allies alike will take note."

During his daytime press conference, Reed said that on the home front, President Trump is unfortunately getting little pushback from the Republican-led Congress but he is hopeful that will change as people begin to feel the impacts of the cuts and taxes, and start reaching out to their elected officials.

"We have to keep calling out what we think is wrong," he said, adding that his office is willing to work across party lines to try to keep essential government assistance programs intact and stop the slashing of funding for essential federal services such as medical grants and the National Weather Service.

"The question is how do we stop this perfect storm," he said. "I think that as more and more constituents speak out to their congressional delegations... ultimately the people's voices will be heard," Reed said. "And that is the genius of this country."

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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Pamela Verklan

Faith

Miss Faith is ready to warm up your heart and home! Attention senior dog lovers, this sweetheart has it all. Looks, charm and love...lots of love to give! Faith loves everyone and is good with other dogs, no kitties for her though so please keep that in mind. She is about eleven years old, loves walks, car rides and snuggle sessions. If you have been looking for a great companion and a new best friend to fill your heart and home, then call 401-349-1818 and set up a time to go meet this beauty in person! Faith is with the folks at Rhode Home Rescue. You can also email petmom73@yahoo.com for more information. Faith will be waiting to steal your heart!

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AG, schools chief defend LGBTQ+ rights, DEI programs

Attorney General Peter F. Neronha and Rhode Island Department of Education Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green have shared guidance with school officials on safeguarding the rights of Rhode Island students regardless of their identity, gender or sexuality. This guidance also instructs schools that diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility programs in Rhode Island schools should not change until the legal effect of recent executive actions is settled.

Recent executive actions have prompted questions about the way schools support LGBTQ+ students, as well as how schools continue with diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility programs. While litigation of these actions is ongoing, this guidance is intended to assist schools, teachers and administrators in protecting the rights of every student and maintaining inclusive environments and initiatives.

Until the legal effect of the aforementioned executive actions is settled, Rhode Island schools should not change current practices and procedures involving the rights of LGBTQ+ students and diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility programs. Any such changes may be in violation of existing federal and state law.



Education Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green

“As the new administration continues to prioritize chaos, confusion and fear over the American people, it is important for responsible leaders at every level of government to provide clarity to their constituents whenever possible,” said Neronha. “The president is attempting to make federal funding contingent in part on the reversal of policies meant to make schools a safe place for students to learn and grow. The rights of all students must be protected, and existing diversity and inclusion initiatives should stand in accordance with the law. Protecting our children includes shielding them from discrimination tactics employed by politicians seek-



Attorney General Peter F. Neronha

ing to divide us for their personal and political benefit. We stand with our schools and with our kids, now and always.”

“Educators have a moral and legal duty to ensure all students can learn and thrive in school environments that support and empower them to achieve their highest potential,” said Infante-Green. “A lack of specificity and clarity in policy changes and directives issued at the federal level have caused confusion and concern in Rhode Island schools and across the nation. With the federal landscape rapidly shifting and uncertainty surrounding the legality of recent actions and mandates from the executive branch, many school communities have reached out to request support from state leaders. We have worked in close collaboration with Attorney General Neronha and his office to provide guidance on how school leaders may approach federal actions. With many rapid and unclear changes, we will continue to closely monitor shifts at the federal level and respond to the needs of our school communities.”

The rights of LGBTQ+ students

The Trump administration’s executive order on gender identity does not, and cannot, command state or local officials to take any action. The Jan. 20 order directed federal agencies to “enforce laws governing sex-based rights, protections, opportunities and accommodations to protect men and women as biologically distinct sexes” by reviewing grants to ensure that federal funds “do not promote gender ideology,” and rescinded various guidance documents supporting LGBTQ+ students. However, given Supreme Court precedent, as well as recent federal district court and federal appeals court decisions, local education agencies should not take any action in response to the executive order unless and until its legal validity is affirmed by the courts or ratified by Congress. Further, as re-

cently affirmed by the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island, the administration cannot unilaterally suspend or rescind congressionally allocated funding for Rhode Island schools, regardless of policy regarding the rights of LGBTQ+ students.

Regulations protecting LGBTQ+ students issued by the commissioner of education have the full force and effect of law, and Rhode Island schools must continue to abide by these state laws and regulations. These regulations provide that each local education agency must adopt a policy providing “a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory school environment” for transgender and gender non-conforming students that “is consistent with state and national best practices, guidance and model policies.”

These regulations also give the commissioner of education authority to enforce the statutory requirements prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in schools. Rhode Island schools must continue to abide by these state laws and regulations.

Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility initiatives

The Trump administration has issued several executive orders threatening to curtail diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility initiatives across the country, and has attempted to condition federal funding on compliance with these orders. These orders are vague by design, conflict with court precedent and state law, and may be unconstitutional. Courts have already prohibited the administration from withholding funding from organizations with diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility programs. Further, courts have also ruled that the administration cannot withhold funds that have already been legally appropriated by Congress.

Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility policies adopted by the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education are entirely consistent with applicable state and federal law. Unless instructed to do otherwise, Rhode Island educators should continue to advance the goals of diversity, equity and inclusivity as promoted by such standards.

The Office of the Attorney General and Department of Education will continue to work together with our public schools and with our state and federal law enforcement partners to ensure adherence to these principles and to promote a safe and nurturing educational environment for all Rhode Island students.

Questions related to this guidance should be referred to the Office of the Attorney General at guidance@riag.ri.gov.

SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



Libraries are *more* than just books...

By MATTHEW LAWRENCE



A whopping 92 percent of library patrons leave libraries feeling calm and peaceful, according to a new study organized by New York Public Library along with the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project at the University of Pennsylvania's Positive Psychology Center. That finding is just one of many takeaways from the study, which surveyed 2,400 New York Public Library patrons in 2023. The study also found that libraries contribute to patrons' love of learning, assist their personal growth, and make them feel equipped for life's challenges.

While many non-users may be surprised by these findings, it seems like common sense to the people who work in public libraries.

"Personally, I think when you leave the library with a pile of books and know that the next 30 hours of your life will be spent relaxing in a big chair, of course you're going to feel calm and peaceful," says Evan Barta, Deputy Director at Warwick Public Library.

"We help people with all sorts of technical problems," said Jon Anderson, director of the Marian J. Mohr Library in Johnston. "So I wouldn't be surprised if they felt calmer when they leave. I also think reading is just a very healthy thing to do. Television and social media can just make you feel



more aggravated. Any time you give people a chance to read, it activates their minds and makes them more curious. Reading is a healthier way to use your mind."

