



WARWICK BEACON



Exploring the tiny world. Page 13

WARWICKONLINE.COM

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Council OKs school finance review panel

By ADAM ZANGARI

In an 8-1 decision, the Warwick City Council has voted to establish a commission to oversee the finances of Warwick Public Schools after news broke that they were \$9 million in debt for Fiscal Year 2025.

The commission will consist of five members, three nominated by the mayor with City Council approval, one nominated by WPS administration and one by the School Committee.

Its duties will consist of overseeing school expenditures and developing a three-year operating and capital financial plan, and it will disband after the Fiscal Year 2026 budget is finalized. It will not, Mayor Frank Picozzi said, have any powers outside of budgeting.

The sole dissenter in last Wednesday night's vote was Ward 2 Councilman Jeremy Rix, who said that he was concerned about an appointed commission taking power from elected officials.

"Let's not make any bones about it, the commission would

be effectively controlled by political appointees," Rix said. "I agree that this is a serious problem. I would also say that the current School Committee and the School Committee in recent years has had a much better relationship with the executive branch and City Council compared to many other School Committees ... If I did not have confidence in the current School Committee, I might be supporting this legislation, but in recent years, the School Committee has really turned around."

Rhode Island Auditor General David Bergantino called for the commission after meetings with Warwick's administration and schools officials.

Bergantino, along with Picozzi and Finance Director Peder Schaefer, said that the commission would be necessary in order to close the deficit before it creates problems.

The biggest fear of the administration was that not acting on the deficit could affect the city's bond rating, which Picozzi said would have catastrophic impacts on the city.

"With over \$300 million in bonds to still sell, a lower rating would cost the city tens of millions of dollars," Picozzi said.

"This deficit must be lowered as much as possible now and be eliminated over several years with an amortization plan."

The auditor general commended the city's government and Warwick Public Schools, saying that the level of cooperation and urgency that the two had shown was promising and had left enough time for corrective measures to be taken.

"In my experience, such transparency and leadership is not always demonstrated," Bergantino said.

Speaking against the bill and representing the schools was School Committee President Shaun Galligan.

Galligan said he was not against further oversight of the committee's finances, but rather that, given the urgency of the situation, creating a commission that would not be able to begin work until bills making it legal passed the General Assembly did not make sense to him.

He also argued that the \$9-million figure listed as a worst-case scenario deficit is now outdated following the committee's approval of nearly \$3 million in cuts at a Jan. 14 meet-

COUNCIL - PAGE 11



Frozen Few

Frozen Few sailors enjoy a respite from the more grueling upwind legs when they round the windward mark and head on a downwind run.

See page 7 for more. (Photo by Jim Cavanaugh)

By JOHN HOWELL

90 days on job, airport security boss quits

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

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

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

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

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

But Perkins had issues with RIAC operations.

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

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

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

He continued, "Unlike most professions, law-enforcement decisions and actions have serious consequences. Walking away and not notifying someone of the issues I

observed during my time there is not something my conscience or my professional character and oath would allow. The issues that concerned me are not issues that need to be shared in the media. Based on my experience as a law enforcement professional for over 35 years, I knew the correct way to handle the issues that concerned me - report them to the highest

ranking police officer in the state, Colonel Darnell Weaver.

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

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

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

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

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

Helping drivers with autism navigate traffic stops



DMV Administrator Walter Craddock (left), state Sen. Victoria Gu and state Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro with the blue envelopes and emergency contact cards that will be given to any driver who opts into the program. (Submitted photo)

By ROSEGALIE CINEUS

The Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles has gone statewide with a new program aimed at helping drivers with autism.

The Blue Envelope program is a new DMV service that works to facilitate smooth and effective communication between neurodivergent drivers and law-enforcement officers.

According to Walter Craddock, administrator for the DMV, the program gives drivers who are on the autism spectrum a way to keep their license, registration and proof of insurance in one convenient place - a blue envelope that includes driver directions on what to expect in a traffic stop.

And just as important, that blue envelope tells law-enforcement officers that a driver may be dealing with diagnosed difficulties involving disruption and mental processing.

DRIVERS - PAGE 11

- INDEX -

Classified	23
Editorial	9
Obituaries	11
Police Log	2
RhodyLife	13
Sports	19



TITANS STUN PATS

The Toll Gate basketball team pulled off a big 50-47 upset win over Pilgrim, reclaiming city bragging rights. See story on page 19.

NOTABLE Quote

"After 90 days on the job, I quickly surmised that remaining employed at the airport under the current administrative leadership was something I would not do."

- Joseph Perkins, director of airport security at Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport, who left his position abruptly Tuesday morning, submitting his resignation to the superintendent of state police, Col. Darnell Weaver.



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LEGAL NOTICES

INVITATION TO BID
Greater Providence YMCA
East Side/Mt. Hope Branch
438 Hope St., Providence, RI

located at 21 Linwood Drive,
Johnston, RI 02919, further
designated as Assessor's Plat 44,
Lot 315; for hearing February 6, 2025

creditors must file their claims in the
office of the Probate Clerk within
the time required by law beginning
January 23, 2025

Creditors must file their claims in
the office of the Probate Clerk within
the time required by law beginning
January 23, 2025

Project: Removal and replacement of
aerobics studio flooring with Mondo
VinylSport VM66 for ADA compliance.

**POTTER, Stephen L. alias Stephen
Leroy Potter, est.**
Administration Petition; for hearing
February 6, 2025

**CORMIER, Raymond Rathburn,
alais Raymond R. Cormier, est.**
Stephanie Callaghan Zonfrillo has
qualified as Executrix; Creditors
must file their claims in the office
of the Probate Clerk within the time
required by law beginning January
23, 2025

**DOHERTY, William E. alias William
Edward Doherty, est.**
Frank Mastrati, Jr. has qualified as
Administrator; Creditors must
file their claims in the office of
the Probate Clerk within the time
required by law beginning January
23, 2025

Bid Docs: Available in person or via
email from Dylan Desrosiers at
(401) 427-1873 or
d-desrosiers@gpymca.org.

SANANTONIO, Donald N., est.
Guardianship Petition; for hearing
February 6, 2025

**DIETZ, Amaranta M. alias Amaranta
Maeve Dietz, est.**
Grace K. Dietz has qualified as
Guardian of Person and Estate;
Creditors must file their claims in
the office of the Probate Clerk within
the time required by law beginning
January 23, 2025

FIORENTINI, Virginia M., est.
Alan R. Fortes has qualified as
Executor; Creditors must file their
claims in the office of the Probate
Clerk within the time required by law
beginning January 23, 2025

Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference:
Friday, February 7, 2025 at 10AM.

TALLIE, Ava, est.
Minor Guardianship for Estate Only;
for hearing February 6, 2025

**DIETZ, Anouk M. alias Anouk
Matilda Dietz, est.**
Grace K. Dietz has qualified as
Guardian of Person and Estate;

**FISHER, Janis E. alias Janis Fisher,
est.**
Leigh R. Leach has qualified as
Executor; Creditors must file their

1/23, 1/30/25

VICKERS, Robert Alfred, est.
Probate of Will; for hearing February
6, 2025

AFRICK, Sandra, est.
Jeffrey Greenberg has qualified as
Executor; Alicia L. Hoffman, Esq.
of 211 Quaker Lane, Ste. 201,
West Warwick, RI 02893 as agent;

NOTICES - PAGE 10

NOTICE CITY OF WARWICK PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 45-24-53 that a Public Hearing will be held in the City Council Chambers, 3275 Post Road, Warwick RI 02886 on February 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider the proposed ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Official Zoning Map, as summarized below:

Applicants: TowerCo 2013, LLC and Cellco Partnership, d/b/a Verizon Wireless

Assessor's Plat: 354

Assessor's Lots: 49

Location: 150 Draper Avenue – Ward 5

Present Classification: Residence A-10 District (A-10)

Zone Change Requested: Residence A-10 (A-10) with variances and authorization for Use Code 611 Telecommunications facility, including towers

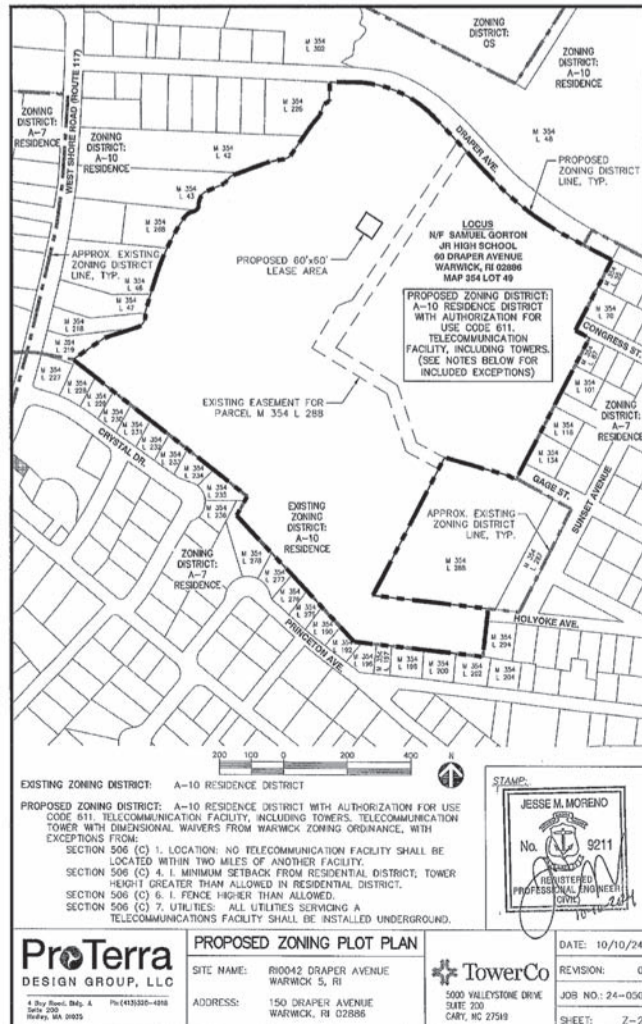
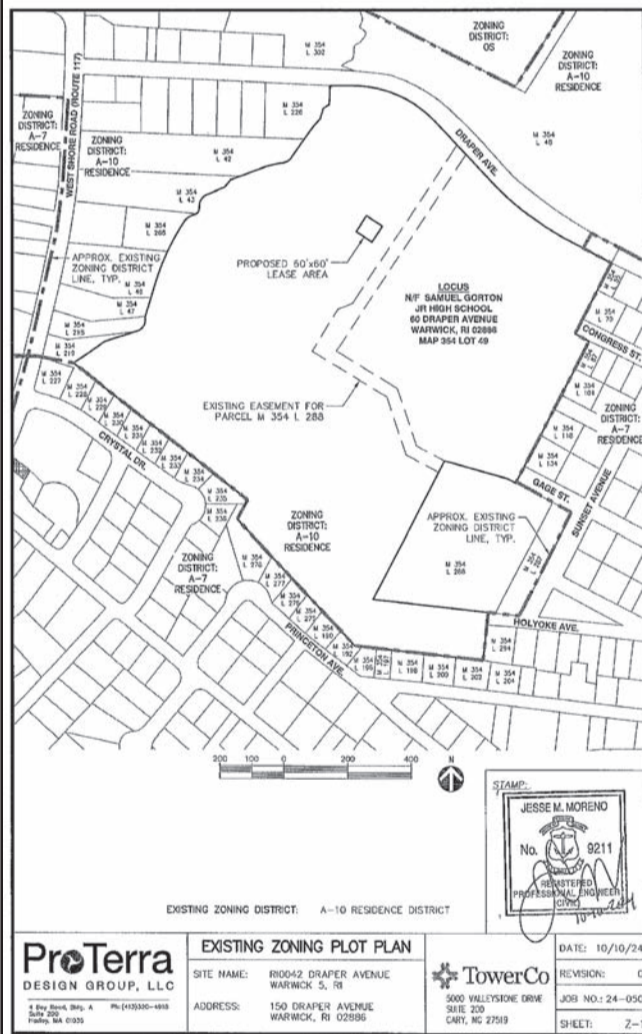
Reason for Proposed Change: To allow a telecommunications tower and facilities to be built on the property in connection with a lease between the City as landlord and TowerCo 2013, LLC as tenant, with Verizon Wireless as a subtenant use.

A complete copy of the proposed amendment may be examined on-line at the City of Warwick's web page and/or copied, at cost, in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, Warwick, Rhode Island; Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. The proposed ordinance may be altered or amended prior to the close of the public hearing without further advertising, as a result of further study or because of the views expressed at the public hearing. Any alteration or amendment will be presented for comment in the course of the hearing.

All persons interested in the above are respectfully requested to be present at that time and place to be heard thereon. Individuals requesting interpreter service for the hearing impaired must notify the office of the City Clerk at 738-2006, 72 hours in advance of the hearing date.

Attest:
Lynn D'Abrosca, City Clerk

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



NOTICE CITY OF WARWICK PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 45-24-53 that a Public Hearing will be held in the City Council Chambers, 3275 Post Road, Warwick RI 02886 on February 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider the proposed ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance, as summarized below:

Applicants: Thousand Lakes, LLC

Assessor's Plat: 273

Assessor's Lots: 481

Location: 319 Bald Hill Road – Ward 8

Present Classification: General Business (GB)

Zone Change Requested: Amendment to Use Table Footnote 29

Reason for Proposed Change: To allow the retail sales of marijuana and marijuana related products

A complete copy of the proposed amendment may be examined on-line at the City of Warwick's web page and/or copied, at cost, in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, Warwick, Rhode Island; Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. The proposed ordinance may be altered or amended prior to the close of the public hearing without further advertising, as a result of further study or because of the views expressed at the public hearing. Any alteration or amendment will be presented for comment in the course of the hearing.

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Applicants: Sprague Covington, LLC

Assessor's Plat: 351

Assessor's Lots: 234

Location: 112 Old Warwick Avenue – Ward 5

Present Classification: General Business (GB)

Zone Change Requested: General Business Planned District Residential (GB PDR)

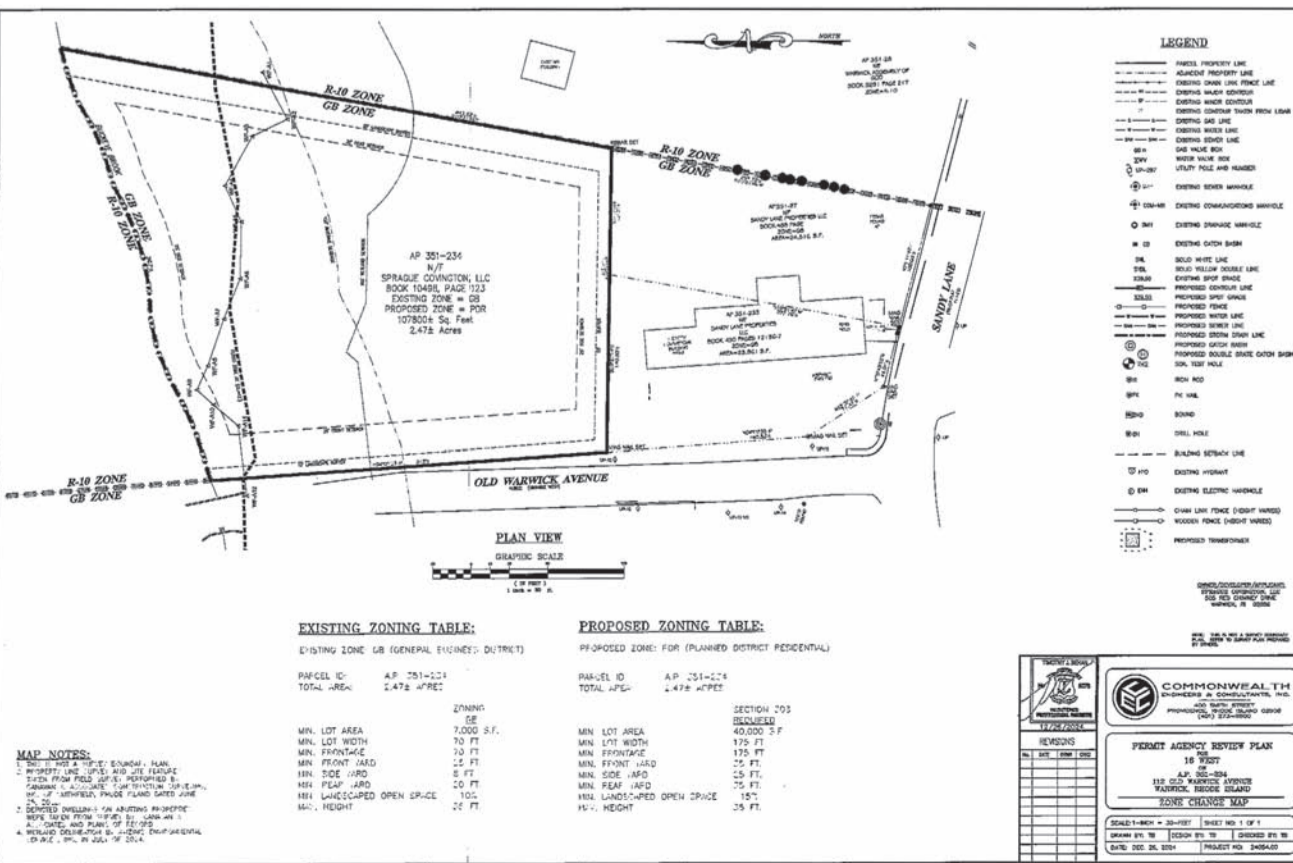
Reason for Proposed Change: To support a 16 unit development on vacant land

A complete copy of the proposed amendment may be examined on-line at the City of Warwick's web page and/or copied, at cost, in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, Warwick, Rhode Island; Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. The proposed ordinance may be altered or amended prior to the close of the public hearing without further advertising, as a result of further study or because of the views expressed at the public hearing. Any alteration or amendment will be presented for comment in the course of the hearing.

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Attest:
Lynn D'Abrosca, City Clerk

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



THE BUZZ

Jan. 31, Feb. 07 & Feb.14 (Fridays) "Mono-printing on Gel Printing Plates Workshop" will be held from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on each date at the Warwick Center for the Arts, 3259 Post Rd., Warwick. Cost is \$60 and \$45 for WCFA members. Materials fee \$10. In each workshop, participants will experiment with using paint and stencils to monoprint on gel printmaking plates. Make one-of-a kind prints and papers that can be used to make collages, small books, cards -- the possibilities are endless! No art experience needed! For further information, please call 401-737-0010 or warwickcfa.org.

Feb. 01, "Create-a-Card Workshop for your SPECIAL VALENTINE!" will be held on Sat., Feb. 01, from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Warwick Center for the Arts, 3259 Post Rd., Warwick. Cost is \$35 and \$25 for WCFA member. Enjoy the company of friends and family while we create beautiful handmade Valentine cards! All supplies and treats included! This is a multi-generational workshop. For further information, please call 401-737-0010 or warwickcfa.org.