"We offer a place where everyone is included and treated equally with respect," says Ed Garcia, Director of Cranston Public Library. "Our staff is dedicated to helping everyone with empathy and compassion."

EveryLibrary, a national organization dedicated to promoting libraries, released a statement in conjunction with the release of the study. "The [New York Public Library] report makes a compelling case that public libraries should be recognized as essential pillars of well-being. The research suggests that libraries don't just serve individuals; they strengthen entire communities."



I think when you leave the library with a pile of books and know that the next 30 hours of your life will be spent relaxing in a big chair, of course you're going to feel calm and peaceful.



— Evan Barta
Deputy Director of Warwick Public Library



There is something for everyone at the library... Whether you are checking out something to read or view, using our free public computers or free Wi-Fi, attending a class, a program, viewing an art exhibit or just coming into the building to be around other people and have a sense of community. The library is here for all.



— Ed Garcia
Director of Cranston Public Library

EveryLibrary describes itself as "the first and only national organization dedicated to building voter support for libraries," and their main goal "is to support local public libraries when they have a referendum or measure on the ballot," according to its website.

EveryLibrary is also the subject of this year's Bateman Case Study Competition, organized by the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). Across the country, "Bateman teams" are made up of college students pursuing PR careers. In Rhode Island, Roger Williams University has a PRSSA chapter, and students from the university are currently working to promote the work of EveryLibrary.

"A lot of people who use the library already know the benefits of using the library," said Claire Kelley, a junior at Roger Williams and member of the university's Bateman team.

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By JENNIFER COATES

There is going to come a time when you can no longer avoid it. That pile of laundry in the corner, growing every day while you find excuses to ignore it. But it is not going away, and eventually, it will overtake your room or leave you without a single clean garment to wear.

Laundry is like that – it is never-ending. Now, there is a possibility for escape! Why labor ONE MORE MINUTE this winter tackling the inevitable chore of endless laundry when you have the willing and able hands of Kaushal Jain of Jain's Laundry to rescue you?

For an incredible .89/pound, Kaushal will wash, soften, dry, and even fold your laundry – all in one day – all at this user-friendly, clean and efficient laundromat in Johnston. Besides the convenience of this great service, this incredible price also covers the cost of the softener, bleach, soap and hangers! The math is simple enough – ten pounds of dirty clothes, dropped off in the morning and ready to go by day's end – all for less than \$9.00. Fifteen pounds of dirty clothes dropped off on the way to work and ready to go by dinner – all for under \$14.00.

For the most competitive prices in the area, you will find both the wash-fold, same-day service offered by Kaushal here at Jain's Laundry as well as a room full of coin-operated washers and dryers for the "do-it-yourselfers". If you don't have enough quarters, no worries ~ there is a change machine that accepts up to a \$20.00 bill available here.

There are large capacity machines available for all size loads, from 25 pounds to 65 pounds. The top loading machines are available here for only \$2.25 per load. State-of-the-art dryers are installed which are incredibly efficient, rotating both clockwise and counter-clockwise to prevent the bunching and twisting that can make drying uneven in conventional dryers.

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your supply of detergent, softener or laundry bags. There is never a need to wait because there are rows and rows of machines ready to go at any given time. Everything you need is right here at Jain's Laundry.

There is plenty of parking and a friendly, helpful staff here, ready to meet the needs of both residential and commercial customers. You can stay in their clean waiting area between cycles or leave and return between loads. There is always someone there to keep an eye on your clothes or help you as needed.

Jain's Laundry is found in the Plaza 44 shopping plaza on

39 Putnam Pike. It is open seven days each week - from 8 am to 9 pm, Monday through Friday, and 7 am to 8 pm on Saturday and Sunday. For more information about their services, call 401-231-7019. Visitors to Advantage's design center at 1232 Hartford Avenue (next door to Market Basket) are welcome Tuesday through Friday from 10:00am to 4:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm. There are also free in-home consultations and on-site project evaluations.

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Sports

Martins takes 3rd at states

JHS senior qualifies for regionals

By ALEX SPONSELLER
SunRise Sports Editor

Johnston senior wrestler Logan Martins put on a show at last weekend's Rhode Island Interscholastic League Wrestling State Championships, as he finished third overall at 132 pounds after moving up in weight this season.

It was the first time Martins placed third at states after coming in fourth on multiple occasions. The third-place finish qualifies him for this weekend's New England Championships.

"I was really proud of how I wrestled. The third-place match has always been a roadblock for me, so to finish third is exciting for me. It's exciting to be able to compete at New England and represent my school," said Martins, who was also proud to have success at his new weight. "It was much needed. I had an easier weight cut this year which helped me feel strong."

Martins has been wrestling year-round before he was even at JHS, making him one of the state's most

● MARTINS - PAGE 14



Johnston's Logan Martins competes at last week's wrestling state championships. Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com

CCRI headed back to NJCAA tourney

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) Women's Basketball team showcased their dominance once again in the NJCAA Region XXI Conference, securing the regional title for the fourth year in a row and, punching their ticket to the National Tournament.

Under the guidance of Hall of Fame CCRI alumnus Coach Doug Haynes, the Lady Knights finished the season 23-5 overall and 13-0 in league play, including the postseason. Dating back to 2021-22, the women's team has won an unprecedented 50 consecutive games against Region XXI schools.

Entering the Region XXI Tournament as the #1 overall seed this past weekend, the Knights gained an early lead after their first match-up against Northern Essex Community College. The final score was 94-52, advancing the Knights to the championship game against UConn Avery Point, where the Knights secured a 75-59 victory and the Region XXI title.

"It's been a fulfilling season with this group of players because of the pressure on them to keep our region win streak alive and advance to the National Tournament," said Coach Doug Haynes.

"Our women's basketball team continues to demonstrate excellence, dedication, and perseverance," said CCRI Interim President Rosemary A. Costigan, Ph.D., RN, adding, "This incredible accomplishment is a testa-

● CCRI - PAGE 20



The Bishop Hendricken swim team last weekend. Photo by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com

Hawks swim to 35th title

By ALEX SPONSELLER
Herald Sports Editor

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League's Swimming State Champion-

ships were held on Sunday at Brown University and plenty of locals made noise on both the boys and girls side.