Feb. 02, Music Bingo at the FireBarn come join the fun playing Music Bingo at the Oakland Beach FireBarn, 645 Oakland Beach Ave., Warwick, on Sun., Feb. 2, at 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 04, Photographic Society of RI will hold a meeting on Tues., Feb. 04, at 6:15 p.m., Print Log In, at 6:30 p.m., as a social time and the meeting will start at 7 p.m. It will be held at Lakewood Baptist Church, 255 Atlantic Ave., Warwick. Ian Plante will be the presenter, and he is speaking on Wide Angle Landscape Photography. Check out our website www.psri.us for more information.

Feb. 06, "New Voices: The Next Generation of Rhode Island Artists" Exhibit: Opening Potluck Reception at Warwick Center for the Arts will be held on Thurs., Feb. 06, at 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at 3259 Post Rd., Warwick. It is free and open to the public. The exhibit runs from Jan. 22 - Feb. 15. This exciting exhibit features works by rising talents in our community. For further information, please call 401-737-0010 or visit warwickcfa.org.

Feb. 09, COLLAGE & COMPANY, "cut, paste, and stick together!" will be held on Sun., Feb. 09, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Warwick Center for the Arts, 3259 Post Rd., Warwick. Cost is \$10 non-members and free for WCFA members. Explore the art of collage in this drop-in studio session organized for both beginners and seasoned collage enthusiasts. This is an open studio without formal instruction. Bring your materials, start a new project or continue working on something in progress. For further information, please call 401-737-0010 or warwickcfa.org.

Feb. 13, "Adventures in Acrylic" will be held on Thurs., Feb. 13, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Warwick Center for the Arts, 3259 Post Rd., Warwick. Cost is \$45. From stencils to layering techniques to incorporating photo images, you will develop your painting toolbox to enhance the narrative of your paintings. For further information, please call 401-737-0010 or warwickcfa.org

Feb. 18-20, Warwick Center for the Arts will be hosting a February School Vacation Art Camp from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Warwick Center for the Arts, 3259 Post Rd., Warwick. Young creatives (grades 1-4) will learn about the classic and contemporary artists while building their artistic skills in painting, drawing, collage, and sculpture. Each day will focus on exploring different art mediums while learning how to use various materials to develop their own unique creations. Choose one day or all three. For further information, please call 401-737-0010 or visit warwickcfa.org.

Feb. 22, Steak Fry and Live Band at the FireBarn will be hosting a Steak Fry and Live Band event on Sat., Feb. 22, from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at The Oakland Beach FireBarn on 645 Oakland Beach Avenue, Warwick. Tickets are \$20, and go on sale on Sat., Feb. 01. Call: 401-737-4786 for more information. This event is open to the public. Come see what we are about; meet old friends and make new ones.

Mar. 09 Edgewood Yacht Club will be hosting their annual Open House on

Sun., Mar. 09 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 1 Shaw Ave., in Cranston. This is a yearly celebration as we begin to toast Spring, the Bay and the Community! Appetizers and finger foods will be served, the bar is open, and members of the Club and the Sailing School will be present to answer any questions about membership or sailing lessons for the 2025 season. If you've ever wondered what is in that beautiful building at the bottom of the hill at 1 Shaw Avenue in Cranston, we would be glad to show you!

March 13, RIPTA released its 2025 schedule for its program that offers a reduced fare bus pass program for seniors and people with disabilities. Every month, RIPTA's Customer Service staff will travel to communities throughout the state to process Photo ID bus passes for qualified seniors and individuals with disabilities with valid documentation. This will allow residents to access transit information and apply for the Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program without having to travel to RIPTA offices in Providence. Photo ID bus passes for qualified people with disabilities and seniors will cost \$10.00 in 2025 and are valid for 2 years. Warwick residents can visit on Thurs., March. 13 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Pilgrim Senior Center on 27 Pilgrim Parkway, Warwick.

Applicants can apply in person at RIPTA's Photo ID Office, located in Kennedy Plaza. The Photo ID Office is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. (closed 12pm-1pm). In addition, RIPTA Customer Service staff will continue to process bus passes applications submitted through the mail and online. For more info call 401-784-9500, ext. 2012 or visit RIPTA.com/ReducedFare.

NAMI-RI offers mental health courses in January NAMI-RI, the local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, will offer two Family-to-Family courses, starting in January. This a free 8-session educational program for family, significant others, and friends of people living with mental illness. The in-person course will be held in Middletown, RI at St. Lucy's Catholic Church beginning Saturday, January 11 at 3:00 PM. This same course will also be held on Zoom starting Wednesday, January 15th from 5:30-8:00 PM. To register, or for more information call 401-331-3060, email beth@namirhodeisland.org or visit namirhodeisland.org

Wickford Art Festival Artist Applications Now Open North Kingstown, RI - The Wickford Art Association (WAA) is excited to announce that artist applications for the 62nd annual Wickford Art Festival are now open. The outdoor art festival will take place on the weekend of July 12 & 13, 2025. Now through March 15, artists are invited to submit their applications to be considered for participation in this event. Artists interested in applying can visit the official festival website at www.wickfordart.org for more details. Applications will be reviewed by a jury panel, and selected artists will be notified in early April 2025.

Every Monday through Friday, Virtual Dementia Caregiver Support Groups are specifically designed for people caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Mon., 3:30 to 5 p. m.; Tues., 3 to 4:30 p. m.; Wed., 5 to 6:30 p. m.; Thurs. and Fri., 10 to 11:30 a. m. Information and registration, call 401-415-4664; or email to: info@HopeDementia.org. Follow us on Facebook @HopeHealth.

Every Monday - The Gaspee Celtic Jam meets at the Pawtuxet Village Baptist Church, 2157 Broad St., Cranston, every Mon. from 7 to 9 p.m. Do you play fiddle, guitar, Irish flute, pennywhistle, bodhran, mandolin, banjo, concertina, accordion, folk harp, hammered dulcimer, Appalachian dulcimer, banjo, acoustic bass, ukulele, keyboard, recorder, or sing? All skill levels welcome. Visit www.gaspeecelticjam.org for more info (including the current tune list/tune book) or to send us any questions. No specific Celtic music experience is required.

Every First and Third Monday Rhode Island Active Toastmasters meets, serving both Rhode Island and Southern MA. Rhode Island Active Toastmasters holds its meetings at New England Institute of Technology in East Greenwich, in Rm N214 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, please contact us Rhode Island Active Toastmasters. All are welcome!

Every Tuesday, ASL Interpreted RI AA Meeting will be held at Phillips Memorial Baptist Church, 565 Pontiac Ave., Cranston from 7 to 8 p.m.

Every Second and Fourth Tuesday the

Fall River Toastmasters Meeting, serving both Rhode Island and Southern Mass the Fall River Toastmasters holds its meetings. Doors open at 6 p.m. and meeting is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Join us at The Chamber, 200 Pocasset St, Fall River, MA, 2nd floor. For more information, call Sean DaCosta at (508)-840-6621. All are welcome!

Every Thursday, Take Off Pounds Sensibly TOPS #38 is meeting every Thursday morning at St. Luke's Episcopal Church (lower level), 99 Pierce Street, East Greenwich. Weigh-in begins at 10:15 a.m. The meeting starts at 10:45 a.m. Enter from the side parking lot, go down the stairs to the kitchen area. All are welcome as well as any canned food donations. For information, call: Angela Henderson at 401-225-6174.

Every Thursday, Get-a-Job-Thursdays - We Make RI, an organization that provides free manufacturing training, hosts a series of job fairs every Thurs. from 11 a.m. to noon, 200 First Ave., Cranston. We Make RI offer job seekers a chance to meet with employers, get career counseling, resume help and more. Some employers include Swissline Precision, Admiral Packaging, KB Surfaces, Warwick Hanger and Hitachi Cable. For more information about this event or other training opportunities, visit www.wemakeri.com/get-a-job-thursday or contact Mike at (401) 232-0077 x109.

PSA Free Gun Locks at Cranston & Warwick Public Libraries Secure storage of weapons is now the law in Rhode Island. A Free Gun Lock and Securing Weapons Safely information are now available at two locations: Cranston Central Library Reference Desk, 140 Sockanosset Cross Rd. Cranston, Warwick Central Library Reference desk, 600 Sandy Ln., Warwick. Stop by for a free gun lock and literature on how to securely store weapons. Doing so will save lives and make our communities safer. Residents from all RI communities are welcome. "This event is not endorsed by or affiliated with the Cranston Public Library."

Oaklawn Grange Used Clothing Donation Shed in need of used clothing items at the Oaklawn Grange Donation Shed, 24 Searle Ave., Cranston. Accepted items only: Used Clothing, Shoes, Sneakers, Belts, Purses, Linens, Pillowcases, Blankets, Curtains, and Stuffed Animals. All items must be in useable condition. Your donations will be distributed as whole garments locally and worldwide. Contact oaklawngrangeinfo@gmail.com for more information.

NAMI-RI Offers Family Support Groups; the RI chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness offers free support groups for families and friends of loved ones struggling with mental health. Groups are led by trained facilitators with experience with family members. Meetings last 1.5 hours, and everyone gets a chance to share. Group members offer help and resources, when appropriate, based on their experiences. More information and full schedule can be found at namirhodeisland.org. or call 401-331-3060. No pre-registration for these monthly groups is necessary.

Volunteer with NAMI-RI The RI chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness is seeking volunteers to facilitate family programs in 2024. Free training is required and available for interested persons with loved ones struggling with mental health. Our grassroots volunteers, work every day to provide help and hope to millions of Americans. For more information about our family programs and volunteer training, email beth@namirhodeisland.org, call the NAMI-RI office 401-331-3060 or visit our website at www.namirhodeisland.org

Hearts for Hospice - Visiting Nurse Home and Hospice (VNH&H) is asking for individuals to support their hospice programs by giving \$20 or more to their Hearts for Hospice campaign. People can dedicate their gift to a loved one who is always in their heart; all dedications are listed on the organization's website. You can make your donation at www.visitingnursehh.org/giving/ or by calling 401-682-2100 extension number 1631.

Editor's Note: To submit your news to The Buzz, send information and photos to Rosegalie at rosegalie@beaconmediari.com by Friday at 3 p.m. to appear in the following week's edition. Items can include community and school event announcements and calls for volunteers. Submissions may be edited for space and are not guaranteed to run. To guarantee space, please call 401-732-3100 and ask to place an advertisement.



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Pack 1 Warwick in new home after unexpected move



Ward 5 City Councilman Ed Ladouceur recently visited the Pack 1 Warwick Cub Scouts at their new home at Warwick Neck Elementary School. While there, he answered dozens of questions from the Scouts. (Beacon Media photos by Tim Forsberg)

By **TIM FORSBERG**

Pack 1 Warwick has weathered many changes over its storied history, but few as sudden as the one it faced in May 2023.

After decades of meeting at St. Mary's Church, and later Heritage Christian Fellowship on Warwick Neck, the Cub Scout pack was asked to vacate the church hall following an ownership change, leaving them just three weeks to relocate.

Faced with the challenge of finding a suitable meeting space, longtime Pack leader Patty Gomm opened her home to ensure the program could continue.

"It's all about the kids," Gomm said. "I was willing to give up my home as a meeting place to keep the Pack going."

The temporary arrangement came with its challenges. Due to limited space, meetings had to be split into double sessions every Thursday. Younger Scouts met from 6:15 to 7 p.m., while older Scouts met from 7:15 to 8:15 p.m. Despite the tight quarters, the Scouts made use of the space, even conducting outdoor activities such as flag-retirement ceremonies and cooking in the warmer months.

In November 2023, hope emerged when Warwick Neck Elementary School offered to host the Pack. After months of planning, the Scouts held their first meeting at the school on Jan. 9. Now, all 24 Scouts can meet together from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., allowing them to form stronger bonds and making the process more convenient for parents.

"The parents and Scouts love the new location," said Gomm. "There's plenty of

space for activities and ample parking, and parents who have kids in both age groups no longer need to spend their whole evening at meetings. It's a win-win for everyone."

The move to Warwick Neck Elementary has not only resolved logistical challenges but also opened new opportunities. With more space, Pack 1 Warwick is eager to welcome new Scouts, boys and girls in grades K-5, into their fold.

"Scouting is about more than just meetings," said Gomm. "It's about helping kids become good citizens, good neighbors and community-minded individuals. It's one of the few places in their lives where they can't fail – we just ask them to do their best."

The Pack's longevity and dedication to the community are evident in its history and leadership. Gomm, now in her 23rd year with Pack 1, has been involved in Scouting since her children, now adults, participated. Today, she continues to mentor her grandchildren and remains deeply committed to the program.

"Parents who get involved in their child's Scouting activities are making memories that will last a lifetime," she added. "I hope Pack 1 Warwick will thrive long after I'm gone, continuing to provide this incredible program to future generations."

Thanks to the support of the Narragansett Council and Warwick Neck Elementary's principal Frank Galligan, the Pack now has a stable home. The leadership is also optimistic about the future, hoping for a growing Pack filled with new Cub Scouts.



Physical fitness is part of the Scouting program, and these Scouts are stretching out.



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High schools' groundbreaking set; costs trimmed

By ADAM ZANGARI

The targeted groundbreaking dates for the new Pilgrim and Toll Gate High Schools, as well as the updated estimated cost of both projects, were announced at the latest special Warwick School Committee meeting.

Pilgrim High School's groundbreaking is expected to take place during the week of April 21, while Toll Gate's is set for the week of May 5.

Tuesday night's special meeting on school construction was the first held in a forum format, where members of the public could directly question members of the administration; LeftField Project Management, the owner's-project-manager for both projects; Dimeo Construction, the construction managers for both schools; Saccoccio & Associates Architects, the architects for Toll Gate, and saam architecture, the architects for Pilgrim.

The new projected cost to build the new Pilgrim and Toll Gate, according to LeftField's Chris Spiegel, is \$372.9 million. That's down \$14.9 million from the previous projection, \$387.8 million, though still \$22.9 million above the \$350 million in borrowing approved by voters.

Spiegel said the work that had been done to reduce costs had also been successful in keeping cost reductions "unseen and unfelt" by the students and teachers who will use the buildings.

"As we said in October, the \$37.8-million budget shortfall was a worst-case scenario, and our team here was going to go back and turn over every single stone that we could turn over and look for ways to bring the cost of this project down without sacrificing your educational programming spaces," Spiegel said. "When you have more detail, your numbers get better refined. That's been a significant way that we've been able to move this price down."

Being three months further along in each project, Spiegel said, had also helped remove some elements of uncertainty, allowing costs to come down. The project still includes \$17 million worth of contingency funds, lower than the \$28 million LeftField had set aside in contingency funds initially.

The delay in Toll Gate's groundbreaking, compared to Pilgrim's, is largely due to it having a tougher site to work on than Pilgrim, and new wetlands found on the site have initiated new Department of Environmental Management reviews. That tougher site also has led to a higher cost for the building – \$764 per square foot, as opposed to Pilgrim's \$702.

Spiegel compared those numbers to projected numbers for other high school projects in the state – Central Falls, which is at \$715 per square foot, South Kingstown (also managed by LeftField) at \$758 and Pawtucket at \$765.

Pilgrim's total square footage, according to saam architecture's Katie Kernizan, is about 204,000 square feet, while Toll Gate's, according to Saccoccio's Steve Guglielmo, is about 197,000.

Though Toll Gate's parking lots had to be reworked slightly to avoid additional wetlands, the site plans and floor plans for both Pilgrim and Toll Gate were mostly unchanged. The largest change made over the last few months was removing classrooms on Toll Gate's basement floor, which would have been used by career and technical students, and adding space to the WACTC building to house those.

"The designs that you see today – the educational programming scope has not changed from that October meeting," Spiegel said. "It

has not changed from School Committee approvals."

Spiegel also noted that despite the start of construction being delayed from the initial March estimate, the schools are still on track to be finished by July 2027.

Making sure construction was finished quickly to avoid inflation and potential tariff-related complications, Spiegel said, was one of his top priorities.

"We're keeping a very close eye on the market, and we will adjust as needed," Spiegel said. "It's just another reason why we don't want to take our foot off the gas, and why we're being as aggressive as possible to get our products in on schedule and ordered prior to executive orders taking place."

Athletics department makes plans for construction years

With the new high schools to be built on the schools' current athletic fields, Warwick Athletic Director Kenneth Rix informed the public about the plans for each of Pilgrim and Toll Gate's outdoor sports teams.

The delay in the start of construction, Rix said, meant that this year's spring teams could at least start their seasons at home, though they would have to move off campus after the groundbreaking for each school.

"Originally, we were under the assumption that we would want to have our teams off campus for the entirety of the spring," Rix said. "Allowing these teams to use their facilities in March and April – really the two most formative months for spring sports and development – is going to be very beneficial."

A few teams, such as Pilgrim's football team and both schools' cross country teams, will still be able to practice at their schools during construction, though the former's games will be held at Veterans Memorial Middle School.

A good number of the city's outdoor teams will relocate to Warwick Vets, though some spring sports will head to other locations. Outside of Vets, other areas in the city that will see use from the high schools' sports teams over the next few years are the North Country Club field, Bend Street Complex, Belmont Park, City Park and the Mickey Stevens Sports Complex.

Toll Gate's football team, according to Rix, is also currently contemplating whether to practice at the field across from the Gorton Administrative Building, at Winman Middle School's facilities or the Vets' field, where they have played for the last couple of years and will continue to play through construction.

Rix said that the help of Beverly Wiley, Holly Weber and the rest of the city's Parks and Recreation

Department had been key in making sure that all of Pilgrim and Toll Gate's athletic teams had homes while their schools were being built.

"I can't say enough about them," Rix said. "They did not see it as a School Department problem; they saw it as a city problem, and they jumped in and helped with that."

Though he is excited to see the finished product, as well as new football and baseball fields on the Toll Gate site, the next few years will require patience, Rix said.

"Over the next few years, the community has to be flexible. The one thing that's definitely going to happen is that teams are going to be displaced," Rix said. "We're going to get a good product in about four years, and people are going to have these facilities that they were hoping to have and that they haven't had. But we're going to have to take a step back to take a few steps forward."

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Solomon pitches bill to ease physician shortage



Rep. Joe Solomon Jr.

By ADAM ZANGARI

One of Warwick's state representatives has introduced a bill to help Rhode Island deal with what has been a growing crisis across the country: a shortage of doctors.

Rep. Joe Solomon Jr. has worked on a bill this year to allow doctors who have medical degrees and have practiced medicine in other countries to become licensed to practice medicine in Rhode Island more easily.

Solomon said that he had been thinking about introducing the bill since hearing about a similar one in Massachusetts that took effect this year. He called some lawmakers in the Bay State about its impacts and their hopes for it.

Solomon's bill is closely modeled on the new law in Massachusetts.

"I did some research, and the legislators in Massachusetts [who I talked to] said that it was a great bill," Solomon said. "I reached out to some other stakeholders as well, and there's a general consensus that this is needed and something that can work well

in Rhode Island... After speaking with some of our hospitals, they've also referred to Massachusetts as being a model."

Nine cosponsors have signed onto the bill, including fellow Warwick Rep. Joe McNamara; all of the bill's cosponsors are Democrats. Companion legislation, Solomon said, will be introduced in the Senate by Sen. Lori Urso (D-Pawtucket).

In conversations with other state representatives, Solomon said, he has heard an outpouring of support for the bill.

"Everybody who signed the bill had the same concerns – that there's a shortage of positions out there," Solomon said. "They've been telling me about their issues trying to find a place – it's the same story in America for so many people. I've gotten a lot of positive feedback, and there definitely would have been more than 10 cosponsors if I were to ask all of my colleagues."

The issue, Solomon said, was largely one of bureaucratic red tape. Those requirements, Solomon said, had been put in place because of fears that doctors trained outside the United States would not receive a comprehensive medical education and proper training.

That, Solomon said, is no longer the case. "All of these people would be qualified, and the structure of renewals would work," Solomon said.

To apply for the program should it become law, doctors would have to have a doctorate from a university recognized by the World Health Organization. That license would last for one year, be renewable once, and would allow doctors to practice medicine in underserved communities.

After two years of being in the program, doctors could apply for a full license.

Solomon said the bill defines underserved communities as those that the state's board of medical licensure has determined do not have enough physicians to cover the needs of the community.

Trying to help solve a national crisis at the local level, Solomon

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EYC's stalwart winter Race Committee, including Ray Parker, dress warmly to set the courses and provide assistance to any struggling sailors. (Photo by Jim Cavanaugh)

Frozen few brave wintry breezes at EYC

The Edgewood Yacht Club "Frozen Few" Sunfish Frostbiting Fleet is sailing nearly every Sunday this winter despite the temperatures. Around ten boats compete on the Edgewood Basin of the Providence River each week from 11am to 2pm. Conditions permitting, the fleet will complete six races each week on a variety of courses.

EYC membership is not required for winter racing, and several non-members sail each week, including sailors who have also competed in regional, national, and international Sunfish regattas.

The tradition of winter sailing at EYC is a century old - when the river froze straight across to East Providence, a fleet of EYC ice boats would compete. In recent years, it has been rare to see the docks frozen in at all, allowing for more sailing in the often-stiff northerly breezes that come this time of year.



Stuart Malone, winter Race Committee chair, starts the races from EYC's pontoon boat, with Save The Bay's Fields Point headquarters and the Port of Providence in the distance to the north. (Submitted photo by George Shuster)



After racing, warm soup and cold beer awaits the fleet in the EYC 2018 clubhouse, the third building to house EYC on the foot of Shaw Avenue since the club's founding in 1889. (Submitted photo by George Shuster)



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Neronha, Infante-Green on student rights

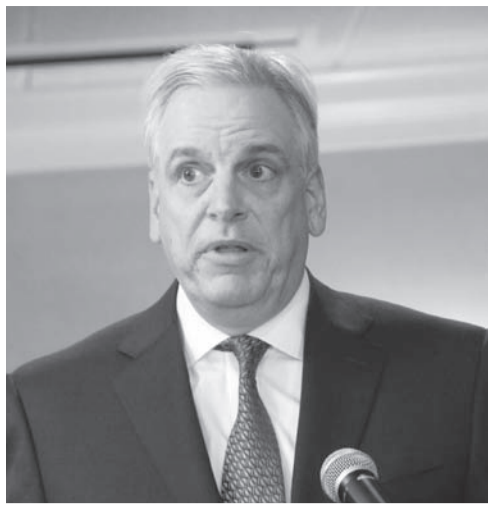
Attorney General Peter F. Neronha and the state Department of Education today shared guidance with school officials on safeguarding the rights of Rhode Island school children regardless of their nationality or immigration status.

Recent changes to federal immigration enforcement policies are prompting questions about the potential presence of federal law enforcement, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), at schools. While we do not yet know if federal authorities will conduct operations targeting Rhode Island schools, this guidance is intended to assist schools, teachers and administrators in protecting the rights of every student.

"Working with our local, state and federal partners, this office has and will continue to aggressively investigate and prosecute violent offenders, whether those offenders are U.S. citizens, non-citizen lawful residents or offenders that are here unlawfully. Immigration enforcement is the role of the federal government, and this office will continue to cooperate with federal immigration authorities as necessary and in compliance with state and federal law," said Neronha.

"That said, federal immigration officials have signaled that they no longer view schools as off-limits for even routine enforcement actions. Yet, Rhode Island children must have access to education without interruption or fear. While federal immigration enforcement policies may have changed, basic legal and constitutional principles have not. We are issuing this guidance to remind our teachers and administrators of those legal principles so they can focus on what they do best: educating our kids and keeping them safe at school. Unless there is a real public safety exigency, immigration enforcement does not belong on school grounds, where it has the potential to negatively impact all students regardless of immigration status. Now and always, we must protect our children as they navigate their formative years, and we must support our school faculty members who help guide our kids to greatness."

"Providing all students access to safe and welcoming learning environments is essential for empowering them to excel academi-



Attorney General Peter F. Neronha
(Beacon Media file photo)



Education Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green
(Beacon Media file photo)

cally and beyond the classroom," said Education Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green. "In accordance with federal and state law, Rhode Island remains committed to providing all students a quality education that sets them up for success. We are deeply appreciative of Attorney General Neronha and his team for their assistance in providing our school communities guidance and resources to navigate recent shifts in federal policy."

School access

Governing law prohibits immigration enforcement officers from accessing non-public areas of schools, including classrooms and hallways, without a judicial warrant issued by a federal district or magistrate judge, based on a finding of probable cause. Further, Rhode Island law requires schools to implement safety protocols to ensure that only authorized individuals are permitted access to non-public areas of the school. Accordingly, schools may prohibit all unauthorized visitors, including federal law enforcement officers without a judicial warrant or court order, from entering non-public school areas, except in the event of a genuine public safety emergency.

Information access

Students are entitled to enroll in public

school in Rhode Island regardless of their immigration status or the status of their parents, and schools may not discriminate based on national origin or immigration status. Schools are generally not required under federal or state law to collect citizenship or immigration status information as this information is irrelevant to the enrollment process.

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Rhode Island Educational Records Bill of Rights generally prohibit disclosure of student educational records and instead provide limited access for specific purposes. Schools should have written policies and procedures for gathering and handling confidential student information. Schools cannot disclose information to third parties, including federal immigration authorities, unless doing so is authorized by, FERPA which generally requires a court order, judicial warrant or valid subpoena to make such a disclosure. If a school receives a request for information from ICE, they should review the request with legal counsel to ensure compliance with federal law.

Warrants and subpoenas

- ICE administrative warrants do not by themselves authorize immigration officials to access non-public areas of a school or to search school records. Such administrative

warrants cannot compel school personnel to assist with the apprehension of a person identified in an administrative warrant. Additionally, such administrative warrants are not sufficient to mandate disclosure of student information that is otherwise protected by state and federal law.

- A Notice to Appear (NTA) is a document that seeks to start formal removal proceedings against an individual before an immigration court. An NTA does not require school employees to take any action or grant an immigration enforcement officer any special power to induce cooperation.

- Administrative subpoenas are not court orders and do not require immediate compliance. School policies should require personnel to immediately alert administrators about the service of an administrative subpoena to allow for consultation with legal counsel and notification of parents/guardians.

- Federal court warrants are issued by District Court judges and magistrate judges based on a finding of probable cause. When presented with a facially valid federal court warrant, school personnel must comply with the requests of federal immigration authorities as set out in the warrant. They should, whenever feasible, notify the chief school administrator and/or their legal counsel to verify the terms and requirements of the warrant.

School officials should always act in a manner that promotes the safety and security of their students and school personnel. School officials should not interfere or obstruct law-enforcement officials in the lawful exercise of their authority. Should federal immigration authorities seek to carry out enforcement actions on school grounds, they must do so in conformance with the requirements of the Fourth Amendment and other federal and state laws.

The Office of the Attorney General and RIDE 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 of our students.

Questions related to this guidance should be referred to the Office of the Attorney General at 401-274-4400.

TALKING POLITICS



by
IAN DONNISS

STORY OF THE WEEK: President Trump's use of an executive order to try to eliminate birthright citizenship – a right enshrined in the Constitution not long after the Civil War – shows how suddenly we find ourselves in a new and different political era, one with a lot of uncertainty about the long-term fallout.

Attorney General Peter Neronha is among more than 20 attorneys general challenging the attempt to undo birthright citizenship.

"Despite what he may say to the contrary, the president cannot unilaterally rewrite the Constitution," Neronha said in a statement. For now, a court has blocked Trump's move, but it was just one among a fusillade of executive orders on topics ranging from a hardline approach on immigration to an expedited schedule for releasing federal documents about the assassinations that rocked the 1960s.

The effect was almost immediate. Immigrants and their advocates are anxious. Democrats are alarmed. Trump supporters are delighted. There was also Trump's pardon of roughly 1,500 people convicted of assaulting police and other crimes related to the Capitol riot on January 6, 2021 – a move, as the BBC reported, that "erased the work of the largest criminal investigation in U.S. history," even if it allows the president to amplify his own alternate history.

As Trump and his administration try to impose their stamp on the federal government at a breakneck pace, how will the U.S. be different by the end of his presidency? As Ezra Klein notes, Trump's return comes amid uncertainty posed by other big changes – the maturing of AI, the warming of the planet and the global decline of fertility.

Elsewhere, Scott Lehigh makes the point that Trump's victory last year required support well beyond his MAGA base, meaning that "when his presidency moves into a phase where Congress can't sidestep accountability, the road ahead is likely to get both steeper and rockier, GOP congressional control notwithstanding."

IMMIGRATION FALLOUT: Gov. Dan McKee and Providence Mayor Brett Smiley are sharing a similar message about their approach to immigrants without legal status in Rhode Island: state police and Providence police, respectively, will continue working with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on criminal cases, but the state and the city will not otherwise seek to round up or expel immigrants without legal status.

"President Trump should take a playbook out of President Reagan's playbook and actually create an amnesty program to help some of these people they're good people for our state," McKee told me during an interview last week. "Give them a path to citizenship."

What will be fallout of new political era?

In Rhode Island's capital city, "Mayor Smiley has affirmed that the Providence Police Department will not and should not be immigration officers," spokesman Josh Estrella told The Public's Radio. "The city has not and will not proactively collaborate with ICE to provide information and will not change this policy."

MORE MCKEE: The governor has had a sometimes-testy relationship with reporters in Rhode Island, and he's shown less interest than his predecessors in doing long-form interviews. But when McKee, 73, returned as a guest on Political Roundtable last week for the first time since May 2023, he was affable and unbothered by my line of questions. Here are some highlights from my discussion with the governor.

***On his less-than-robust approval rating: "Rhode Island has never really had governors that have polled well." McKee said he plans to announce his reelection campaign in the "near future."

***Asked about why warnings about the Washington Bridge going back to 2009 – as reported by Patrick Anderson in April – didn't get more attention, McKee said, "I think that's what we're trying to find out," although he mostly stuck to his message about moving forward after inheriting a broken bridge. "It's difficult to tell," he said about whether the western bridge could have been saved, at lower cost, if action had come sooner.

***Can the state make more headway against its structural deficit by attempting to raise state revenue to the level of state expenditures? As he is wont to do, McKee pointed to his 2030 plan and when asked for specifics, cited various efforts to improve the economy – apprentice programs, boosting scholarships and investing in such new sectors as the life sciences and cybersecurity.

BAROMETER: U.S. Sen. Jack Reed has generally polled as Rhode Island's best-approved elected official for years. So it's worth noting both the tone and specific words of the man once dubbed "the E.F. Hutton senator" as Donald Trump begins his second term at the White House. Reed's statement on Trump's inauguration was congratulatory and mostly diplomatic, expressing hope that 47 will muster "a stronger commitment to upholding and defending our Constitution."

Reed didn't mince words on the J6 pardons: "Trump's pardon of these offenders is an insult to law enforcement, the rule of law and our democracy. With these pardons, Donald Trump is sending a dog whistle to other extremists that political violence is okay as long as it is done under the banner of Trump. The president has the power to pardon, but he can't erase this historic stain on his record or whitewash history."

Nor did Reed, a West Point grad and former Army Ranger, hold back in his opening statement during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Pete Hegseth, the nominee for defense secretary, asserting that he lacks the character and composure for the position.

SPEAKING OF NOMINEES: U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse's vote on Robert F. Kennedy Jr., President Trump's controversial nominee to lead the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is a subject of growing interest. On Jan. 13, I emailed Whitehouse's office to ask if he was a definite 'no' on the vote – and I still haven't heard back. Now, Ted Nesi flagged Brown alum Josh Marshall's piece describing Democrats worrying that Whitehouse may support Kennedy due to a friendship going back to law school.

BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE: State officials announced plans last week for a limited relaunch of the state's health-benefits website, following the cyber-breach in December. Meanwhile, Alexander Castro at the Rhode Island Current reported that extensive details about the mechanics of the site were posted online for months, until he began asking questions.

IMMIGRANTS AND THE ECONOMY: "Immigrants – they get the job done," goes the line in Hamilton. That's true throughout America's economy – and according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, immigrants without legal status paid almost \$100 billion in federal, state and local taxes in 2022. Back in 1996, I reported for the Worcester Telegram & Gazette how Jamaican migrants played a crucial role in harvesting the apple crop in New England – a practice that began when the American labor pool shrank during World War II.

"The work is extremely hard - harder than most Americans want to work for the pay," Jay Marshall, owner of Marshall Farm in Fitchburg, told me. "I can't explain how much you hurt at the end of the day."

More recently, The Public's Radio documented how migrant teens work in the seafood processing industry in New Bedford.

In a guest piece for this column last December, Dr. Pablo Rodriguez wrote that America's economy needs more, not fewer immigrants to prosper: "Our fertility rate has fallen below replacement level, and without an influx of young people, we will not be able to keep up with the needs of an aging population. According to FWD.us projections, the U.S. should double immigration levels to remain competitive and keep fiscal programs like Social Security strong. International migrants were the sole source of growth in the U.S. working-age population in 2021 and 2022."

HEALTH: A combination of COVID, the flu and norovirus are straining local hospitals, as my colleague Olivia Ebertz reports.

KICKER: Presidents come, presidents go, but Rhode Island's usefulness as a measuring unit for icebergs has some serious staying power, even amid – or perhaps because of – global warming.

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EDITORIAL

A pragmatic, empathetic government program?

A shout out for good government policy is in order for the Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles, which last week announced that a new program meant to help improve interactions between police officers and drivers with autism was going statewide.

The “Blue Envelope” program — which had been piloted in Connecticut and New Jersey, and in numerous Rhode Island communities including Central Falls, Cranston, Narragansett and Bristol — strives to provide a means for neurodivergent commuters to quickly and easily proclaim that they have processing issues or communicative delays, which could be misinterpreted or unexpected to an officer engaging the driver in a traffic stop.

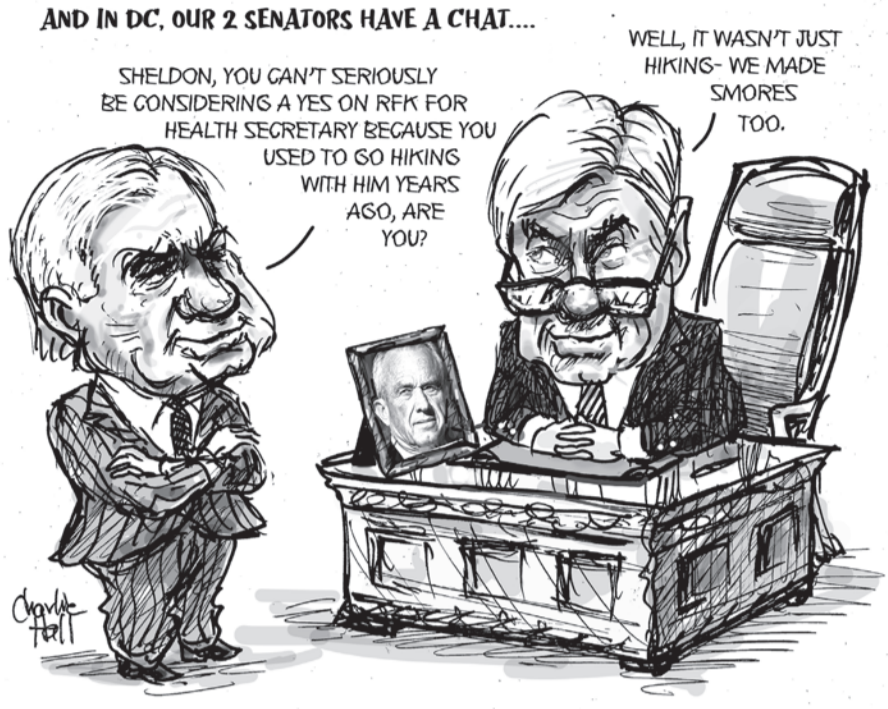
If you’ve ever been involved in a traffic stop, even for something silly like a blown tail light, you know that it can be an incredibly stressful and anxiety-inducing situation. For those on the autism spectrum who may have difficulty dealing with high-stress or unanticipated situations that call for action, it can be even more severe. If the responding officer does not know about these developmental differences, the situation could spiral out of control, to the detriment of the driver, the officer’s safety, and the overall relationship between law-enforcement officers and the people they serve.

The program is not mandatory for anyone, but those with autism-related or sensory-processing afflictions now have the ability to opt into the program at any time, regardless of where they live in Rhode Island. The DMV will provide them with a blue envelope to hold their driver’s license, registration, insurance card and an emergency contact card.

The envelope also provides instructions to the driver on exactly what to do during a traffic stop, and the officer will have received training to be aware of the situation once they are handed the envelope, ensuring that all parties are on the same page for the duration of the traffic stop.

We applaud Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro (D-Dist. 37, Westerly) and Sen. Victoria Gu (Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown), who sponsored the bill enacting the program to begin in the state, along with Gov. Dan McKee for signing the bill into law, and to Bud Craddock at the DMV for bringing the program statewide.

This is the kind of straightforward, empathetic and highly effective legislation that can prevent a potentially life-altering or traumatic experience from happening to those who are already at higher risk of being victimized or put into harm’s way due to their disabilities, and it is the kind of policy that makes us proud to be Rhode Islanders.



Hospital visit: What an opportunity



me on my medical history. I learned the town has two rescues and they each average about four runs a day.

The Kent Emergency Department was humming and ironically so was my phone that I later learned was from the office of Paari Gopalakrishnan, president of Kent. The EMTs wheeled me in. The place was busy. I was transferred to a hospital bed and Erin and Lisa quickly hooked me up to hospital monitors. They were efficient yet personable, I felt well cared for. Wired up and waiting for a doc, I pulled out my phone and started making calls. Gopalakrishnan's office was inquiring whether I had a number for Llewellyn King, who had written a column

Get sick. Yes, you read that correctly. I'm not suggesting you catch a cold. That's just too mundane. Have an exotic episode like vasovagal syncope. Spend a day or two in a hospital; meet some people you'll likely meet under different circumstances (you know this is Rhode Island) and you'll probably remember for years.