The Bishop Hendricken Hawks wrapped up the boys title in dramatic fashion, winning the 400 yard freestyle

relay to clinch the championship in the final event.

Hendricken senior Tristan Jordan was the anchor of the relay and would

● HAWKS - PAGE 20

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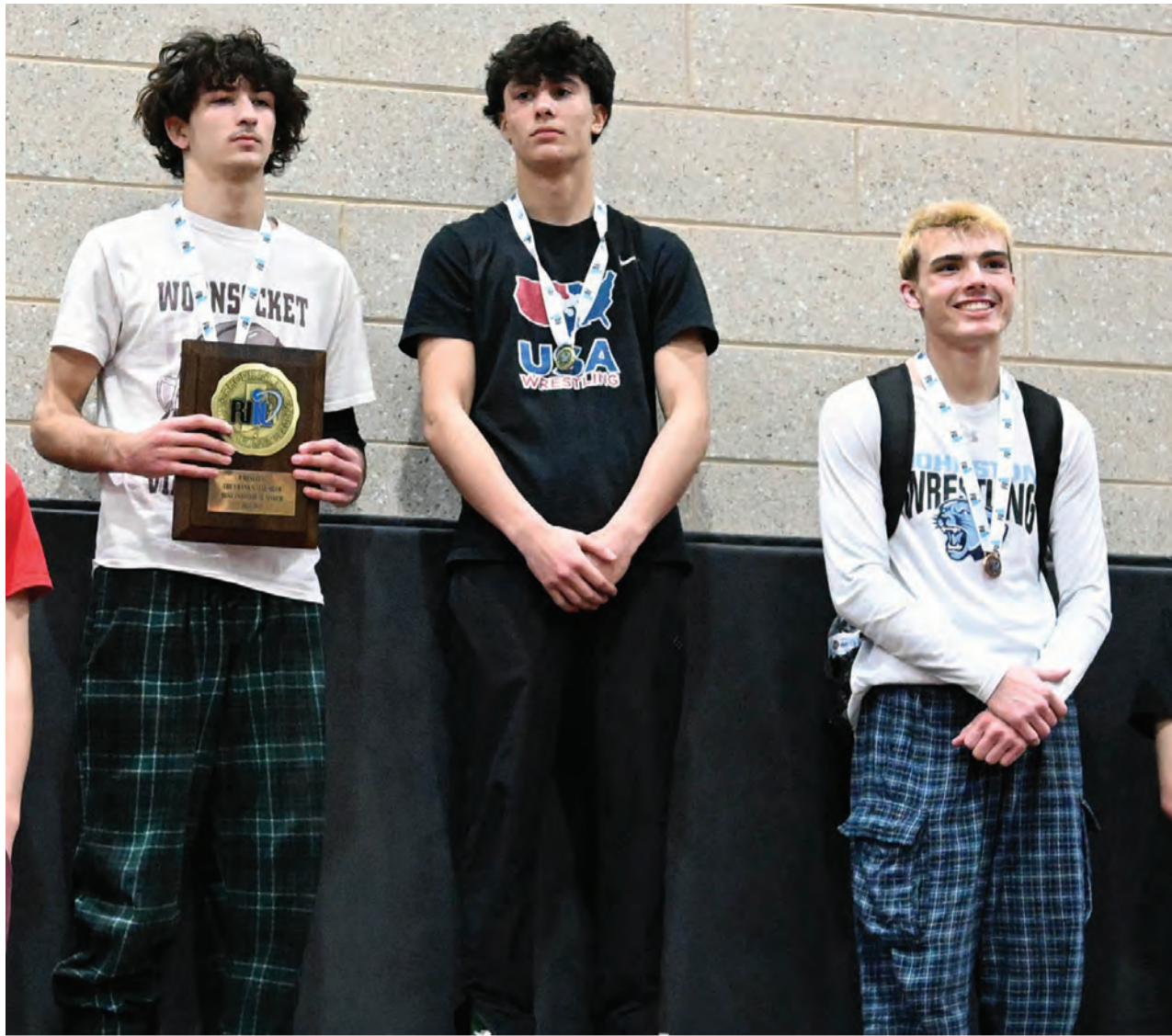
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Logan Martins on the podium after taking third at states last week.

● **MARTINS** - from page 13

experienced grapplers. Although he has not thought much beyond the state tournament, he is hoping to use his years on the mat as an advantage at New Englands.

“I understand what it takes to be ready for each match, go in there and do what you’ve got to do. I was looking more to score points and do enough to win (at states). It doesn’t matter how you do it,” said Martins. “I never really thought about what I wanted to do (at New Englands). Getting to the podium is always the goal, it’s not going to be easy, but that’s the goal.”

Although Martins has one more tournament to go, he has wrapped up his RIIL career and will leave a long-lasting legacy within Johnston wrestling.

“I’ll look back at how much my family played a part of my success. Bringing me to all the extra practices, helping me get there and be better. I keep track of my stats so it’s cool to look back at the success that I’ve had and I attribute that to my drilling partners and family,” said Martins.



Also competing at states for Johnston last week was Luke Sharpless.

● **HAWKS** - from page 13

help the Hawks secure the win by 0.28 seconds in a photo finish.

Jordan was on the shortlist of favorites to clinch an individual title. Although he just missed, he was thrilled to still take home gold as part of the relay team.

“It was awe, it was acceptance that this was my last event that I would swim in high school, and it was making up for falling short,” said Jordan of what went through his mind when he and Hawks clinched the championship. “I am a champion and our team is a champion, we needed to win.”

As he prepares to gradu-

ate, Jordan was proud to not only help Hendricken get back on top last season, but to repeat as champs this time around while laying a foundation for the future in the program.

“It’s beautiful. Last year we came back after a two-year drop. Not only was I part of the jumpstart, but I was part of continuing it further. I believe (the younger swimmers) will come back ready to work. They know what the standard is,” said Jordan.

Hendricken’s relay team of Rocco Czaja, Hunter Andrews, Avery Cover and Jordan won the 400.

Jordan took second in the 100 free for Hendricken and

third in the 50 free. Hendricken’s relay team of Tristan Andrews, Hunter Andrews, Cover and Jordan took second in the 200 free.

Hendricken’s relay team of Czaja, Ben Ranney, Liam Kelly and Tristan Andrews took fourth in the 200 medley.

Rocco later placed fifth in the backstroke for Hendricken while Tristan Andrews took fifth in the breaststroke.