This Side Up

by JOHN HOWELL

What are you going to do with all this information?

Instead of looking at your hospital visit as an inconvenience, recognize it as an opportunity. You're in the turning gears of the medical system. In addition to being helped, you're getting educated. How else would you be capable of describing an echocardiogram — it almost put me to sleep — or the work of a phlebotomist (see, I'm using one of those big words now) — if not personally experienced.

What prompted this perspective was a call from Bob Coker, the retired Toll Gate physics teacher and tennis coach who continued playing in the Saturday morning tennis league he helped start soon after Toll Gate opened more than 50 years ago. He was in his 90s when he finally put down the racket.

Bob stays in touch with the tennis gang, and following Saturday play meets a group of them for breakfast at Panera Bread in East Greenwich. He was calling to let me know that Elaine, the wife of another retired Toll Gate teacher and once a league player, Maurice “Mo” Blais, had passed. I haven't seen Mo in years. Bob gave me the news and how she had passed so quickly.

I asked Bob about his health, and he went into some details.

I should have guessed, he would ask when I might return to the tennis court or at least stop in for breakfast at Panera.

Have a story to tell

I had a story from my recent overnight visit at Kent Hospital.

It began innocently enough.

I was scheduled for bloodwork, so Jackie Bernard, who with Carol and others have been driving me places, delivered me to the office of my primary-care physician, which also houses a Brown University lab. It wasn't long before Cathy had drawn blood and taped a patch of gauze to absorb any blood from the procedure. I was ready to leave, but told Cathy I felt lightheaded. She reached into a fridge to get me an orange juice. The next thing I remember is being surrounded by staff including my physician, Dr. Herbert Brennan, and seeing an East Greenwich rescue, lights flashing, outside the window.

I revived quickly with the orange juice, but to play it safe Brennan suggested I go to Kent for observation.

The EMTs wheeled me to the rescue. They affixed pads to my chest to get a read on my heart, took my temperature, oxygen level and blood pressure. They also quizzed

about his Christmas visit to Kent emergency. I told them where I was and in 10 minutes, Paari, as he is known to the Kent staff, was at my bedside.

The staff kept close tabs on my vitals. My body seemed to be running just fine, although my stomach was telling me I hadn't eaten anything since dinner the night before. Would they be bringing lunch? The answer was no.

Drama unfolds

Meanwhile a drama was playing out in a nearby cubicle.

“Get me out of here,” a woman was yelling. The staff assured her everything was going to be all right, but they couldn't take out the IVs that were possibly keeping her alive. The woman didn't care. She wanted out. In lower voices the nurse talked with family members. They were trying to get the patient into hospice care. From the delays, I gathered it took multiple calls.

It was a dimension of hospital care I hadn't considered. Not everyone wants a cure. Some want an end.

Dr. Mark Salmon (“just like the fish,” he said) showed up in mid-afternoon. He had all the lab results and looked for a personal account of how I felt. He knows the Kent community, having done his residency at the hospital. I asked about lunch and he looked surprised.

“Ham and cheese or egg salad?”

I picked the ham and cheese and in a couple of minutes he returned with the sandwich, a blueberry muffin and a ginger ale from a waiting-room vending machine.

Dr. Salmon said I would be spending the night for observation. I passed the news along to Carol, who recruited Leslie Derrig to join her for a visit. Soon after they arrived, Joe was dispatched from “transport” to wheel me up to a room on the fifth floor. Joe put us all in a good mood and smiled broadly for Leslie's photo as he waited for an elevator.

There was more good humor as Purple — you could tell from the hair — led the way to the room. She pointed out the bed controls and the red button to summon her if needed. We traded stories about our kids. Then it was time to say “night-night.”

The following morning there were some tests and a doctor's visit. Everything was OK. I would be discharged late that afternoon. Carol looked over the sheets I'd been handed.

Vasovagal syncope was the diagnosis. The short definition is a sudden drop in heart rate and pressure that can be brought on by a confluence of things which made sense to me. I hadn't slept the night before my blood test, I had taken an oxycodone to numb my back pain and I had been fasting prior to the blood test.

Now I have tales to tell and a malady that would surely stump the tennis gang. It wasn't wasted time.

LETTERS

Respectful discourse critical

To the Editor,

The current political landscape presents a critical juncture. We face diverging paths, each with profound implications for our nation's future. Recent years have wit-

nective course of action.

Differing perspectives exist on the best approaches to address our nation's challenges. A robust and informed electorate is essential for navigating these complexities and making decisions that serve the best interests of all Americans. It is incumbent upon each citizen to carefully consider the available information, evaluate various proposals, and cast their support in accordance with their values and convictions. Responsible and respectful discourse remains crucial as we strive to build a more prosperous and just society.

John Cervone
North Providence

WHERE TO WRITE:
1944 Warwick Avenue
Warwick, RI 02889
publisher@beaconmediari.com

and the erosion of public trust. It is imperative that we engage in thoughtful dialogue and critical analysis to discern the most ef-

Transparency a pressing issue for everyone

By ETHAN SHOREY

In a side capacity to my job as a local newspaper editor and writer, I'm also president of the Rhode Island Press Association. To people of a certain age, that name might sound stodgy and old, but we've been working hard to make sure we're focused on things that matter to the people of Rhode Island today.

One of those is to remind everyone as often as we can that there are still very strong publications that function with a mission to keep you informed and to help make our communities better places. Raising that awareness puts important stories in the public eye.

Recently, we also started accepting all-digital outlets as members, and several of those have come aboard recently.

Many of our local high school staffers and students are also aware of Rhode Island High School Journalism Day, which we brought back three years ago in a virtual capacity. Last year, our northern Rhode Island area was represented well, and I have no doubt that at least some of that was due to students here growing up knowing the importance of a local news outlet to their community and wanting to perhaps be a part of that one day.

RIPA also puts our money

where our mouth is on this one, funding scholarships for students who want to go into journalism.

Another area of focus is to advocate for good policy and to make sure the government isn't stifling the ability of average people to get information.

One bill we've advocated for over the past few years, and are hoping for a positive outcome this year, is Sen. Louis DiPalma's legislation that would increase the public's access to government documents and information. The access law offers a number of changes to how police information must be reported, including on misconduct and body camera footage, reducing costs of record searches and redaction (current practice deeply impacts news outlets' ability to acquire information for public consumption), and increasing fines for government officials found to violate the Access to Public Records Act. That includes daily fines for willful and knowing withholdings.

To some, this might sound like “just” a press issue, but it's a you issue as well. That's by extension or if you're ever in a position where you need to acquire key information for yourself or someone you know or love.

A quick point on the “willful and knowing” item: the vast majority of findings against state or local govern-

ments when it comes to withholding information are not deemed to be in this category. Most findings are considered the garden variety, and would never result in a fine. This is reserved for the worst offenses.

We would greatly appreciate hearing from you if you've been forced to deal with long and frustrating attempts to get information. Government and agencies can do so much good with the right people and processes in place, but many also know how quickly things can turn when the wrong people act improperly and then want to keep their actions secret. Email ripressassociation@gmail.com with your story.

I'm not naïve enough to have missed that “the media” (there I go speaking of it as some amorphous blob as I tell others not to) isn't thought of nearly as fondly as it once was. That said, people of every political persuasion, if they're honest with themselves, know the good that can come about when someone, whether in traditional media or in one's alternative outlet of choice, exposes the truth.

Ethan Shorey is president of the Rhode Island Press Association and editor of The Valley Breeze and its five newspapers. The news outlet you're reading this in is a RIPA member.

SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



What does a senseless murder more than 30 years ago in Rockford, Illinois, have to do with recent events at the Toolmark Analysis / Firearms Identification Section of the Rhode Island State Crime Laboratory? More than you might think ...

Second of two parts

Recent events at the Toolmark Analysis / Firearms Identification Section of the RI State Crime Laboratory (RICL) have something in common with the Illinois State Police Crime Laboratory in the Pursley case: both laboratories are controlled by law enforcement.

On September 3, 2024 both the RICL and the Attorney General's Office (RI-AG) issued public statements about a problem at the RICL — a nonconformity with laboratory standards in a single case (the 'mismatch' case). Remedial steps were taken, including the suspension of internal examinations, the outsourcing of further examinations to an external, accredited laboratory or qualified consultant, and the retention of an outside, accredited agency to conduct an assessment/technical review of the operations of the RICL's firearms section.

The State Crime Lab Commission (Commission) created by statute to oversee the RICL met twice in August and once in October, 2024, to discuss the issue. Although subject to the Open Meetings Law (OML), the Commission labeled the issue as a "personnel matter," which allowed its discussions and actions to be shielded from public scrutiny. Curiously, however, at a Commission meeting on April 11, 2024, the Commission disclosed information relating to a non-conformity issue that appears to be nearly identical to the one that is the subject of the current controversy.

What the Nichols Report recommended

This inconsistent application of the OML was partially mitigated by the external agency report prepared in connection with RICL's remedial steps. This October 9, 2024, report by Ronald G. Nichols, President, Nichols Forensic

In 2 states, accuracy of gun forensics challenged

Science Consulting, Inc. ("report" or "Nichols' Report") was the result. It was provided to defense counsel in the 'mismatch' and other pending cases potentially impacted by the 'personnel matter/nonconformity' issue. Its findings included:

- three examiners misidentified thirteen fired cartridge cases in the mismatch case, incorrectly identifying a submitted Glock firearm as having made the toolmarks in question
- the misidentification came to light when the cartridges were correctly connected to a different Glock pistol recovered by another agency
- the misidentification was attributable to the examiners' exclusive reliance on a toolmark common to all Glock pistols (a "class characteristic") while ignoring other markings
- greater attention should be paid to "sub-class characteristics"—toolmarks that are more individualized to a specific firearm

The report's recommendations included:

- analysts should increase their reliance upon "sub-class characteristics"
- analysts should use language more discerning than 'conclusive' or 'inconclusive' in reports
- 'conclusive' results should be based upon an examination of both class characteristics and sub-class and incidental characteristics.

Lowering expectations about toolmarks

Rhode Island is not the only state dealing with this issue, which was identified in a 2009 National Research Council Report (NRC Report) and the 2016 report of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology

(PCAST Report). Courts across the country have taken steps to improve the reliability and understanding of toolmark analysis. Some of these actions echo the Nichols' Report recommendations including:

- restrict the degree of certainty in firearm examiners testimony (avoid the use of the word "match" or "conclusive")
- limit firearms testimony when the opinion is based on class characteristics only
- allow challenges to an individual analysis (as opposed to the entire field)

Policy considerations

Will the RICL voluntarily accept the "best practices" recommended by the Nichols, NRC, and PCAST reports like other jurisdictions, or will litigation be needed? Consideration of prior history may be helpful: In 2009, the General Assembly considered transferring the RI Department of Health's (RIDOH) Forensic Science Section to the Rhode Island Department of Public Safety, a law enforcement entity. Coincidentally, the aforementioned NRC Report opposed such a move because it would be inconsistent with each agencies' functions, create problems of perception and conflict of interest, and inhibit the independence of the laboratory. Fortunately, the transfer was rejected by the legislature.

Additionally, to achieve the best results here, the commission must be more diverse. Currently, it is heavily weighted in favor of law enforcement, with the RIAG serving as its chairperson. Additional members should be appointed – specifically other criminal justice stakeholders such as the judiciary, the criminal defense bar, the larger legal community and additional representatives from the academic community, especially from the University of Rhode Island's renowned College of Engineering, given that field so closely fits with the functions of the RICL.

Michael A. DiLauro, Esq.
The Just Criminal Justice Group LLC
Warwick

RhodeRestore: RI's first local roads program

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

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

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

Unlike traditional programs that focus only on state highways, RhodeRestore improves the infrastructure closest to home. Roads that take you to work, sidewalks your children walk to school on and bridges that connect neighborhoods are finally receiving the attention they deserve. This program isn't just about repairs – it's about ensuring

that every community has the foundation it needs to thrive. The governor, working with the General Assembly and the League of Cities and Towns, is addressing the issues that impact Rhode Island families most directly.

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

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

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

I was thrilled to hear the governor's commitment in the State of the State address to making RhodeRestore permanent. I look forward to collaborating with him and our General Assembly partners to deliver safer, smoother and more sustainable infrastructure for all Rhode Islanders.

Randy R. Rossi is executive director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns

The world's most vulnerable are in danger

The world's most vulnerable individuals face grave danger.

With a single signature, President Donald Trump has effectively shut the door on refugees, stripping countless innocent children and families of their right to seek asylum.

Since the founding of the United States, the nation has upheld a moral responsibility to offer refuge to those in need, providing a chance to build a new life and pursue the American dream.

But now, that dream is slipping away – especially for those who have fled war-torn regions or escaped their homes in the dead of night out of fear for their lives.

This situation is heartbreaking, but we cannot allow America's moral compass to waver.

For decades, tens of thousands of refugees have endured long, grueling waits for the opportunity to rebuild their lives in the United States. Imagine their despair.

Many can never return home – to places like Afghanistan, Sudan or the Democratic Republic of Congo – due to ongoing conflict, the threat of torture or even death. Wom-

en and girls are especially vulnerable. Meanwhile, unaccompanied children who have braved perilous journeys to escape violence in Central America now find the border closed to them, leaving their futures uncertain.

In this moment of crisis, we must not turn our backs on those who need us the most. America has long been a beacon of hope for the persecuted, the displaced and the desperate.

To abandon that legacy now would be a betrayal of the very values that define us. We have a moral obligation to stand up for refugees, to advocate for their right to safety and to ensure that the promise of a better future remains within reach.

The time to act is now – before more lives are lost, before more dreams are shattered and before we lose sight of the compassion and humanity that make our nation strong.

Justin D. Bibee is a human rights advocate.

Notices

(Continued from page 3)

claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

FLEMING, Howard F. alias Howard Francis Fleming, est.
Brian Fleming has qualified as Executor; Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

GIAMMARINO, Rose, est.
John Giammarino has qualified as Administrator; Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time

required by law beginning January 23, 2025

HOMAN, Jonathan Mark, est.
Regina Marie Homan has qualified as Executrix; Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

LIN, Nancy, est.
Marsha Hang has qualified as Administratrix c.t.a.; Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

MAGNER, Gloria M. alias Gloria Marie Magner, est.
John Magner and Mary Nuzzo have qualified as Co-Executors

(Mark Iacono, Esq. of 56 Exchange Terrace, 5th Floor, Providence, RI 02903 as agent); Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

MURPHY, Eileen M. alias Eileen Murphy, est.
Christopher Murphy has qualified as Executor (Marc Titchnell, Esq. of 2088 Broad Street, Cranston, RI 02905 as agent); Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

ROSSI, Joseph M. est.
Barbara A. Rossi has qualified as Executrix; Creditors must file their

claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

ZAINYEH, Anthony M. est.
George A. Zainyeh has qualified as Executor; Creditors must file their claims in the office of the Probate Clerk within the time required by law beginning January 23, 2025

Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the City Clerk's Office at (401) 738-2006 Ext 4 at least (48) hours in advance of the hearing.

ATTEST: LYNN D'ABROSCA, CITY CLERK

1/23, 1/30/25

Kent moves to universal masking

Kent Hospital announced on Tuesday it is implementing universal masking (masking of healthcare workers, patients, and visitors). According to Care New England, masking goes into effect when key epidemiologic markers reach predefined levels within our service communities.

Butler Hospital has implemented Universal Masking, and Kent Hospital implemented it on Jan. 29. At other CNE facilities, masks are not routinely required but are readily available to staff, patients, and visitors for optional use. We continue to monitor indicators of respiratory illness and adjust accordingly.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Asbury United Methodist Church
143 Ann Mary Brown Drive
Rev. Yohan Go
467-5122
Worship Service 9:30am
Sunday School at 9:30am
Sept - June
asburymcni.org

Baha'i Faith
Warwick Community
Call for meeting information
800-228-6483

Buttonwoods Bible Chapel
311 Buttonwoods Avenew
401-823-7803
or 508-579-7384

Christ Church
1025 Main St., E.G.
(corner Post & Cedar)
884-8632
www.christchurchec.org

Church of The Apostles
Anglican Church in North America
170 Fairview Ave.
Coventry, RI 02816
821-7609
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
www.apostlesri.org

Church of The Transfiguration
1665 Broad Street
461-3142
Sunday 10 a.m.
Holy Eucharist

Community of Christ Church
292 West Shore Road
Rev. Nancy L. Cornish
Rev. Peter M. Latham
738-0342

Concordia Center for Spiritual Living
292 West Shore Rd.
732-1552
10 am. Sundays
concordiacsl.org

Eckankar Center
2914 Post Road, Unit #3
Path of Spiritual Freedom
Light & Sound Services
1st & 3rd Sundays 10 AM
Pastor Mark Lopotoski
738-4727
www.eckankar-ri.org

Faith Baptist Church
765 Commonwealth Ave.
Pastor Matt Vandeleeest
738-7664
faithbaptistri.org
Sunday 9:30am & 11:00am

Faith Family Chapel
205 Hallene Rd. (Unit 103)
Pastor Brian Regan
681-4690
www.faithfamilychapel.org

First Congregational Church of Warwick, UCC
715 Oakland Beach Avenue
Pastor Michael Ashe
738-3377
fccwri.org

First Evangelical Lutheran Church
124 Division St.
East Greenwich

Friendship Baptist Church
2945 West Shore Road
Pastor Kaleb Hall
738-4392
friendshipri.com

Greenwood Community Church, Presbyterian
805 Main Avenue
Rev. Dr. Stephen L. Clark
737-1230
www.gccp.org

Lakewood Baptist Church
255 Atlantic Avenue
Pastor Ron Provencal
781-1136
lakewoodbaptistchurchri.com
Sunday Worship 10am
Offering Zoom for Sunday Services.

Living Faith Christian Church
1201 Greenwich Avenue
739-2444
www.LivingFaithRI.org

Narragansett Bay Baptist Church
1642 West Shore Road
Pastor Dru Merrill
738-0600
nbbcri.org

Norwood Baptist Church
48 Budlong Avenue
Rev. George Barclay
941-7040

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
1817 Warwick Avenue
Pastor Todd Stange
739-2937
www.pilgrimlutheranri.org

Saint Barnabas Episcopal Church
3257 Post Road
Rev. Scott R. Lee
737-4141
8:00 & 10:00 Holy Eucharist
www.stbarnabaswarwick.org

Saint Mark's Episcopal Church
111 West Shore Road
737-3127
Saturday - 5:00 pm
Sunday - 9:00 am
www.stmarkswarwick.com

Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
389 Greenwich Avenue
Rev. Hayley Bang
737-6758
stpaulwarwick.org

Saint Timothy Church
1799 Warwick Avenue
739-9552

Saints Rose & Clement Church
111 Long Street
739-0212
Masses: Saturday 4 pm
Sundays 8 am & 10:30 am

SouthPointe Christian Church
200 Pettaconsett Ave.
401-821-9800
Worship Services 9 & 10:30 a.m.
Kids Programming for Birth-4th grade both services
5th-8th grade Programming 9 a.m. Sundays
High School Programming Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
southpointeri.com

Spring Green Memorial Church
1350 Warwick Avenue
463-8328
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Rev. Shelton Rucker, Jr.
https://sgmcri.wordpress.com/

Trinity Church
139 Ocean Ave., Pawtuxet
Cranston, RI 02905
8 am & 10 am
10 am is live-streamed on facebook @trinitypawtuxet
941-4324
http://www.trinitycranston.org/

Warwick Hope Assembly of God
425 Sandy Lane
Pastor Matthew McIntosh
732-0634
Sunday Service 9:30 am.
Bible Study Wed. 7 pm

Warwick Central Baptist Church
3270 Post Road
Pastor Sam Chesser
739-2828
wcbc01@verizon.net
Service Sundays at 10:15 AM

Warwick Christian Fellowship
358 Warwick Neck Avenue
Pastor Steve Reickett
739-26606

Westminster Unitarian Church
119 Kenyon Ave., E.G.
401-884-5933
Sunday Service 10 am
Streaming on: westminsteru.org

Woodbury Union Church, Presbyterian
58 Beach Avenue
Rev. Deb Packard
737-8232
WoodburyChurchRI@gmail.com

Council

(Continued from page 1)

ing. Assuming cuts currently planned for February's meeting are passed, Galligan said WPS would have reduced the projected deficit by roughly two-thirds, leaving a shortfall of \$3,624,260.

"That's what seven calendar days of work has done," Galligan said. "And these cuts are very reasonable, considering what we started with."

Ward 5 Councilman Ed Ladouceur, however, argued that many of the cuts were merely moving money from this year's budget to budgets further down the line, noting that one such move in January's regular meeting in particular – cutting \$750,000 of the WISE Union pension contribution – bothered him.

"These are kick-the-can-down-the-road cuts," Ladouceur said. "What you're cutting today, you're going to put back tomorrow. And you've already told us that tomorrow is going to be worse than today."

Ward 9 Councilman Vincent Gebhart also questioned the sustainability of the commission to make meaningful cuts without being able to affect personnel changes, saying that only \$40 million of the schools budget was spent on non-personnel matters.

Having people from outside the city look at the School Department's budget without having a deep knowledge of Warwick's school system, Galligan said, was also a concern to him.

"There's no residency requirement within this proposed legislation," Galligan said. "So you're going to have someone, you know, come into the city, be appointed, make cuts, but not understand what the community's priorities are, what the community's needs and desires are. Then they'll come in, look at numbers, and make cuts that will possibly have a detrimental impact on our community, our children and their education."

The meeting drew several dozen members of the public, who were roughly split on whether establishing the commis-



School Committee chair Shaun Galligan gives a presentation on Warwick Public Schools' deficit and the steps taken in the past few months to lower that deficit. (Beacon Media photo by Adam Zangari)

sion would be a good idea, with slightly more voicing opposition to it.

Those against argued that it would subvert the School Committee's elected officials, and also questioned the cost of the commission and whether the city would be able to retain professionals for the job.

Many also questioned why the city would create a commission to supervise school finances but not the finances of the city as a whole, arguing that existing rules would allow for a look at both.

"In the long term, the city budget is worse than the school budget," former Councilman Bob Cushman said. "I figure we are going to be in a fiscal crisis probably two to three years from now... The city and the schools have been bailed out over the last five years [by] tens of millions of dollars in COVID funds; otherwise, this would have happened a long time ago."

Picozzi argued that while the city has its own financial chal-

lenges, a similar measure would not be needed, and that the schools' financial standing was the immediate problem.

Members of the public in favor of the commission took the absence of WPS's administration from the meeting as a sign that they could not be trusted to run their own finances.

Another point of frustration at the meeting came from a lack of answers about how the deficit arose – something WPS is currently investigating internally.

Both Schools Superintendent Lynn Dambruch and Assistant Superintendent Bill McCaffrey attended a meeting with students in WPS's special services transition program and their parents last Wednesday night, which Galligan said had been scheduled before the special council meeting.

Ultimately, an overwhelming majority of council members were in favor of creating the commission, citing the need to protect the city's bond rating.

Ward 3 Councilman Bryan Nappa said that he viewed the commission as a "backstop" should WPS not be able to fix their financial problems on their own.

"We really respect you coming up here, and looking at this in the most favorable light, I truly hope that you all can work together and work with the administration and us to find a way through this, and that the actions we're taking here tonight are largely never going to be realized," Nappa said. "I have faith in your drive to make a resolution to this problem, but I think this is a prudent approach."

The next step is for legislation authorizing the commission to pass the General Assembly. That is expected to take one to two months, should it pass.

If WPS's finances are in order by then, Picozzi said, he would not appoint any members to the commission, thereby dissolving it.

Council President Anthony Sinapi said that if there are significant issues with the setup of the commission, they would be raised at the General Assembly.

"There's no guarantee that it passes there. If they find issue with it, if they don't think it's a good idea, then it won't," Sinapi said. "If people still disagree with the content of this, they are more than welcome to lobby the General Assembly accordingly. But I think this walks a delicate balance."

Drivers

(Continued from page 1)

"Whenever we do things that can assist individuals and [make] encounters with law enforcement efficient and effective, whatever we can do to move that along, I think is very, very important," Craddock said.

The blue envelope also has important information for police officers on how to work with a neurodivergent driver and shares tips on different signs to recognize and ways to make the interaction run smoother.

The program gained traction when two state legislators were inspired to propose it thanks to a Westerly high school student who had learned about similar programs while researching for his senior project.

Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro and Sen. Victo-

ria Gu proposed a bill to create the program. The legislation was approved by the General Assembly in June 2024.

Some police departments had already adopted a Blue Envelope program before the General Assembly had approved the legislation.

Craddock believes five police departments implemented it on their own – Central Falls, North Kingstown, Narragansett, Bristol and Cranston.

According to Cranston Police Capt. Justin Dutra, the department has issued approximately 60 blue envelopes since the start of the program. He is hopeful that with support from the DMV more drivers will take advantage of the envelopes.

Craddock says there's been interest from the police chiefs' association to include police departments as supplemental locations where people can get the blue envelopes. It is something he is considering, depending

on how the program goes.

An item that Craddock said they added to the program is a contact card. It serves as a way for a police officer to reach an emergency contact if there is an issue and avoids having to ask the driver directly whom they should call should the need arise.

"If you have somebody that's on the autism spectrum, their anxiety level is going to be much, much higher," Craddock said. "So, anything we can do to help defuse that and make it a simpler transaction."

Joanne Quinn likes the Blue Envelope idea and says it is a more subtle way to get information across to law enforcement.

Quinn serves as the executive director for The Autism Project, a local nonprofit agency that works to improve the lives of people with autism. The group works on teaching others how to understand autism and how to engage better with individuals who have autism.

She said the Blue Envelope program is a way to tell law enforcement to slow down a bit and recognize they must approach this situation a little differently.

"The fact that this is voluntary is very important," Quinn said. "I think that [it gives] peace of mind, because our people are just as capable, the majority, of being out and driving. But sometimes in stressful situations we may not be able to regulate as quickly. But if they know the difference, it can lead to better engagement and understanding."

"It's an important support, [a] way to communicate non-verbally that you will need some help and the way to help," Quinn said.

Anyone can opt into the program; a blue envelope can be picked up at the DMV office in Cranston or at any DMV office, or at AAA offices if you're a member.

Clara Jean Motter

Clara Jean (Swerking) Motter, 100, formerly of Warwick, passed away on Thursday, January 23, 2025. She was the loving wife of the late Rev. Dr. W. Eugene Motter. Born in Dayton, OH, she was the daughter of the late Edward F. and Clara (Gruebmeier) Swerking.



Clara graduated Cum Laude from the University of Rhode Island and attended the Gordon Theological School. She was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother and worked as the Secretary for the RI State Council of Churches until her retirement. Clara's faith was important to her. A devout Baptist, Clara was a parishioner of Warwick Central Baptist Church in Apponaug and a member of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island. She served in various capacities at Warwick Central Baptist as a member of the Choir and Board of Deacons, the President of the Women's Council, and Chairperson of the Women's Circle. Clara was also a volunteer with the West Bay Caregivers and South Providence Neighborhood Ministries.

Clara was an avid traveler. She accompanied Gene on trips to Southeast Asia and Thailand. After Gene's death in 1982, Clara continued to travel, going on ten international trips to locations including Israel and Austria, and also took part in twenty Elder Hostel trips. On these excursions, she took plenty of pictures and created beautiful slides and presentations accompanied by scripture and poetry which she shared with various groups.

She is survived by her beloved children, Patricia Anne Motter Aswad (Richard) of Nahant, MA and Paul Eugene Motter (Melanie) of West Suffield, CT, her grandchildren, Olivia Aswad and Valerie Motter, and many devoted friends who were an integral part of her life.

She was the sister of the late Edith Swerking, Laveda Biery, and Janet Armstrong.

The family would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the staff at John Clarke Senior Living Nursing Center in Middletown RI for their excellent care and love. Thanks also to Hope Hospice of Providence, RI for their compassionate care.

Her Funeral will be held on Saturday, March 15, 2025 at 2:00PM at Warwick Central Baptist Church, 3270 Post Road, Warwick.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to: Warwick Central Baptist Church, 3270 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886.

www.murphyfuneralhomes.org

OBITUARIES

Keith John Fortin



Keith John Fortin, 69, of Longmeadow Avenue, Warwick, passed away peacefully with his loving family by his side on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at Hope Health Hospice and Palliative Care in Providence. Born in Providence, he was the son of the late John O. and Edla V. (Ayers) Fortin.

Keith served in the United States Navy for six years as a Neuropsychiatry Technician and Medical Assistant at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Bethesda, MD, before being Honorably discharged.

Keith worked for several years at the former Chestnut Lodge Psychiatric Children's Home in Maryland before returning to Rhode Island where he opened and operated Midstate Camera Repair in Warwick from 1985 through 2021 before retiring.

Keith was an avid gardener who spent his summers meticulously planting and maintaining beautiful flowers in his backyard, where he also enjoyed listening to music and reading. He was a wonderful cook who loved making delicious meals for his friends and family to enjoy. Keith had a profound appreciation and love for art, filling his home with photographs and paintings from all around the world. He also traveled extensively, seeing the world and all the incredible sights it had to offer. Keith lived a full life!

He is survived by his sister, E. Cynthia Bishop and her companion Steven Einhorn of Warwick; his nephew, John W. Bishop of Warwick and a brother Mark A. Fortin and his wife Sandra of Cumberland. He also leaves his extended family in Maryland that he spent a lot of time with throughout the years.

At Keith's request, his service and committal with Military Honors in the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery will be private for the family. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Keith's name to the Covenant House, PO Box 758636, Topeka, KS, 66675-9986 would be appreciated.

Sean C. Kelley

Sean C. Kelley, 51, of Warwick, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family, Saturday afternoon, January 25, 2025 at Rhode Island Hospital.

Born in Providence, the beloved son of Lucy P. (Brennan) Kelley of Johnston and the late Francis X. Kelley. He grew up in Johnston and lived in Cranston before moving to Warwick in 2016.

Sean had a passion for cars. During the span of his career, he explored roles within the automotive field. Within the Cranston area he was a much sought after auto mechanic as a graduate of New England Technology and Certified Master Technician in multiple areas of auto repair. From 2000-2006 Sean operated his own repair shop, Pontiac Service. He was well known for his honesty, integrity and fair pricing. After closure of Pontiac Service, Sean became an auto instructor at MTTI followed by UTI. When UTI closed the Massachusetts campus, he worked for the Rhode Island Department of Motor Vehicles as an inspector.

An avid New England Sports fans, Sean loved the Patriots, Bruins and Red Sox.

Besides his mother he is survived by a son, Luke P. Kelley; a sister, Mary F. Kelley and his aunt, Eileen Kevane. He was predeceased by his sister, Patricia A. Kelley.

His funeral will be held Friday, January 31, 2025 at 8:45 a.m. from the PRATA-GALLOGLY Funeral Home, 78 Providence Street, West Warwick followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 a.m. in St. Robert Bellarmine Church, 1804 Atwood Avenue, Johnston. Interment will be in St. Ann Cemetery, Cranston. Visiting hours Thursday 4:00-7:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions to St. Robert Bellarmine Food Shelf, 1804 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919 in his memory would be appreciated. Information and condolence, please visit: www.PrataGallogly.com



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We miss the things you used to say,
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It's when we miss you most of all.

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— Thank you

By ADAM ZANGARI

City Council OKs union contracts amid debt worries 2 members warn of fiscal ‘point of no return’

The Warwick City Council approved two separate collective bargaining agreements for members of the city's Police Department and city employees in addition to a memorandum of agreement with members of the city's Fire Department in their third meeting this month.

The first two contracts, between the city and Warwick Lodge no. 7, Fraternal Order of Police and the city and Council 94, Local 1651, were approved in a 7-2 vote, with Ward 2 Councilman Jeremy Rix and Ward 5 Councilman Ed Ladouceur the sole dissenters.

The third contract approval – between the city and Local 2748, International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO – was done in an 8-1 vote with Ward 9 Councilman Vincent Gebhart the sole dissenter, though he said his vote was symbolic and he would have voted in favor had he been the deciding vote.

Each of the CBAs will be in place

through June 30, 2027, and the memorandum of agreement will resolve a dispute between the city administration and the Fire Department regarding other post-employment benefits by raising both the city's and the union's contributions to 2% of it by 2027, matching the amount in the two police collective bargaining agreements.

Rix said that while he believed that there were “some positives” in each of the agreements, he believed the city was leaving money on the table, and that leaving other post-employment benefits underfunded were things he could not agree to.

“Where I do have an issue is not starting out with the OPEB right at the 2% to match what was the contingent agreement of Local 2748; effectively, this is a matter of the city leaving

money on the table to the tune of something greater than \$360,000,” Rix said. “I am just truly confused by some of the logic here with where we are going as a city.”

While other council members shared their concerns, each said they were in favor of the contracts because they believed that the CBAs represented “a step in the right direction” for the city and the unions.

Ward 3 Councilman Bryan Nappa said keeping the city's finances in perspective was important, but that the numbers looked more frightening than they are.

“The unfunded liability to that end would only come into true fruition at \$280 million if all of that was to come to call all at once, which I think we can all agree the chance of that happening is

essentially zero,” Nappa said. “So net positioning, as far as fiscal health for the city, while it's a good barometer in some instances, is not a good overall barometer of the fiscal health of the city. That large number scares people often, and I think we need to keep that in perspective as to what that actually means.”

City Council President Anthony Sinapi said the method by which OPEB was being funded in the agreements was viable, and that it was not feasible for the city to immediately jump to agreements where the unions sharply increased their OPEB funding.

“You can only do incremental change. Collective bargaining negotiations are a give and take. If they give 8% all at once, they also get to take something,” Sinapi said. “This is a

good thing. Incremental benefits are how CBAs work.”

Sinapi also said that the council's role in ratifying the agreements was rather small “for better or for worse” and that the council not approving the CBAs would send the city and the unions to arbitration.

Rix and Ladouceur warned that they were deeply concerned that the city was nearing or had already passed the financial “point of no return.”

“The indebtedness that continues to mount is not sustainable,” Ladouceur said. “Just a few days ago, a finance director said that two out of the five criteria for a state takeover is eminent ... I will not be able to support this contract not because I disagree with the pay raises but because they have not negotiated a reasonable contribution or increase in contribution to the health care costs.”

Rix and Ladouceur both voted for the AFL-CIO agreement, saying that it did not make sense not to vote in favor with the other two already passed.

By JOHN HOWELL

Council to school officials: No quick fix for deficit

While disappointed that not a single representative of the school administration showed up at last Wednesday's meeting when the City Council approved legislation to establish a school budget commission, council members say they do believe the school administration and committee take seriously a projected \$9-million deficit in the current operating budget.

Solving the problem is another matter.

In a phone call Friday, Mayor Frank Picozzi said he was “shocked” when neither Superintendent Lynn Dambruch nor Assistant Superintendent Bill McCaffrey attended the special meeting, as it had been mentioned in discussions about legislation to create a budget oversight commission.

Picozzi estimates the deficit is actually \$10 million if not more since the school audit has not been reconciled for FY 24. It is projected to show a deficit between \$600,000 and \$1.3 million. In addition, the state appropriated nearly \$1 million more to Warwick schools after the mayor and City Council approved the current operating budget.

Dambruch said Friday that she and McCaffrey were previously committed to meeting with parents of special-needs students. She said that meeting was publicly discussed at a School Committee meeting. She said about 20 people attended in person or remotely at the meeting, held at Pilgrim High School. The meeting started at 5 p.m. and lasted about three hours.

Galligan fields questions

Picozzi questioned the sincerity of the ongoing drumbeat that schools are looking to be transparent and cooperative in solving the projected deficit in the current operating budget if they weren't present to answer questions. In opening remarks, School Committee Chairman Shaun Galligan explained the absence of administrators and said he would address council questions.

Ward 6 Councilman William Muto gave Galligan a thumbs-up for representing the schools. “Shaun did a great job,” Muto said in a phone call Sunday.

City Council President Anthony Sinapi was forgiving of the absence of school administrators.

“Given that the meeting was scheduled on short notice, it's not terribly surprising. Had the meeting been scheduled further in advance, I have no doubt one or both of them would have been in attendance,” he wrote in a text.

He is also confident schools are sincere in their efforts to tackle the deficit.

“I certainly think they are doing their best to address the situation,” he said.

Freshman Councilman Bryan Nappa offered, “I believe that the committee is trying their best to handle this problem as effectively as they can. As I stated at the meeting, they need to be cautious about characterizing their

efforts appropriately. Moving necessary expenditures to the following fiscal year should not be considered a “cut” and cannot be calculated as a dollar-for-dollar corrective action. I think they are well intentioned. I am confident that Chairman Galligan and the rest of the committee will do everything in their power to try to mitigate this problem.”

As evidenced by the council vote and articulated by the Picozzi, City Finance Director Peter Schaefer, state Auditor General David Bergantino and former Auditor General Ernest Almonte, Nappa is not alone in thinking the schools can't do it alone.

“I do believe that they need more professional assistance to appropriately reallocate their budget and to draw back spending and expenses in a way that is sustainable and has a minimal adverse affects for our students and teachers,” Nappa said.

Likewise a freshman councilman, Muto believes school administrators “truly understand the seriousness of the situation” but may not have the tools” to address it. He believes the problem can't be solved in a year and that the “School Committee needs to find the money without kicking the can ... it has to be structural changes.” He points to one change that is already beginning with schools converting to the same financial reporting system as the city. He sees the commission as assisting in “pav-

ing a new path” to fiscal stability. “People want Warwick to be strong,” he said.