Cranston West’s Alexander Tremblay led the Cranston co-op by taking eighth in the 200 individual medley. The co-op’s relay team of Tremblay, Jayden Symonds, Runlin Liu and Eri Ogunde placed ninth in the 400 free.

to cheering them on at the National Tournament.”

The NJCAA Division III Women’s Basketball Selection Show took place on Wednesday, March 5, where the Knight’s seed and matchup for the National Tournament was determined.

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● **CCRI** - from page 13

ment to their talent and hard work, as well as the outstanding leadership of Coach Doug Haynes and the CCRI Athletics staff. I am so proud of the team and look forward

Reed defends NOAA on US Senate floor

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI
Special to the SunRise

It makes good economic sense to fund NOAA as their 2023 annual budget was \$6.8 billion, yet fisheries alone have an estimated annual economic impact of over \$400 billion. This impact is just the Fisheries side of NOAA with no weather/atmospheric benefits noted.

Last Thursday an estimated 600 to 880 NOAA employees received layoff notices, most were employees classified as probationary, meaning they were hired recently or had recently been promoted to a new position. Officials responsible for the layoffs refused to provide the media with details on the number of employees that received layoff notices.

NOAA is responsible for a broad range of research and data supporting agriculture, fisheries, aviation, transportation, marine, weather forecasting (tornadoes, hurricanes, wild fire conditions) and energy sectors. Its mission (visit Our mission, values and vision | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) is “to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, ocean, and coasts, to share that knowledge and information with others, and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.”

After layoffs were announced last Thursday in an NRP story Janet Coit, Chief of NOAA Fisheries under the Biden administration (and Rhode Island resident), said NOAA cuts could “hollow the ability of NOAA Fisheries. It raises the question, she says: “How do you support the growth of our seafood sector while simultaneously eviscerating the agency that’s responsible for sustainable management and many other aspects of supporting our seafood sector?”

Last Wednesday, Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island took to the Senate floor to defend NOAA, its work, employees and budget. Senator Reed said, “Mr. President, my key topic this morning is to speak about the tremendous value that NOAA—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—provides the American people. Destroying NOAA... would be an enormous blunder that would hurt our economy, hamper innovation, and increase the risks to American lives and property. The fact is that NOAA accounts for just one-tenth of 1 percent of the Federal budget. Yet it is delivering information and research that are absolutely vital to our economic prosperity.”

To see Senator Reed’s complete comments supporting NOAA and their efforts in the region and nation, visit the Congressional Record at CREC-2025-02-26-senate.pdf or see the video at ‘An Enormous Blunder’: Jack Reed Warns Against Cutting NOAA Funding.

Your support of NOAA and the fishing community is much appreciated.

Cape Cod Salties Annual Open House

The Cape Cod Salties (CCS) Sport-fishing Club held their annual open house Wednesday, Feb. 26 at the Yarmouth, MA Senior Center. Over 100 people attended the event with fifteen saltwater research and fishing related organizations displaying information and answering questions at tables.

Jonathan Ungerland, CCS President said, “This is our second annual open house, a great tradition growing with area organizations and members making them aware of our work in the community advocating for fisheries.” Groups participating in the event included MA Division of Marine Fisher-



Senator Jack Reed took to the Senate floor last week to defend NOAA's work, employees and budget. Submitted photos

ies, UMass Striped Bass Research Team, Cape Cod Trout Unlimited, Cape Downwinders, Waquoit Bay Fish Company, Save Our Bay MA. Barnstable Association of Recreational Shellfishing, Friends of Bass River, Ocean Conservancy, Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association, WHOI - Seagrant, and Riverview Bait and Tackle.

Congratulations Cape Cod Salties for another successful year serving the fishing community on the Cape.

New England Saltwater Fishing Show this weekend

The New England Saltwater Fishing Show is this weekend Friday, March 7 to Sunday, March 9, 2025, at the Rhode Island Convention Center. The Show features tackle, rods, reels, lures, electronics, charter guides, boats, motors, accessories, clothes and much more.

Visit www.nesaltwatershow.com for the seminar updates and information on the show. Children 11 and under admitted free and on Sunday, March 9, Family Day, all women are admitted free. Adults who enter the show can register to win a Free Fishing Charter Trip with Capt. Connor MacLeod of Tall Tailz Charters for up to six people. You can purchase raffle tickets for three custom rods donated by Ralph Craft of Crafty One Customs, with the rods displayed at the RISAA membership booths. Tickets at the door are \$15.

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. Visit Fishing Machine Charters, Pt. Judith, RI at www.fishingmachinecharters.com; www.islandcurrent.com and 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. Check ice conditions with local cities and towns to make sure ice is safe for fishing or skating. For stocked ponds in Massachusetts visit Mass Wildlife at Trout stocking report | 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 or visit www.noflukefishing.com.

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Sainristil earns All-N.E. honors in weight throw

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Senior Samantha Sainristil (Cranston) earned All-New England honors with a second place finish in the weight throw (17.02m) at the 2025 New England Div. III Women's Indoor Track and Field Championship, held at The Track at New Balance on Saturday.

Rhode Island College finished tied for 16th (28 teams) with a team score of 13.0. Williams finished first with a team score of 142.50.

RIC trailed only Southern Maine for second among Little East institutions competing at the meet.

Sainristil's effort was the second-longest of her career.

Quiana Pezza (Cranston finished 14th in the triple jump (10.80m).

In upcoming action, Rhode Island College will compete at the 2025 NEI-CAA Championship, held at the Reggie Lewis Center on Friday and Saturday, March 7-8.

Motta earns NE honors in weight throw

Junior Brandon Mota (West Warwick) earned All-New England honors and won the N.E. Championship with a first place finish in the weight throw (17.38m) at the 2025 New England Div. III Men's Indoor Track and Field Championship, held at The Track at New Balance on Saturday.

Rhode Island College finished tied for 13th (32 teams) with a team score of 13.0. Amherst finished first with a team score of 109.0.

RIC trailed only Southern Maine for second among Little East institutions competing at the meet.

Sophomore Enrique Edjang (Providence) earned All-New England Honors with an eighth place finish in the weight throw (15.76m).

Senior Garrett Jones (Beacon Falls, Conn.) finished 19th in the triple jump (12.80m).

Junior Shamus Culhane (North Kingstown) finished 22nd in the

weight throw (14.44m).

Sophomore Will Schiller (Smithfield) finished 35th in the 400m (50.41).

In upcoming action, Rhode Island College will compete at the 2025 NEI-CAA Championship, held at the Reggie Lewis Center on Friday and Saturday, March 7-8.

Anchormen fall in semis

Senior guard Dwayne Robinson-O'Hagan (Woonsocket) posted 19 points and dished out five assists as No. 3-seeded Rhode Island College ended the season in an 81-68 overtime loss at No. 2-seeded Western Connecticut in semifinal action of the 2025 Little East Men's Basketball Championship played at the William A. O'Neill Center on Thursday night.

The Anchormen wasted no time getting comfortable as they opened up the game on a 22-9 run within the first 10 minutes.

Five minutes later, senior guard

Deyshawn Tengbeh (East Providence) knocked down a triple to give RIC a 14-point, 29-15, lead.

It was the hosts who made a late run in the first half, however, the Anchormen headed into the locker room leading by 10, 36-26.

The Wolves would open up an 11-3 run to begin the second half and cut their deficit down to just two, 39-37, five minutes into the final 20 minutes.

WestConn trailed, 62-57, with 1:37 remaining, but a key turnover and missed free throw attempts opened the door for the hosts to come back and force an extra session.

The Anchormen's offensive rhythm ended with regulation, as the Wolves outscored RIC, 18-5, to secure a berth in the conference final.

Fifth-year forward Ousmane Kourouma (Woonsocket) finished with 12 points and a game-high 15 rebounds. Sophomore guard Cameron Wilson (Bear, Del.) posted a career-high 12 points and seven rebounds.

Real Estate Transactions

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE	ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
COVENTRY					JOHNSTON				
1 Patience Ln	3 Kids LLC	Whitford, Dawn	2/14	\$373,000	120-1/2 Pine Hill Ave	Cascade Funding Mtg T Hbl	Macario, Guillermo R and Cabrera, Danny R	2/14	\$252,200
16 Pinehurst Rd	Mason, Emily L	Masterson, Morgan T and Chadwick, Alexander J	2/14	\$295,500	1603 Plainfield Pike Lot H5	Gemma, Linda A	Joseph P Tirocchi Lt and Tirocchi, Joseph P	2/12	\$100,000
1647 Flat River Rd	Garcia, Phillip N	Santos, Paulo A	2/14	\$270,000	3 Barbara Ct	Haskins, Glenn C and Trask-Haskins, Deborah A	Maria Hope Gaskell T	2/12	\$550,000
23 Sunset Lake Cir Lot 26	Westwood Const Inc	James M Veset T and Veset, James M	2/14	\$697,900	4 Arcade St	Alpha Holdings LLC and J&M Home Buyers LLC	Sicard, Carlos	2/14	\$355,000
24 Watercress Ct	Girard, Nicholas A and Montanaro, Rachel E	Beagan, Joseph M and Beagan, Katherine E	2/10	\$460,000	93 Peck Hill Rd	Florio, David and Johnson, Matthew	Bever, Brian V and Vazquez, Enid	2/18	\$379,000
30 Ernest St	Petrarca, John T	Kirtlink, Christopher L	2/14	\$464,999	WARWICK				
42 Sherwood Valley Ln	Lombardi, Santo	Stroker, Lexine	2/14	\$189,900	104 Stone Ave	Miller Prop Grp LLC	Anderson, Leann and Anderson, Michael	2/11	\$515,000
49 Willow St	Genesis Irt and Disanto, Jarod D	Oxx, Joseph A and Brotherton, Richard	2/10	\$370,000	113 Van Zandt Ave	Waxman, Michael S	Dairbi, Tamar	2/10	\$475,520
64 Mohawk St	Agb Construction LLC	Stringfellow, Peter and Mcnamara, Meaghan	2/13	\$455,400	13 Silver Lake Ave	Walter King Enterprises L	Francisco, Karla M and Jovin, Michael	2/12	\$375,000
7 Park Ln	Buontempo, Rudolph and Buontempo, Scott	Garcia, Phillip	2/14	\$149,000	24 Ninigret St	Flagstar Bk	Flagstar Bk	2/11	\$334,492
CRANSTON					25 Short St	Russo, Anthony T and Russo, Carolyn B	Dinh, Tra H	2/11	\$345,000
133 Fordson Ave Lot 1	Anleu, Andrea	Caracciolo, Michael and Caracciolo, Kimberly	2/7	\$233,000	30 Gilbert Stuart Dr	Robert & Marie Perrone Lt and Perrone, Robert J	Knipper, Michael and Knipper, Marysol	2/10	\$1175,000
15 Marlow St	Dimaio, John V and Dimaio, Joan M	Dimaio, Michael J	2/7	\$455,000	30 Shippin Ave	Reall Prop LLC	Pike, Eric E	2/10	\$507,500
18 Harding Ave	Williams, Anganie J	Lfw LLC	2/7	\$306,000	35 Missouri Dr	Calvetti Jr, Craig A and Calveti, Farrah P	Gonzalez, Erick	2/10	\$474,500
34 Fernwood Dr	Slink, Mary E and Slink, William T	Slink, Mary E	2/7	\$315,000	3524 W Shore Rd Lot 214,	Pacesetter Grp LLC	Axd Invest LLC	2/12	\$190,000
35 Hines Farm Rd	Perez, Sheny M	Agency Group LLC	2/7	\$495,000	3524 W Shore Rd Lot 710	Haley, William J	Chehy 3rd, Joseph W	2/10	\$300,000
35 Ledgewood Dr	Pantano, Mario D and Pantano, Catherine	Fitzgerald, John D and Fitzgerald, Graciela	2/6	\$552,600	479 Providence St Lot B1	Poore, Kristen R	Murray Jr, David	2/10	\$280,000
4332 Post Rd Lot 101	Sciarra, Georgene	Sunshine Dev Inc	2/7	\$255,000	78 Horse Neck Rd	Rose Rlty & Family Invest	Day Jr, Harry A	1/16	\$
5 Lake Garden Dr	Giorgio, Victor V and Giorgio, Eric J	Eisner, Jessica	2/7	\$440,000	WEST WARWICK				
50 Betsey Williams Dr	Cioffi-Donley, Darlene S	Vakharia, Jamsheed and Vakharia, Lisa	2/7	\$585,000	10 Grace Ct	Delfino, Linda V and Desmarais, Lisa V	Delfino, Chelsea and Mis, David	2/18	\$309,000
57 Laura Cir	Capirchio, Fiorvante D	Moreau, Nicholas J	2/6	\$655,000	199 River Farms Dr Lot 199	Connolly, Kristen and Connolly, Heather	Dellaventura, Robert	2/18	\$324,900
85 Alton St	Rodriguez, Edwin	Linera, Tomas E	2/7	\$190,000	236 Andrews Ave	Diaz, Christine L and Diaz, Jose A	Streeter, Bryan and Streeter, Luara	2/18	\$479,900
EAST GREENWICH					34 Willow St	Elvira Manna Irt and Manna, Gaetano T	Sjrf Realty LLC	2/7	\$340,000
115 Westfield Dr	Liesching, John R and Liesching, Robbyn	Rao, Vinay and Rao, Kathryn	1/16	\$1,879,000	52 Narragansett Ave	Fath, Marion J	Mathieu, Tyler	2/14	\$340,900
EXETER					88 Clyde St	Ford, Philip and Ford, Michael	Kritter, Dylan L	2/18	\$390,000
597 S County Trl Lot 203	Jade Investment Group LLC	Rhode Is Auto Storage LLC	2/12	\$469,000	<small>This copyrighted material is compiled from public records and re-printed under agreement with the Warren Group of Boston. Not every community is reported each week. To report a data error, call 617-896-5310 or send an email to transfersatthewarrengroup.com</small>				
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RI Philharmonic presents Rhapsody in Blue