In an email Monday, Galligan said the school administration continues its diligent efforts to reduce the projected deficit to a level that does not compromise student needs or academic achievement, while also not impacting bond or tax rates.

“Moreover,” he continued, “the School Committee and auditor general have called for the development of a comprehensive five-year strategic plan. This plan must not only outline the annual budgetary requirements, but also detail the strategies to achieve fiscal balance in a sustainable manner. To ensure progress, we have emphasized the need for this plan to be ‘as close-to-final as possible,’ and be provided to the City Council no later than Feb. 28.”

There was no shortage of questions during the council meeting.

Nappa and Muto want to know when the schools knew they would be running in the red at the end of the fiscal year.

When Galligan disclosed the committee learned it faced a \$6-million shortfall in the salary account in August, Nappa questioned how the committee could keep adding an additional \$500,000 a month to the projected deficit.

Picozzi questions whether the School Committee can come up with a viable five-year plan to put the district in the black, as

Galligan said will happen by Feb. 28. And he finds the \$2.88-million in budget reductions made earlier this month only delaying expenses, such as pension contributions and the hiring of an assistant principal at Vets Middle School – “kicking the can a short distance,” not systemic changes to reduce costs.

Picozzi is hopeful the commission will look into why about 20% of the school enrollment is on IEPs (individual education programs) that require the hiring of teacher assistants and why Warwick's ratio of teachers to students is 1 to 10 when Cranston, with 2,000 more students, is 1 to 13.

An argument made by former School Committee and City Council member Robert Cushman against legislatively creating the commission was that the city could turn to existing legislation calling on the state to research both city and school budgets. Apart from being faster, Cushman reasoned, it would give a fiscal road map to the city, which he estimated will face \$1.5 billion in unfunded liabilities once \$350 million in bonding for the new Toll Gate and Pilgrim high schools is issued.

Picozzi sees no reason for a comprehensive municipal-finance review. He said Tuesday that several people had spoken to him about wanting to serve on the commission, but he hasn't made any decisions. He named Almonte as a possible candidate.

The commission is to have three mayoral appointees with advice and consent of the council plus one appointee each of the superintendent and School Committee chair.

Picozzi likes Almonte's ability to connect with people.

“He doesn't even talk like a Harvard-educated man.” However, with Almonte recently retired as director of the RI League of Cities and Towns, Picozzi questions whether he's prepared to take on another job.

As for the legislation, Picozzi said the city's senior representative, Joseph McNamara, introduced a bill Thursday. House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi didn't foresee any problems with the measure gaining passage given the support it received from the council. Jeremy Rix, Ward 2, was the sole opposing vote. He argued that an appointed commission would nullify the authority voters vested in the elected School Committee. The commission won't have the power to hire or fire employees or to negotiate personnel contracts.

An office for the commission, staffing and a stipend for commission members are other issues to be resolved. Picozzi would like to see the office located in the school administration building. Dambruch could not immediately think of a space, but said she would look into it. In addition to school administrative offices, the former Gorton Junior High School is being used to house Holliman Elementary School classes while renovation work is being done at the school.



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Exploring the tiny world in our backyard

Narragansett Bay is laboratory for URI PhD candidate



Recipients of Emerging Coastal Leader Awards gather for a group photo at the URI Narragansett Bay Campus. (Photos courtesy of Rickie Ewton)

By JOHN HOWELL

As an elementary school student, Erica “Rickie” Ewton read Jurassic Park. It was an introduction to biology, and as a kid she dreamed of somehow procuring dinosaur DNA and creating her own park.

She remembers thinking, “You can do anything if you put your mind to it.” Her love of reading and her mother, Stacey, had a lot to do with her pursuit of discovery. The reading introduced her to new places and ideas.

“I latched onto science,” she says.

Her mother, a hard worker, kept her on track.

Ewton grew up in Oregon and went to Oregon State University for undergraduate studies. As a sophomore, she was accepted into a program that took her to Australia, where she accompanied a team doing studies on corals. As she was 17 years old, her mother had to sign for her to receive a passport. The experience furthered her interest in research, biology and science.

The Warwick resident is a recent recipient of an Emerging Coastal Leader Award at the University of Rhode Island. Her field of study has taken her from that early dream of dinosaurs to creatures so small – 5 microns – they aren’t visible to the naked eye. They predate dinosaurs and are considered among the first living organisms – plankton.

There are thousands of plankton species, and Ewton is doing her dissertation on the tiny mixoplankton. Her field of study is relatively new. Her research is leading her to discoveries, including new mixoplanktons.

Ewton is a PhD candidate in biological oceanography at the university’s Graduate School of Oceanography. She anticipates walking across the stage with her husband, Connor Jaymes Dionne, this spring to receive her PhD. Dionne is likewise finishing his dissertation. He is studying how to make batteries more efficient and sustainable by modeling and fabricating them from novel materials that are more abundant and geopolitically secure.

It was serendipitous that Ewton and Dionne should meet. Always prepared to try something new – Ewton calls herself a “serial hobbyist” – and realizing she needed a break from her passion for scientific research, she decided to learn ballroom dancing. She and Dionne were paired. They excelled. Their team competed nationally and they won competitions. They would have continued had it not been for the pandemic that fractured the team. But the partnership between Ewton and Dionne blossomed. They were married in 2021.

Narragansett Bay is Ewton’s laboratory. She builds upon water data that includes salinity, temperature, oxygen content and other characteristics that have been recorded daily from the same location in the middle of the bay since the 1950s. Recent samples include live plankton, of which there are two basic types – phytoplankton, tiny plants that derive their energy from the sun and give off oxygen, and zooplankton, which are swimming animals.

Mixoplankton, she explained, live off of nutrients in the water such as phosphorus, nitrogen silica and trace metals, as well as eating other organisms. As they are fed additional nutrients they become larger and turn to phytoplankton. She measures the effect of light on the plankton. She is also studying how mixoplankton can sequester



Ewton with her Emerging Coastal Leader Award and Elin Torrell, director of the Coastal Institute at URI.

■ EWTON - PAGE 16

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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian
Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

Leo

If you are looking for action, look no further! Leo is all about action, he loves to play, he's super smart and he will make you laugh all day! He is just over a year old so still that puppy energy, but he also likes to snuggle after playtime. Leo is a medium size mixed breed with a gorgeous tri-color coat and sparkling chocolate brown eyes! His zest for life is obvious and he can't wait to find his perfect match! He has been with other dogs in his foster home, but he'd probably be happiest being spoiled as your one and only boy. His dream home would have a fenced in yard where he can run out his energy and adults or older children. Leo might even excel at agility if you are up for that type of activity with him. Go meet him and watch this boy shine! Contact Save One Soul Animal Rescue League via email: Jocelyn@sosarl.org or feel free to visit their website at <http://www.sosarl.org> for more information. Leo says, "Let's get this party started!"

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Where's your favorite slice?

Round up offers highlights ahead of National Pizza Day

By ROB DUGUAY

If there's anything most of us can agree on, it's that pizza is deliciously awesome. Whether you like basic cheese, or something more adventurous like buffalo chicken, you really can't go wrong with the combination of a good sauce, crispy crust and whatever toppings the mind can dream up. Despite its Italian origins, pizza is an American delicacy and there are people all over the country who are enthusiastic about it by the slice, or even by the whole pie.

On National Pizza Day, Feb. 9, consider hitting up your local pizzeria. Yeah, you can go to Domino's or Pizza Hut, but the independently run, and sometimes family owned, pizza place can provide a culinary experience that few chains can rival.

Tony's Pizza Palace on Pontiac Ave in Cranston is practically an institution with its 50-year history. Another place in the same city that has a similar reputation is The Big Cheese & Pub on Reservoir Avenue. At Big Cheese consider a side of mozzarella bread too. If you're looking for a great Sicilian style pie, try Catanzaro's Pizzeria on Park Avenue or Tommy's Pizza on Oaklawn Avenue. Both places are fantastic, and Maria's Pizza & Wings, which is down the street from Tony's on Pontiac Avenue, is solid as well.

In Johnston, the town is home to D. Palmieri's Bakery, which has the best pizza strips. I know folks from outside of Rhode Island like to trash these local goodies, but once they have one from there I think they'll change their mind. La Nuova Pizzeria on Atwood Avenue makes their own dough, which makes a big difference and it guarantees a scrumptious pie. Rosa Mia Pizza on Greenville Avenue can make a pizza in a variety of crusts ranging from regular to thin crust to focaccia with an amazing selection that caters to any appetite. There's also the Pizza Palace on Plainfield Pike, which always has spectacular specials available.

When you're talking about pizza in Warwick, Crusty's Pizza on Warwick Avenue comes to mind. The award-



Photo courtesy of Catanzaro's Pizzeria

winning establishment has been around for over 30 years, and they stay true to their name with a crust that has a proper crunch to go along with their fresh ingredients. If you're looking for a place that's very affordable, but also delicious, the Pier Pizza Company on Post Road is exactly what you're looking for. For the people who are looking for that Massachusetts South Shore bar pizza they've been seeing all over the internet, they don't have to go far by heading to Grainsley's on West Shore Road in the heart of Conimicut Village. There's also the amazing and unique varieties at The Pizza Nomad right over the border on Providence

Street in West Warwick.

And if you're looking to celebrate Feb. 9, then head over to Apponaug Brewing Company on Knight Street within the Pontiac Mills for their pizza party that's going on from 11am to 8pm.

Everyone has their favorite local pizza place, and if I didn't mention yours, then my sincere apologies. If any of these establishments I included are new to you, then make sure to go check them out when you can. There's really nothing like a great pizza, and the area around Cranston, Johnston and Warwick has plenty of fantastic places to choose from.

Johnston children bitten by rabid dog

Back in the 19th and early 20th centuries, few things were as terrifying as hearing a cry of "Mad dog!" Wild-eyed canines, yelping and foaming at the mouth were to be feared as much as Satan. A bite from a rabid dog always meant a painful death was going to ensue.

In April of 1922, three young residents of Hedley Street in Johnston were playing in their yards when a dog making its way down the street stopped and bit all four children along with a friend one of them had visiting. Carlton Kemp Steere, the 5-year-old son of carpenter Byron Steere was one of the children bitten. Arthur Rushmore, the 11-year-old son of machinist Roland Rushmore was also viciously assaulted, along with 6-year-old Dorothy Beckett, the daughter of building caretaker William Becket. Four-year-old Charles DUBY, the son of wallpaperer and painter Charles DUBY was bitten as well while he played with his friends on Hedley Street that day. The vicious dog was killed soon after its terrifying attack on the children. Its head was removed and sent to a physician at Brown University so that its brain could be examined for signs of rabies infection. Rabies, once known as hydrophobia, is caused by

Back in the Day



by KELLY SULLIVAN

the lyssavirus, which is carried in the salivary glands of the infected animal. The word "rabies" is derived from the Latin word meaning "madness" and the illness is spread through bites and scratches. Symptoms of rabies may show up within two days of becoming infected, or take several years to produce any noticeable symptoms depending on how long it takes the virus to work its way into the central nervous system. Fever, sore throat, vomiting, paralysis and death eventually result due to severe inflammation of the brain.

A person afflicted with rabies becomes terrified of water – hence the term hydrophobia. The production of saliva is greatly increased when one is affected with rabies. However, the sight of water is unbearable to the afflicted and any attempt to make a person with rabies drink water results in the victim suffering painful throat spasms. The parents of the children

who had been bitten by the dog in Johnston all decided to put their children on the Pasteur Treatment. It is essential to start rabies treatment even before knowing if the animal attacker is infected as, once symptoms begin, death is certain.

The Pasteur Treatment was the result of four years of research by French scientist Louis Pasteur and his colleagues. It consisted of a series of daily injections of the rabies virus obtained from the brain tissue of a rabid animal, with the initial doses being weak and the latter doses being stronger in order to stimulate the human body's antibodies. Pasteur tested the treatment on rabbits – first infecting them and then extracting the virus from the back of their heads and adding formaldehyde to it. Pasteur's first human subject in his rabies research

was 9-year-old Joseph Meister who had been bitten by a rabid dog two days earlier. Beginning on July 6, 1885, Pasteur injected the boy with a 14-day series of shots composed of rabbit spinal cord suspensions containing a progressively inactivated rabies virus. Meister recovered from rabies and the world realized a major advancement had just been made in the world of science and medicine. Meister later worked at the Pasteur Institute in France as a caretaker. Ten days after the Germans occupied Paris, he committed suicide.

On April 16, 1922, the Brown University physician who examined the detached head of the dog which had bitten the four children in Johnston, called to inform the Johnston chief of police that the dog had indeed been infected with rabies.

The Pasteur Treatment is still used in many countries but the United States has moved on to a safer and more potent vaccine, one in which cell cultures are combined with hyperimmune globulin. Presently, less than ten people in the United States die of rabies each year, compared to the rate of 100 fatalities annually at the turn of the 20th century.

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



Cranston High School yearbook photo of Carlton Steere

Donnelly gives masterful performance in Wilbury's 'The Father: A Tragic Farce'

Theatre Review by DON FOWLER

Veteran actor Richard Donnelly gives a masterful performance as Andre, the aging father who is facing the challenges of Alzheimer's in French author Florian Zeller's "The Father: A Tragic Farce."

Director Josh Short has wisely done away with accents, put the one-act, 90-minute play up close and personal, and corroborated with Donnelly (Read last week's interview by Ida Zecco) with Donnelly).

Monica Shinn's clever, utilitarian set brings the actors close to their audience, allowing them to see and feel reactions to Andre's complex character.

The theme of the play is becoming a common one: The effects of the terribly cruel disease on a person and those who love him/her.

"The Father" goes deeper. It explores not only how a person changes, but also how the disease affects memory, reality and character.

Donnelly is brilliant at showing us different moods, reactions and fazes.

At times he is completely lucid. At times he makes us wonder if he is playing with those around him.

"The Father" is a play about the relationship between a father and his daughter (splendidly

played by Jeanine Kane) and a few others in his life.

Andre resents her at times, as she tries to do what is best for him and for her. He also can be manipulative.

He forgets where he is, who is who, where he left his watch, and what happened to his other daughter.

He reacts to every caregiver his daughter brings home until a pretty young lady is hired.

When she asks what his profession was, he replies, "tap dancer" and gives a demonstration.

"But Dad, you were an engineer," his daughter says, not allowing him his moment of either forgetting or playing.

Good performances from Jeff Ararat, Tanya Anderson Martin, and Gabrielle McCauley as people who pop in and out of his memory and Marvin Novogrodski as Anne's husband who suggested where Andre's final years should be spent.

It was good to see Novogrodski back on stage. The RI actor was a familiar face in children's entertainment for years and has returned home from Massachusetts. I was impressed with how he handled an important supporting role.

"The Father" is at Wilbury Theatre Group through February 9. Go online at thewilburygroup.org for tickets.



RICHARD DONNELLY
(Photos by Erin X. Smithers)



JEFF ARARAT AND RICHARD DONNELLY



RICHARD DONNELLY AND JEANINE KANE

From podcasts To the tooth fairy and comedy, Aceto does it all

By ROB DUGUAY

North Providence native Ace Aceto has a variety of professions. He's an author, podcaster, live show producer, an actor and a voiceover artist. And now, add stand-up comedy. As part of a show called "Wise Guys of Comedy" happening on January 31 at the Park Theatre in Cranston, he's going to be taking the stage with impressions and jokes. The show starts at 8pm and fellow comics Frank Santorelli and Brad Mastrangelo will be performing as well.

Aceto and I recently had a talk about how he started doing celebrity imitations, podcasting and being an author and his thoughts on being part of the upcoming show.

Rob Duguay: You've been imitating celebrities since you were a kid. Who was the first celebrity you remember imitating?

Ace Aceto: I started doing cartoon voices, so it was a lot of Bugs Bunny and stuff like that. When I was seven or eight, I tried impersonating Roseanne Roseannadanna (from Saturday Night Live) in a really, really bad way. The time I started getting impressions down was when I was watching cartoons. Marvin The Martian and Daffy Duck were the first two cartoons I was able to kind of nail down where I started thinking, "Hey, I really sound like this."

RD: Who is your favorite celebrity imitation to do these days as part of your set?

AA: It goes back and forth, my co-host on my podcast basically says that his favorite ones that I do, and they are my favorite, are Gilbert Gottfried, who unfortunately passed away a few years ago, and Family Guy characters.

RD: That makes sense, especially for Rhode Island. This podcast you just mentioned is "Behind The Funny" with Scott Higgins. What initially made you want to start doing a podcast and what are your thoughts on podcasting's current widespread role in comedy?

AA: Scott was always a fan of "Inside the Actors Studio" with James Lipton. He liked the fact that he would dive deeply with the actor on what their experience was, how they started and if they went to acting school. Scott wanted to do that with comics, so he started out with ones around Rhode Island, and then it expanded. I was on the fifth episode of the podcast, and it was just a one-on-one interview. We had been friends already, but we just liked the way we kind of clicked, which made the conversation easy.

A few weeks later, I said to him, hey, how would you like to turn the tables and have someone interview you? Let me interview you about your career so your audience can learn a little bit more about you. Again, we had a great rapport and I said to him, if you ever want a co-host, let me know because this was kind of fun. Not long afterwards, Scott reached out to me. For him, he found while going back and listening to older episodes that there were some pauses in the conversation that he was having to edit out. It was mainly because he was in the middle of a guest's answer and he was kind of busy adjusting the sound volume and things like that.

He felt like with these pauses that if he had a co-host then those pauses could be filled in. That's how it started, I weaseled my way into being the co-host, but we love it. We've been doing it for a while now, this March we'll be going into our ninth season.

RD: Very cool. You also wrote a book a couple years ago called "Maddie Loses A Tooth", and it's about your youngest daughter Maddie who lost one of her front teeth.

AA: Maddie lost one of her front teeth, and for some reason, she had a million questions about the Tooth Fairy that night. I just kept saying to her "I don't know the answer to that question, you'd have to ask them." She then asked me if we had any index cards. She disappeared to her room with markers and wrote up 18 different questions for the Tooth Fairy to answer that night. I laid out the cards on my bed, took a picture of it and in a smart aleck kind of way, I posted it on Facebook saying "Great, the Tooth Fairy is going to be up all night answering these questions." I don't even remember who it was, but I remember someone suggesting that it would make a cute children's book.

I did a little bit of research on

the ages that kids lose their teeth, what words are best that they can comprehend and how long a book for that age group should be. I then wrote down a first draft, whittled it down, edited it and let people read it. I had done a lot of reading about publishers and big publishing companies and I came to the realization that unless you have a literary agent that can get your book in front of Random House or any of the large publishers, self-publishing is the way to go. I worked with Stillwater Books, which at the time was in Pawtucket but now they're in West Warwick, and they kind of help with self-publishing. When it came time to get an illustrator, a good friend of mine Carla Mulhern, who I've known since college, said that her son Jonathan could probably illustrate this book.

I had seen his work before and he's a very, very talented artist. That's how Jonathan became my illustrator.