March 14 & 15 The VETS

The Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra presents Rhapsody in Blue with conductor Aram Demirjian and pianist Jeffrey Biegel for two performances at The VETS, 1 Avenue of the Arts, Providence: Saturday, March 15 at 7:30pm as part of the TACO Classical Series, and Friday, March 14 at 6:30PM, as part of the Amica Rush Hour Series. Both concerts feature the RI Phil premiere of Ives' Fugue (from Symphony No. 4), the RI Phil premiere of Peter Boyer's Rhapsody in Red, White & Blue, Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, and the RI Phil premiere of Dawson's Negro Folk Symphony.

"This program is exceptional in many ways. Not only are we presenting three Rhode Island



Aram Demirjian, conductor
Submitted photo courtesy of RI Philharmonic Orchestra

"Featuring a mix of beloved classics and exciting new works, this March concert celebrates the rich and diverse musical traditions that have shaped American orchestral music."

— David Beauchesne, RI Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School Executive Director

Philharmonic premieres, but we are also a part of a historic musical milestone in presenting Rhapsody in Red, White, & Blue by Rhode Island composer Peter Boyer, celebrating the centennial of George Gershwin's seminal work, Rhapsody in Blue," said Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School Executive Director David Beauchesne. "Featuring a mix of beloved classics and exciting new works, this March concert celebrates the rich and diverse

musical traditions that have shaped American orchestral music."

Tickets start at \$20 and are available at tickets.riphil.org or 401.248.7000. Three-concert subscriptions are available for the TACO Classical Series. Subscriber benefits include access to the virtual concert archive, the best pricing as well as the best seats in the house, including the opportunity to always have the same seats at every concert and convenient flexibility with easy-to-accommodate ticket options if any conflicts arise. For subscriptions, tickets and more information visit tickets.riphil.org or call 401.248.7000.



Jeffrey Biegel, pianist
Submitted photo courtesy of RI Philharmonic Orchestra

Full event line-up announced for Providence Culinary Collective

The Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau (PWCVB) announced that ticket sales are live for its inaugural Providence Culinary Collective, happening March 27-30, 2025 in locations throughout Providence.

The Providence Culinary Collective, alongside the inaugural Rhode Island Wine Experience (Wine X) produced in partnership with RMO PR, is also excited to share its full, multi-day schedule of events featuring signature tastings and specially curated paired dinners that honor the city's culinary legacy and reflect its brand.

"GoProvidence, with the help of our talented community partners, has curated a first-of-its-kind food and wine experience for Providence locals and visitors to enjoy," said Kristen Adamo, President and CEO of the PWCVB. "The Providence Culinary Collective brings together seasoned and emerging talent to truly showcase our area's culinary prowess in one delicious and diverse celebration. Throughout this four-day event, you will gather at the city's picturesque rooftops, dine among celebrity chefs, learn from the country's top culinary profes-

sors, and enjoy expertly-prepared meals inside some of Providence's most historic buildings. Providence has long been a destination for authentic cuisine, supported by the talent of Johnson & Wales University alumni and a thriving dining culture. We are excited to continue sharing this with the world during the Providence Culinary Collective."

"Wine X is a vision I've been nurturing for some time - a way to highlight Providence's culinary culture while introducing renowned wines," said Rosanna Ortiz, founder of RMO PR and Wine X. "As someone who believes in the power of community, I wanted to create an experience that brings people together to explore exceptional wine, forge lasting connections, and honor the heart and soul of Providence."

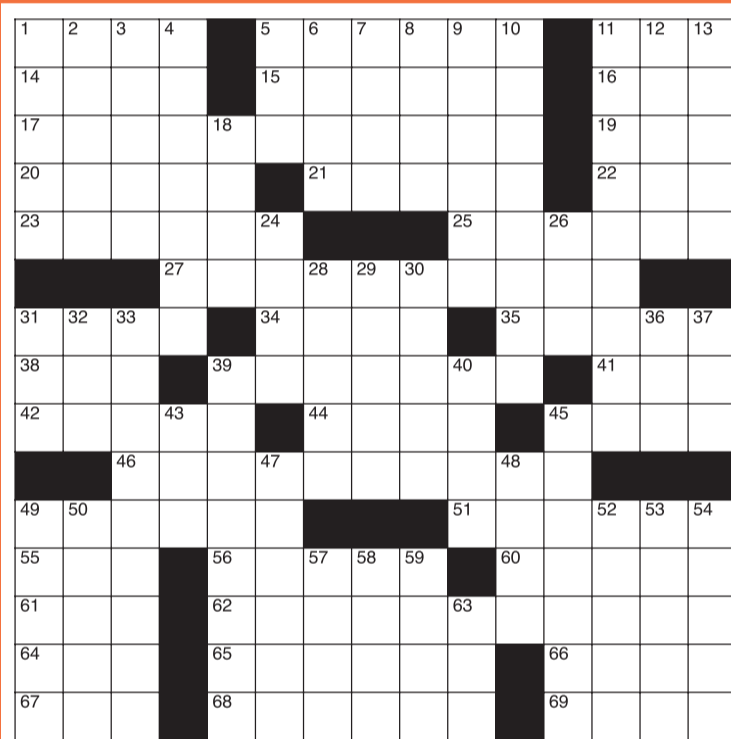
Other Providence Culinary Collective partners include: Johnson & Wales University, Hope & Main, Food Trucks In, Rhode Island PBS and The Public's Radio's Uncorking the Future, and national media partner SAVEUR.

Events are being held in conjunction with Lil Rhody Laugh Riot, a new four-day com-

edy festival happening simultaneously in multiple venues in the city and featuring more than 20 comedians including

Kevin Hart, Matt Rife, Aziz Ansari and Leslie Jones. Find more details at LilRhodyLaughRiot.com.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



CLUES ACROSS

1. Cut a little bit off
5. State with confidence
11. River in NE Scotland
14. Not narrow
15. Lacking social polish
16. Amount of time
17. Frame
19. Automobile
20. Toadstools
21. High school dances
22. Utilize
23. Challenged
25. One-sided
27. Showing extreme greed
31. Potted plants
34. Everyone has one
35. Lake in Botswana
38. E.T. rode in one
39. Juniors' parents
41. Small amount
42. Mother of Perseus

44. Ornamental box
45. Gov't investigators
46. Uncertain
49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
51. The vast grassy plains in S. America
55. Your consciousness of your own identity
56. Noted consumer advocate
60. Spanish sports club
61. Body part
62. Tractability
64. Woman (French)
65. Ready and willing to be taught
6. Marine invertebrate
7. One who takes you to court
8. Indicates outer
9. Parallelograms
10. Strains
11. Cross
12. A way to remove
13. Some pages are dog-__
18. Ukraine city
24. A citizen of Denmark
26. Summer month (abbr.)
28. Hindu queens
29. Jewelry brand
30. Fictional rider of Rohan

CLUES DOWN

1. Brushed aside
2. Water sprite
3. Ones to look up to
4. Monetary units
5. A number everyone has

40. Auction
43. They __
45. Women
47. Inspire with love
48. Japanese ankle sock
49. Appears
50. Old World lizard
52. The leading performer
53. Type of protein
54. Pennsylvania town
57. Art __: around 1920
58. __ Blyton, children's author
59. Abnormal breathing
63. A place to sleep
66. Muslim ruler title
67. Depressed
68. Gradually gave way
69. Clear-thinking

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Lenten sacrifices focus on meaningful acts

Many Christians are now in the season of Lent, the period between Ash Wednesday (yesterday) and Easter. During these 40 days, Christians typically observe Jesus' fasting in the desert before beginning his ministry.

As a child, I remember observing Lent by having to give up something I enjoyed eating and refraining from eating meat on Fridays. This was not a particularly pleasant time for me—giving up my precious candy was difficult, and I hated fish.

As a child, I failed to understand the reason behind giving up my favorite candies for Lent—Bit-O'Honey, Mary Janes, Juju Fruits, gumdrops, Good & Plenty, Boston Baked Beans, Necco Wafers, Chuckles, and Sugar Daddies.

Once a week, my father would drive to downtown Providence on Route 10 (since Route 95 had not yet been built), where he

would send me, alone, into a little hole-in-the-wall store to purchase his favorite cigars. He would always give me a nickel, and I would carefully pick out five pieces of penny candy.

Every Friday during Lent, the smell of fish frying in the pan makes me nauseous. I would pretend to eat it, all while sneaking pieces to our family dog, who sat anxiously at my feet, waiting for me to drop unwanted morsels.

I was overjoyed when Easter finally arrived, mostly because I knew a large basket of candy would be waiting for me—delivered by the Easter Bunny, of course. However, I could not eat any of it right away, as we had to fast for three hours before receiving communion. I impatiently had to wait until after church to finally enjoy my treats. Excitedly, I would put on my new Easter dress, patent leather shoes, and Easter bonnet and my mom and I would head off to church.



Life Matters

with Linda Petersen

Of course, the real meaning of Lent goes beyond simply giving up favorite foods. It is a season of spiritual reflection, repentance, and preparation for Easter. As a child, I didn't fully understand this—but as an adult, I do.

I intentionally try to cheer people up, and sincere compliments naturally flow from me. If someone is wearing a pretty color, a cute blouse, or has beautiful, flowing curls, I make sure to compliment them. I can almost always find something to praise. (My mother was great at that—if my room was a mess and she wanted to give me a compliment, she'd look around, then up, and say, "My, what a pretty ceiling

you have!")

When I'm out in the community, I make a point to greet people with eye contact, a smile, and a cheerful "Good morning!" or "Good afternoon!" Most people smile back, and for some, it may be the only smile they receive that day. I've also found that if I'm feeling grumpy, returning a smile lifts my spirits too—so it's a simple gesture that benefits both others and myself.

As an extra act of sacrifice during Lent, I take the time to write heartfelt cards to people who have had a significant impact on my life. Each card is cute and fun, with a personal message of gratitude. With my busy schedule, setting aside time for this can be a challenge, which makes it feel like a meaningful Lenten sacrifice.

Lent is also a meaningful time for me to give back to the Church Beyond Walls, a street church community in Providence that

serves many individuals experiencing homelessness. For about \$100 on Amazon, I purchase a bulk supply of 150 personal care travel kits, each containing essentials like a toothbrush and toothpaste, mouthwash, a nail file, a sewing kit, a shaving set, and wet wipes. The product description amusingly claims they are "beautifully designed to bring elegance to any upscale property"—which should add a touch of sophistication to Burnside Park, where the church service is held.

My Lenten sacrifices focus on meaningful acts of kindness rather than simply giving up small indulgences. Instead of forgoing candy or only eating fish on Fridays, I choose to use my time and resources to uplift others. These acts may require more effort, but they bring a deeper sense of purpose and connection, making my Lenten journey truly fulfilling.

LIBRARIES from page 11

"We're really honing in on how we can target Gen Z," says senior Madison Jones, who is also taking part in the competition. "We are using Instagram, TikTok and YouTube to get the message out."

The students are working with libraries around the region, from Block Island to Swansea to all three cities and towns on Aquidneck Island. "Libraries are really the living rooms of communities," said Alexandra Cos, a senior who is also part of the Bateman team. "They are for everyone, no matter what."

The students' feelings are mirrored by those of local librarians.

"Our regular patrons know the services we provide," said Barta. "But when we get new people or people that are coming back for the first time in a while, they're often surprised be-



cause they think they're going to have to pay something. There's a lot of joy from realizing that transactions can exist where you don't have to buy a coffee or buy a sandwich to use the WiFi."

"If you want to learn something, you don't have to enroll in a course that costs thousands of dollars," he says. "You can just come to the library and try it out for free."

The study also found that

lower income people see the most benefits from using the public library.

"There is something for everyone at the library," said Garcia. "Whether you are checking out something to read or view, using our free public computers or free Wi-Fi, attending a class, a program, viewing an art exhibit or just coming into the building to be around other people and have a sense of community. The library is here for all."

“Television and social media can just make you feel more aggravated. Any time you give people a chance to read, it activates their minds and makes them more curious.”



— Jon Anderson
Director of the Marian J. Mohr Library in Johnston

"Keeping a child entertained is an expensive proposition," Barta said. "It makes sense that we add value by providing free services."

Aside from books and movies, local libraries also have other benefits for card holders, numbers for which vary by municipality. Forty-one percent of Cranston residents hold library cards, while in Warwick it's 37 percent (the state average). It is much lower in Johnston

at 19 percent.

In 2024 there were 47,019 books checked out at Marian J. Mohr Library, the lone public library in Johnston. Warwick and Cranston saw numbers of 308,522 and 352,346 respectively between all their branches.

Program attendance is also important to note, and the three library systems between them had nearly 3,000 youth and adult programs last year, with attendance numbers ranging

from 3,920 in Johnston to 25,763 in Warwick. Cranston was close behind with 25,241.

The Johnston library has just started promoting writers groups for adults, and is actively recruiting for the library's Friends group. In Warwick, Barta provides free notary services, and the library also loans out a wide variety of items ranging from a wet vac and an air fryer to bocce sets and a portable turntable.

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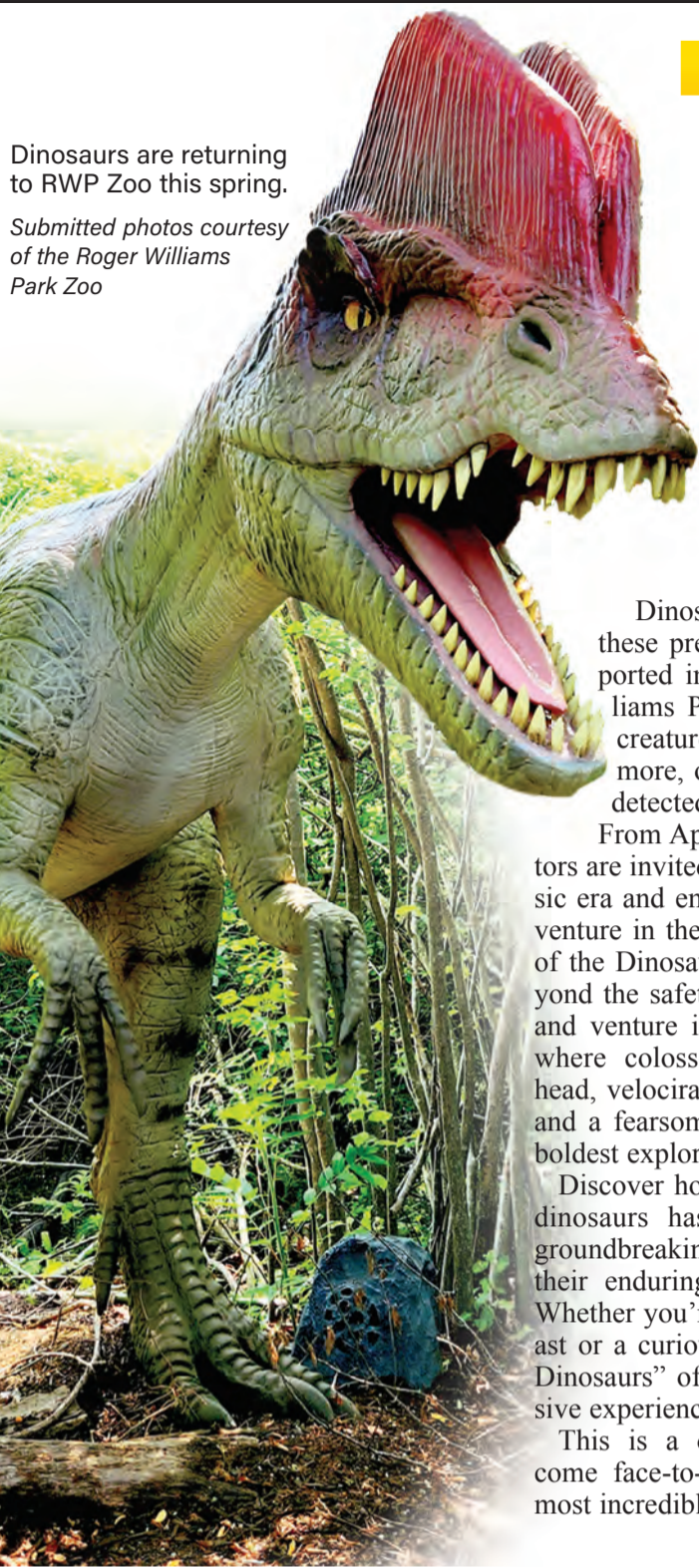
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Dinosaurs are returning to RWP Zoo this spring. Submitted photos courtesy of the Roger Williams Park Zoo



THEY'RE BACK!

Dinosaurs Return from Extinction at Roger Williams Park Zoo

Dinosaurs are back! Sightings of these prehistoric giants have been reported in the wetlands at Roger Williams Park Zoo. Have these ancient creatures taken up residence once more, or have they been lurking undetected for the past 65 million years? From April 6 through August 10, visitors are invited to journey back to the Jurassic era and embark on an unforgettable adventure in the Zoo's latest exhibit, "Return of the Dinosaurs," where they can step beyond the safety of the Zoo's familiar paths and venture into uncharted, wild territory, where colossal brachiosaurs tower overhead, velociraptors stalk through the brush, and a fearsome T. Rex awaits to greet the boldest explorers.

Discover how scientific understanding of dinosaurs has evolved over time—from groundbreaking research in paleontology to their enduring legacy in popular culture. Whether you're a lifelong dinosaur enthusiast or a curious adventurer, "Return of the Dinosaurs" offers an unforgettable, immersive experience for guests of all ages.

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Dinosaur Family Nights

June 14 & August 9 • 5-9 pm
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