RD: You got this "Wise Guys of Comedy" show coming up at The Park Theatre, so what are your thoughts about it? I know that you produce your own comedy show called the "Royal Flush Comedy Show", so does going in with that experience give you a

different perspective?

AA: My "Royal Flush Comedy Show" came about between 12 and 15 years ago as just an idea that I had. At the time I started it, it seemed like everybody was trying to have some sort of themed show. I used my name to come up with this whole Royal Flush concept and I still do it at different places, but I've been taking a step back from the producing, although this year I'm looking at a few new venues that I'd like to do it in. When I was approached by the folks who do the Newport Comedy Series, who work closely with Spectacle Live, they were asked if I was interested in being part of this Italian-themed show. I said that I thought I'd be a good fit for it because I do a lot of material about growing up Italian, going to Catholic school and a lot of things that Italians, especially in Rhode Island, have gone through.

I'm looking forward to working with other comics I respect very much in Frank Santorelli and Brad Mastrangelo. I think it's going to be a really fun night and I think for any Italian-American they're really going to enjoy the show.



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Movies

with
Joyce & Don
Fowler



Best Movies of 2024

The Golden Globes have come and gone.

The Academy Awards are next. We are not fans of the Awards shows, seeing them as both political and boring.

We believe that there is no "best" actor or movie, and comparing performances is like comparing apples and oranges.

What we do know is that there are movies we like and movies we don't like, and there were fewer that we liked in 2024.

These are our favorites, in no particular order:

WICKED - Making a movie from a popular Broadway show is difficult, but this one works. A new star was born in this colorful, magical musical that could be enjoyed by the entire family.

EMILIA PEREZ - Making a serious movie musical about crime and gangs from another culture seems undoable, but this one is so unique and exciting that it works well and holds your interest to the exciting conclusion.

CONCLAVE - Ralph Fiennes plays one of the more convincing characters in a movie that exposes church politics and personal character and beliefs as a new pope is chosen, and we are shown the glorious pomp, circum-



Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo star in the film adaptation of the Broadway musical 'Wicked.'

stances, inadequacies and glory of the Catholic Church ritual.

THE SUBSTANCE - a "What If?" look at the world of glamour and staying young, the movie stars Demi Moore in a fabulous performance. While we thought the ending was a bit over the top, the movie had great performances and messages.

FLOW - An animated classic about a cat who must use all its cunning in surviving raging waters, the movie should be seen by every family.

THE BRUTALIST - While we haven't seen this three-and-a-half-hour movie yet, advance information entices us to see it this week.

Dark, daring, droll 'Hang' at Burbage

Theatre Review by
DON FOWLER

Three people enter a room with a table, four chairs, a water cooler and a huge mirror. Who are they, and why are they there? The who and why are slowly revealed over the next intense eighty minutes.

Director Lynne Colinson has chosen a play that challenges its actors, audience, and reviewer who must be careful not to reveal too much and spoil what is coming next.

Colinson has also chosen an actor (MJ Daly) who will have you rooting for her, even when you are not sure why. She is identified as One. The other two (Margaret Melozzi and Aaron Morris) appear to be in authority and given the task of getting an important decision out of her.

They appear nervous, incompetent and unable to handle their job. Number One challenges them at every turn, causing tense interactions.

Over the course of the give and take 80 minutes we learn what is going on. We also learn that Two and Three are incompetent and no match for Number One.

Now that I have you completely confused, let me assure you that you will start to figure out (For some it may take longer than others. . . and some may come to different conclusions).

Like good dramas, "Hang" will give you much to think about.

As Cool Hand Luke said, "What we have here is a failure to communicate". Melozzi and Morris are terrific in proving their inability to reach the smarter, more passionate Daly, who has become one of my favorite Rhode Island actors and proved her talents both in comedy roles and serious ones.

"Hang" is at Burbage Theatre in Pawtucket in partnership with WomensWork Theater Collaborative through February 16. Go online at Burbagetheatre.org for tickets and more information.

Matt Rife and Jonathan Van Ness join lineup of Lil Rhody Laugh Riot Comedy Festival

Lil Rhody Laugh Riot, Rhode Island's new four-day comedy festival taking over Providence from March 27-30, announced that comedy powerhouses Matt Rife and Jonathan Van Ness are joining the already stacked lineup of electric performers. Also, bringing their signature humor to the Capital City is Ashley Gavin, who joins Melissa Villaseñor and Sophie Buddle for "Triple the Laughs" at The VETS, as well as Des Bishop, performing for one night only at the Comedy Connection.

Anchored at the legendary Veterans Memorial Auditorium (The VETS) in Providence and branching out to stages across the city, including the Providence Performing Arts Center and RI Comedy Connection, this multi-day comedy showdown will deliver a symphony of laughs, unfiltered mayhem, and razor-sharp mic drops. Below are details on the newly added performances:

- **Des Bishop:** Thursday March 27 at 7:30pm - Comedy Connection
- **Matt Rife:** Saturday March 29 and Sunday March 30 at 7:00pm - Comedy Connection
- **Ashley Gavin:** Saturday March 29 at 7:00pm as part of Triple The Laughs - The VETS
- **Jonathan Van Ness:** Saturday March 29 at 9:45pm - The VETS

Previously announced headliners set to bring the laughs are Kevin Hart, Michael Blaustein, Leslie Jones, Aziz Ansari, Hannah Berner and Chris Distefano, along with Josh Johnson, Melissa Villaseñor, Tone Bell, Sophie Buddle, Alec Flynn, and Andy Woodhull.

In conjunction with the Lil Rhody Laugh Riot, the inaugural Providence Culinary Collective will take place the same weekend in various locations across the city. Presented by the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau (PWCVB), this first-of-its-kind food and wine festival will honor Providence's culinary legacy while reflecting the city's brand - modern, inclusive and cool.

Tickets are available now at <https://www.lilrhodylaughriot.com/>. Mark your calendar, grab some friends and prepare for a weekend full of comedy, connections, and laughter that makes the world feel a lil' bit lighter.

Follow Lil Rhody Laugh Riot on TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Threads, and X.



Rickie Ewton took up dancing as a break from her PhD science research. It's where she met her future husband, Connor Jaymes Dionne and together they went on to compete nationally. (Photos courtesy of Rickie Ewton)



■ Ewton (Continued from page 13)

carbon and how that can affect their size. The more carbon, the bigger the plankton, which in the food chain can lead to bigger fish.

Ewton is uncertain where her studies will lead her. The field of study is relatively new. Discoveries keep be-

ing made. She enjoys working with others in the field. She thinks her award will introduce her "to a whole network of bright and connected scientists" that will assist her in applying for funding grants.

Warwick is a special place to her. "I feel so connected to the Bay. I see it. I collect samples. I feel very much a part of it ... and I'm trying to figure out how the system works."



Rickie and Jaymes at their wedding with Jaymes' 93-year-old grandmother.

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An ordeal, but not a mini-vacation

My daughter, Marie, needed major surgery, so I flew in to take care of her. Since her home is quite lively—with her girlfriend, her girlfriend's elderly mom, and three energetic young kiddos—we decided it would be best for me to look after her while staying at a nearby hotel. I thought that part might even feel a bit fun, like a mini vacation.

I met Marie at the hospital, where her girlfriend had dropped her off before heading to her twelve-hour shift as an Amazon driver. As required by law, the hospital had arranged for an American Sign Language interpreter to assist Marie. While I'm a decent signer, I'm far from fluent, especially when it comes to medical terminology. Fortunately, the interpreter was someone who had worked with Marie before and was familiar with her mannerisms. This familiarity is crucial because interpreters are trained to convey not only words but also

Marie's nonverbal cues. For example, a shrug might be interpreted as "okay," a frown as "no," and a quizzical expression as a request to have the information rephrased for clarity.

The operation went smoothly, and I joined Marie and the interpreter in the recovery room, where my drowsy daughter was slowly coming out of anesthesia. While all the nurses and medical assistants we had encountered were wonderfully patient and accommodating of Marie's disability, the discharge nurse seemed a bit frustrated by the extra time it took for the interpreter to sign the instructions as they were read aloud. At one point, the nurse flipped the paper in her lap and remarked, "This is taking too long. Can't she just read them?" Well, no! Do other patients fresh out of surgery have to read their discharge instructions? Besides, even if she were fully alert, Marie's lower reading level might not have allowed

Life Matters



with
LINDA PETERSEN

her to understand the medical terms accurately.

Marie was discharged and an Uber driver took us to the hotel. The hotel was very accommodating, placing our room right at the top of the elevator. This was a huge help, as Marie's gait was slow and unsteady.

I did not get much sleep that first night, waking up intermittently to check on Marie or in response to her little moans. It brought me back to the days when my newborn son

slept in a cradle next to my bed, and I found myself listening intently for every little breath.

I adjusted her pillows, pulled back the covers if she was hot, and tucked her in if she felt chilly. I offered her sips of water when she was thirsty and pudding when she mentioned being hungry. I helped her out of bed to use the bathroom and made sure to give her the prescribed painkillers every six hours. By about five hours and fifty-five minutes, her moaning from the pain let me know just how much they were needed.

Each morning, I went downstairs to take advantage of the hotel's complimentary breakfast. I'd carefully load up a tray with muffins, a banana for each of us, two teas, two orange juices, two bowls of cereal with milk, and, as the pièce de résistance, bowls of yogurt topped with fresh strawberries. I did not feel like I was taking advantage of the hotel because we could have eaten all that at breakfast, but with Marie's

limited post-surgery appetite, we managed to stretch it out to last the entire day.

By the fourth day after surgery, Marie was feeling a bit better and sitting up more comfortably. I helped her out of bed to relax in a cozy chair by a sunny window, and the two of us spent time there playing independently on our iPads, playing Uno, and watching TV. We also followed her discharge instructions by walking together up and down the hotel corridor for 240 steps, the equivalent of 200 yards a day.

As Marie's appetite began to return, I placed a large delivery order from Walmart to ensure she had plenty to eat. The order included applesauce, pudding, microwaveable macaroni and cheese, and her favorites from the Beefaroni category. While not the healthiest options, they were comforting and worked perfectly in a pinch.

The week, however, was NOT a mini-vacation...

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By JENNIFER COATES

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Check out some of these mouth-watering combination platters:

- Islander Seafood Chow Mein
 - Four Happiness (Curious? Order it tonight!)
 - Islander Bird Nest
 - Cashew Vegetable Delight
 - Sauteed String Bean in Brown Sauce (for the vegetarians out there)
- These are but a few of the seemingly endless options available on Islander's menu. There is something for every palate, every appetite, every preference. The portion sizes are



This cozy dining room is spotless, comfortable, accommodating to parties of most any size (check out their banquet hall and their private dining room for your next group gathering) and always open for business!

heaping but there is a child-size menu for the restaurant's pint-sized diners as well.

For those with a fondness for American fare, you will also find plenty of classic favorites to choose from such as BLTs, Broiled Delmonico Steak, Club Sandwiches and Lobster Salads, to name a few. You will never, ever leave the Islander hungry. Never!

The Islander's full bar serves cold draft beer, along with a broad selection of wines, mixed, tropical and frozen drinks. Spend more time doing the things you love this winter and come in for a refreshing drink while watching your favorite New England teams play on one of the large screen TVs in the

restaurant's bar. You are always welcome here.

When you are planning a milestone anniversary, birthday party, wedding or baby shower or graduation celebration, consider booking one of the private, spacious, and comfortable function rooms here at the Islander. If you prefer, they will also cater your next special event with their extensive menu and guaranteed prompt delivery.

The Islander Restaurant is located at 2318 West Shore Road in Warwick. Hours are Sunday - Thursday 11:00 am to 10:00 pm, and Friday and Saturday from 11:00 am to 11:00 pm. For take-out or delivery, call 401-738-9861. Be sure to check them out on their website: www.theislanderrestaurant.com.



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Sports

Titans stun Pats, reclaim city bragging rights

Toll Gate pulls off 50-47 upset over Pilgrim

By WILLIAM GEOGHEGAN
Special to The Beacon

It was no surprise that Toll Gate's Jack Colvin felt comfortable in Pilgrim's gym Monday night.

"I remember being a kid, coming here with my dad," said Colvin, whose father, Ed, coached baseball and basketball at Pilgrim for many years and still teaches at the school. "I practically grew up on this court."

The real surprise was how much the whole Toll Gate team made itself at home.

Playing up a level in the face of a boisterous crowd, the visitors sprung an upset. Colvin pumped in five 3-pointers and the Titans built a stunning lead before holding off a furious charge by Pilgrim for a 50-47 victory.

"This is only my third experience with Pilgrim and Toll Gate, and I have to tell you, this place was really rocking," Toll Gate coach Richard Grenier said. "It was a real nice atmosphere. This is what high school sports should be about. Give Pilgrim credit. They had a nice comeback. I had a



Toll Gate's Jack Colvin, who led the team with 15 points in the win. (Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)

STUN - PAGE 20



The Pilgrim cheer team after last year's championship win. (Photos by Taylor Tatarian)

Pilgrim cheer looking to repeat

Pats aim for back-to-back championships, focusing on teamwork, strong routines this season

By LEXI WARBURTON
Special to the Beacon

Last year's state champions are back again for another season.

Pilgrim's cheer team was just getting started last year and hope to win

it all again this year to make them back to back champs. Competition cheer is cheerleading in a competitive setting while stunting, cheering and dancing. Each team competes a routine to a song of their choosing against different schools throughout

the state.

Head coach Taylor Levin, as well as assistants Halsey Gargano and Olivia Nardillio lead the Pilgrim cheer team and all go to great lengths

CHEER - PAGE 24

Roundup: Toll Gate girls pick up 1st win

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Toll Gate girls basketball team clinched its first victory of the season when it beat Lincoln 45-40 on Tuesday night.

Senior Mary McNulty led the way for the Titans with 13 points, followed by Addison Eddy with 11. McNulty also hauled in eight rebounds while Eddy recorded seven.

Pilgrim 50, Hope 37

The Pats picked up a big Division III win on Tuesday night. Lily Hall led Pilgrim with 11 points while Aliana Solis scored nine. Lia Wasilewski and Madison Tuirok each scored seven in the win as well.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Hendricken 53, Classical 49

The Hawks kept pace in the Division I playoff hunt by getting a pivotal road win against the defending state champs last week.

Jakob Reyes led the Hawks with 17 points while James Caldarella added 16 points. Michael D'Ambra also hit double figures with 10 points.

BOYS HOCKEY

Prout 5, Hendricken 3

The Hawks dropped a tough DI loss to Prout on Tuesday night at Thayer. Frank Tillinghast, Tiernan Leahy and Kolby Kanelos scored in the loss for Hendricken.

Pilgrim 3, Burrillville 2

The Pats picked up their first win of the season when they beat the Broncos on the road.

Jack Saylor, Chase DeGregorio and Nate Kane all scored for the Pats while DeGregorio, Kane, Ricky Cabral, Jackson Bromage, Chris Schifino and Paul Smith all recorded assists. Michael Bessette was sharp in net, stopping 29 of 31 shots faced.

East Greenwich/Toll Gate 7, North Kingstown 1

The EG/TG co-op held on to first place in DII with a big win over the Skippers.

Jack Kiernan led the way with a hat trick while Joe Andreozzi, Austen Dufresne, Timmy Madden and Nick Woods also scored. Brendan Darcey, Markus Rowe, Anthony Mazzeo and Brady Parks all recorded assists while goalie Cael Shanley saved 22 of 23 shots faced.

Toll Gate swims past Pilgrim, ready for postseason

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Toll Gate girls swim team topped rival Pilgrim 53-39 last week and is eyeing a strong finish to this season.

Toll Gate's relay team of Katelyn Watson, Sam Lin, Sam Barr and Tania Cruz-Urban won the 200 medley, while Watson won the 200 freestyle. Lin took first in the 200 IM, while Cruz-Urban placed first in the 50 free.

Barr won the butterfly event and then the 100 free. Tate Payne went on to win the 500 free for the Titans. Lin won the breaststroke, and Cruz-Urban, Payne, Watson and Lin



Toll Gate senior Katelyn Watson. (Beacon Media photo)



Athlete of the Week: Sam Lin

The Warwick Beacon's Athlete of the Week is Toll Gate swimmer Sam Lin. Lin has enjoyed a big season for the Titans and guided them to a win over Pilgrim last week. Lin was a member of the relay teams that won the 200 medley and 400 free, while also winning the IM and breaststroke individual. (Submitted photo)

SWIMS - PAGE 24



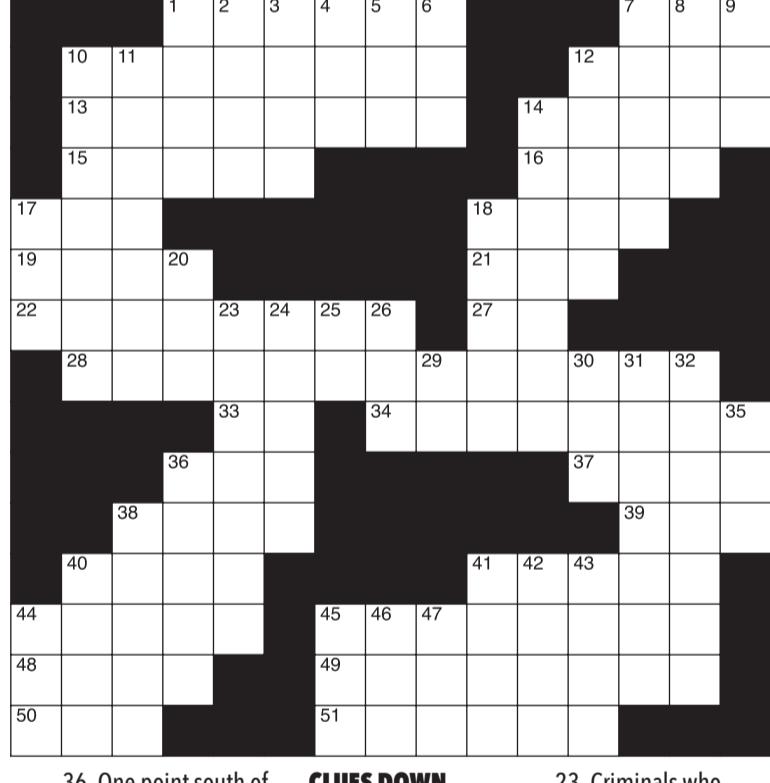
Pilgrim's Jack Bannon goes for a layup.



Toll Gate's Liam Leahy drives past Pilgrim's Jack Cirelli (above). Toll Gate's Brayden Healey battles with Pilgrim's Carter Clifton (below).



CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Where entertainers perform
- 7. Miller beer variety
- 10. Ageless
- 12. River in SE Europe
- 13. Able to be repaired
- 14. Type of wrap
- 15. Atomic #54
- 16. Type of tent
- 17. U.S. Treasury position
- 18. Opposed to
- 19. Protective covering
- 21. Bridge building degree
- 22. Clouding of the lens
- 27. Priestess of Hera loved by Zeus
- 28. Unacceptable
- 33. Mr. T's "The A-Team" character
- 34. American national park

- 36. One point south of due east
- 37. Assist in a crime
- 38. Greek mythological personification of Earth
- 39. A major division of geological time
- 40. German courtesy title
- 41. English family dating back to Norman times
- 44. Discounts
- 45. South American nation
- 48. Former Milwaukee Buck Michael
- 49. Hostile
- 50. Passports and drivers licenses are two
- 51. Discourages from doing

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Supreme god of ancient Egyptians
- 2. Nevada city
- 3. Energy, style and enthusiasm
- 4. Bird's beak
- 5. Language
- 6. Midway between south and southeast
- 7. Punjab village
- 8. Small biting flies
- 9. Sportscaster Patrick
- 10. A way to get around
- 11. Repeat
- 12. A way to cook with fat
- 13. Temporary loss of consciousness
- 17. Reciprocal of a sine
- 18. Fir tree genus
- 20. "Transformers" director Michael
- 23. Criminals who steal
- 24. Genus of leaf-footed bug
- 25. Music product
- 26. "Talk to you"
- 29. Santa says it three times
- 30. Doctors' group
- 31. African nation
- 32. Ageless
- 35. When you hope to get somewhere
- 36. Worn
- 38. Deprives of vigor
- 40. Used to have (Scottish)
- 41. Where you live
- 42. Muslim ruler title
- 43. Basics
- 44. Type of drug (abbr.)
- 45. Spanish soldier
- 46. It precedes two
- 47. Illuminated

■ Stun

(Continued from page 19)

lot of kids who were tired, a lot of kids who played 32 minutes. I think fatigue hurt us down the stretch. But we did what we had to do to pull it out."

Both teams have been among the best in their respective divisions this winter. Pilgrim came into Monday's game at 9-4 in Division II, while Toll Gate entered at 10-2 in D-III.

It was the Titans who took control, separating themselves in the second quarter and pushing the lead out to 20 in a dominant third quarter.

Colvin's 3-point range knew no limits, particularly when he powered Toll Gate's early move. He broke a 12-12 tie with a 3-pointer near the end of the first quarter, then buried three more in the second quarter, each one seemingly further back from the arc than the last.

"This is probably one of, if not the biggest game of my career so far," Colvin said. "It was something special. It was a real full-circle moment, seeing my dad in the stands when he used to take me to these games."

The hot shooting helped the Titans build a double-digit lead. Jack Larrivee drilled a 3 just before the halftime buzzer to put Toll Gate in front 34-21 at the break.

While it was bombs away for the Titans, the Patriots couldn't buy a basket. They missed a host of shots in the paint and were equally cold from outside. They managed just two field goals in the second quarter.

"We shot 7-for-31 in the first half and we were 0-for-13 from 3," Pilgrim coach Sean Henseler said. "That's tough to come back from. And we didn't shoot it well in the third quarter either."

It seemed impossible that the Patriots' cold shooting would last all night, and it didn't - but it went on a lot longer than they expected. The Patriots didn't score through the first 6:57 of the third quarter. In the meantime, Toll Gate got two driving buckets from Liam Leahy in a 7-0 run that pushed the lead to 20.

"We've been playing defense all year," Grenier said. "Some of my old West Warwick teams, we would try to out-score teams. Here at Toll Gate, we're just a scrappy defensive team. We have some guys who can shoot, but we do a lot on the defensive end. To be able to hold Pilgrim to 21 points until the end of the third quarter, I give a lot of credit to the kids that were out there. We didn't allow too much penetration until the very end and that was the key - forcing them to take outside shots."

The Titans stayed comfortably in front even into the fourth quarter. Colvin's fifth 3-pointer of the night made it an 18-point lead with just 4:15 remaining and felt like the dagger.

Instead, Pilgrim lifted itself off the mat. Derrick Butler got a 3-pointer to

fall with 4:01 left, and the Patriots ramped up their defensive pressure. Turnovers on three straight Toll Gate possessions led to three consecutive buckets by Dylan Vale, which made it an eight-point game. Carter Clifton scored inside with 1:59 left to make it 50-44, and Vale buried a 3-pointer with 45 seconds remaining to get Pilgrim within three at 50-47. The crowd was buzzing.

"It's an unreal experience," Colvin said. "The fans, the student sections. It was a great run by them. You couldn't even hear yourself think. That's a great atmosphere."

Leahy was fouled with 18 seconds left and missed both free throws, keeping the door open for the Patriots. Butler got a good look on a 3-pointer from the right wing as the clock ticked under 10 seconds but missed it. Clifton grabbed the offensive rebound, and the ball eventually got to Vale for a tough 3-point try at the top of the key. He just missed it as the buzzer sounded.

"The kids gave themselves a chance," Henseler said. "They didn't quit. We had a good look here at the end. And then we had an OK look on the last shot. But listen, you can't win when you shoot it like that."

Toll Gate didn't score for the final 4:15 of the game - and was on the wrong end of a 15-0 run as a result - but held on for the signature win.

Fans celebrated on the court after the final buzzer and one fan from the Toll Gate section ran to the Pilgrim student section, but Pilgrim officials quickly de-escalated the situation. The teams were not involved in the extracurriculars.

Colvin's 15 points led Toll Gate. Brayden Healey added 12 points. Damola Oremosu had a big second half and finished with nine points while Leahy scored eight.

Vale led the Pilgrim comeback and led all scorers with 22 points. Clifton chipped in 10.

The win gives Toll Gate bragging rights and a nice boost in the RIIIL power rankings.

"It means everything," Colvin said. "Losing to them back to back years and pretty bad losses - to come out here and give 110 percent is the best."

The game was the start of a big week for the Patriots, who also have D-II leader North Providence on the schedule. They're hoping to learn from the defeat.

"I told the kids, 'You're not going to think so because this is a rivalry game and it's for bragging rights,' but in the long run, this is going to be better for our team that we had this experience," Henseler said. "We haven't had this yet - having to come from behind. They see that it's doable. They didn't quit. As a coach, while I'm disappointed, I do think something positive can come from this."

Check ice before fishing or skating, ponds stocked with trout

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Now that it is cold all need to be mindful of ice on ponds and lakes that may look safe but is not. Check with local cities and towns to find out if ice is safe to fish or skate on and use the safety tips offered on state websites before you walk out on ice.

Ice must have a uniform thickness of at least six inches before it is considered safe by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. It generally takes at least five to seven consecutive days of temperatures in the low 20s. However, safe ice is determined by several factors such as the size and depth of a pond, presence of springs or currents, and local temperature fluctuations.

For safe ice tips visit www.mass.gov/service-details/ice-strength-and-safety. In Rhode Island, visit the DEM Division of Parks and Recreation 24-hour ice information line at 401.667.6222. A safe ice guide can be found at www.riparks.com. As of Monday morning, no RI State Park ponds or lakes were declared safe by the State.

Ponds stocked with trout

The State of Massachusetts has a great interactive make that lets you know what ponds were stocked and when. For example, Whiting Pond and Falls Pond in North Attleborough were stocked in September. For a complete list of trout stocked ponds in Massachusetts visit Mass Wildlife at Trout stocking report | Mass.gov.

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is conducting winter trout and salmon stocking. Stocking will be in selected areas weather permitting and began this week.

Starting January 21 Rhode Island planned to stock a total of thirteen ponds. As of Monday morning, January 27, the State's website related Carbuncle Pond, Coventry; Meadow Brook Pond, Richmond; Watchaug Pond, Charlestown; Wyoming Pond, Hope Valley; Silver Spring Lake, North Kingstown; Barber Pond, South Kingstown; and Round Top Ponds, Burrillville had been stocked. Visit Designated Trout Waters | Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management for daily updates.

Fisheries Commission to meet February 4 and 5

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's 2025 Winter Meeting will be held February 4 - 5, 2025 at The Westin Crystal City, Arlington, VA. This will be a hybrid meeting (both in-person and remote) to allow for participation by Commissioners and interested stakeholders.

The ASMFC manages many of the species anglers like to catch, eat and/or release including summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, bluefish and striped bass.

Of particular interest to anglers will be the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board meeting taking place Tuesday, February 4, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Two key items on the agenda include a review of the proposed 2027 Benchmark Stock Assessment schedule as well as a discussion on the scope of Draft Amendment II for 2026 striped bass measures which will determine regulations for 2026. Regulations for this year (2025) will be the same as last year, one fish/person/day at a slot size of 28" to less than 31".

Visit 2025 Winter Meeting Materials Combined for meeting materials and to live-stream the meeting visit <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1665035982583617623>

(Webinar ID 606-647-923); and to call in dial +1 (562) 247-8422, access code 709-788-



Ice fishing can be lots of fun, but both fishers and skaters, should check with towns to make sure the ice is safe. Largemouth bass photo supplied by the MA DEP.



873.

Offshore wind put on hold except for approved projects, new BOEM guidelines

This week President Trump issued an executive order to temporarily halt offshore

wind lease sales in federal waters and pause approvals, permits and loans for both on-shore and offshore wind projects. Off Massachusetts and Rhode Island waters, wind-farms that are already being built or have received final approval will likely continue to be built such as Revolution Wind and Vine-

yard Wind (now under construction); and South Coast Wind south of Nantucket, which recently received final approval from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM).

The Associated Press reported this week, "The interior secretary will review wind leasing and permitting practices for federal waters and lands. The assessment will consider the environmental impact of wind projects on wildlife, the economic costs associated with the intermittent generation of electricity, and the effect of subsidies on the viability of the wind industry."

The order does not pertain to projects in State waters such as the Block Island Wind Farm that has been operating for a few years now.

Also, last week The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has finalized guidance aimed at mitigating the impacts of offshore wind energy projects on commercial and for-hire recreational fisheries. BOEM's final guidance provides a national framework for addressing social and economic impacts on the fishing industry affected by offshore wind development.

This comprehensive final guidance, informed by extensive public input, establishes clear processes for the offshore wind industry to address potential disruptions to fisheries. It ensures consistency and promotes fair treatment of fishers, regardless of their home or landing port.

The guidance emphasizes early engagement and transparency with fishing communities, encouraging lessees to document interactions. Recommendations in the guidance address design considerations, safety protocols, and financial compensation processes. Compensation measures extend through construction, early operations, and decommissioning, ensuring comprehensive coverage for affected fisheries.

For more information about the guidance, visit BOEM's website at: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/reducing-or-avoiding-impacts-offshore-wind-energy-fisheries>

Where's the bite?

Cod. Last week Fishing Machine Charters, Pt. Judith, RI at www.fishingmachinecharters.com hooked up with cod in the Cox Ledge wind farm area. Capt. Mike O'Grady said, "We put together a nice catch of cod and choggies with even a few pollack. We will be sailing open boat cod and choggies trips thru the winter when the weather allows us." So, if you are interested in getting out on a boat to fish cod is a good option. In addition to Capt. O'Grady's open boat, large party boats are fishing too. Vessels generally sail between 5 a.m. and 7 a.m. and return in the afternoon. Visit www.islandcurrent.com and www.francesfleet.com. Fishing. Full day rates for vessels are generally \$130 to \$135 per adult and around \$80 for those under 12 years old.

Freshwater fishing. This recent cold spell will be great for ice fishers. Cold weather will continue to freeze things over. Beech Pond in Exeter, RI and Voluntown, RI continues to have fishable ice with anglers putting their time in and catching fish there. For a complete list of trout stocked ponds in Massachusetts and Rhode Island see links in above article.

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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Midseason report on our winter teams

We're at the midseason point for winter sports, well, maybe a little beyond the halfway mark, and there has been plenty to digest as we gear up for the playoff push the next few weeks.

Here are some takeaways: In Division I boys basketball, I felt pretty strongly that Classical would be the odds-on favorite to win it all again. Sure, La Salle and Hendricken would be in the mix, but I felt pretty good that the Purple would repeat as four of their five starters returned from last year's state championship roster.

At this point, the Rams have been the best team in the state as they sit at 10-0, Hendricken got revenge by beating the defending champs last week, and both Central and Barrington have had their moments and sit firmly in the playoff race.

Although I am not backing down from my original take that Classical will repeat, the Rams have proven to be the better unit by beating the Purple, Hawks and Eagles. They beat Classical by two points, though, and Hendricken earned a hard fought win in Providence last week. Division I, for now, is wide open.

Johnston has had a tough go in its first season in DI. A rebuilding season was to be expected for the

Panthers, who graduated their entire starting lineup and moved up. Johnston has yet to get a win, so the goal from here should be to simply improve and lay a foundation for growth next year.

The Pilgrim boys have been strong in Division II as they set their sights on a deep run with an experienced, well-rounded group. The team is 5-3 in league play and 11-5 overall. Dylan Vale and Carter Clifton remain one of the best duos in the league and Jack Bannon and Jack Cirelli have been consistent producers behind them. The Pats have gotten so-so results against teams ahead of them in the standings, so there is still one step to be taken before we call them bona fide championship contenders, but there is plenty of time for them to make that progress. Cranston West is at 5-8 in DII with a brand new starting lineup, so it will be interesting to see how far guys like Noah Germain can take this group and if it can be a factor down the stretch.

Toll Gate has found itself a home in Division III and has been hanging in the top-5 of the division all winter. The team moved down from DII this season and has felt the benefits immediately. Brayden Healy and transfer Damola Oremosu have been arguably the best front court in the

My pitch



by ALEX SPONESELLER SPORTS EDITOR
ALEXS@RHODYBEAT.COM

division while Jack Colvin and Liam Leahy have been strong in the back court. Similar to the aforementioned Patriots, the Titans have struggled at times against the top few teams, but Toll Gate certainly has the pieces to insert itself into the championship conversation. By the way, the Titans beat the Pats in a cross-over thriller on Monday, further making their case as a DIII power.

Our top girls basketball team has been Pilgrim as it has returned to prominence this year after a season away.

The Pats have been excellent this season and have been led by a large group of sophomores, which makes this success even more impressive. Lily Hall has been the leader as a senior, but sophomores Madison Tuirok, Skylar Hawes and Maddison Be-

langer, among others, have filled out the rest of the lineup and have provided a spark. The Pats entered the week at 6-2 and in third place, with their only losses coming to first and second place Prout and Lincoln School. The game against Prout was a dog-fight, but Lincoln School won by a wider margin. Point being, the question in DIII appears to be, can anyone beat the undefeated Lynx? Pilgrim will be right in the mix to reach the finals, but can one of these teams pull off the upset?

We have a few boys hockey teams that have had interesting seasons to this point.

To start, the defending champion Bishop Hendricken Hawks have not skipped a beat after graduating a big senior class headlined by MVP Griffin Crain. Mason Crain and the new leaders have remained a top team and beat the rival Rams last week. Moses Brown entered the week in first place and dealt the Hawks their only loss. Division I is up for grabs, and the Hawks are right at the top ready to go for it.

We have two teams in Division II with championship aspirations.

The East Greenwich-Toll Gate co-op dropped down this season and has had fantastic results, entering the week in first place. Joe

Andreozzi and Jack Kiernan would be top players on any Division I unit, and guys like Brady Parks, Brady Slinn and Wyatt Gelzhiser have enjoyed breakout years behind them. There are legitimately 6-8 teams that have what it takes to win a title, but EG-TG could be the top dog.

Also in that mix is the Cranston co-op. After a 1-3 start, the Falcons have bounced back and sit at 5-4. Devin DeAngelis has been one of the best scorers in the state and Cranston's offense has been sharp as of late, as has freshman goalie Bryce Crance. Consistency will be key for this team because if it stays hot, anything can happen the rest of the way. The offense runs three lines deep, the defense has a legitimate top line, and Crance has been solid as a freshman. All the pieces are in place for this team to catch fire and make a run.

The Cranston East-West girls swimming co-op has remained unbeaten and in first place as we approach the end of the regular season. For the girls, who have been led by Bianca Asencio and Elaine Wu, their regular season finale is against undefeated West-erly. The regular season title will likely come down to the final meet of the year, setting up what could be a fun division championship the following week.

Locals shine on track for RIC

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Junior Tayshia Cary (Wakefield) set a new program record and finished first in the 60m (7.89) as the Rhode Island College women's track and field team competed at the Wheaton College Lyons Invitational on Saturday afternoon. Cary also finished first as part of the 4x200m relay team (1:46.71).

Freshman Quiana Pezza (Cranston) finished first in both the 4x200m relay (1:46.71) and the long jump (4.98m), second in the triple jump (10.73m) and fifth in both the

60m (8.07) and the 200m invite (27.14).

Fifth-year Trinity Hayes (Providence) finished first in the 4x200m relay (1:46.71), second in both the 200m invite (26.37) and the 400m (1:00.15) and 10th in the 60m (8.37). Freshman Bendu Kamara (Pawtucket) finished first in the 4x200m relay (1:46.71), 11th in the 200m invite (28.66) and 16th in the 60m (8.65).

Sophomore Lexie Zakrzewski (Taunton, Mass.) won the 600m (1:50.52). Senior Samantha Sainristil (Cranston) finished second both in the shot (11.14m) and the

weight throw (14.02m).

Sophomore Marlyn Dunlop (Providence) finished second in the 200m open (31.12) and 13th in the 400m (1:16.00). Junior Haley Oliver (Coventry) finished second in the 800m (2:23.97).

Junior Bethanie Jean-Phillipe (Cranston) finished third in the long jump (4.72m). Freshman Grace Lane (North Smithfield) finished third in the 600m (1:52.82).

Sophomore Shirley Portillo (North Providence) finished fourth in the 600m (1:54.08). Freshman Funmilayo Mclin (Providence)

finished eighth in the weight throw (11.32m).

Junior Milana Melvin (Johnston) finished ninth in the weight throw (10.85m) and 13th in the shot (8.93m). Junior Sasha Sainristil (Cranston) finished 10th in the triple jump (9.32m) and 11th in the long jump (3.73m).

Freshman Mariangely Rodriguez (Providence) finished 13th in the weight throw (9.64m). Freshman Gianna Wilson (Pawtucket) finished 15th in the 800m (2:52.81). Junior Valeria Uribe Calderon (Central Falls) finished 16th in the 800m (3:18.44).

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841 Plainfield Pike	Mortgage Assets Mgmt LLC	Alpha Holdings LLC	1/7	\$156,000	14 Pensacola St	Paradis, Zachary L	Carlson, Kalyan D	1/6	\$393,000
87 Sherwood Valley Ln	Tempo Holdings LLC	Whitfield, John E	1/6	\$240,000	170 Long St	Murgo, Jennifer M	Cortazo, Juan C	1/6	\$380,000
899 Hammet Rd	Cayouette, James M and Cayouette, Tammy J	Lambert, Jennifer	1/7	\$564,900	18 Kernick St	Wanczyk, Stanley E	Linhphanit, Linda	1/6	\$310,000
CRANSTON					215 Ottawa Ave	Orion LLC	Driven Rlty LLC	1/3	\$285,000
1 Park View Blvd	Nunez, Laury M and Nunez, Saulo N	Duncan, Kevon	1/6	\$446,000	24 Craig Rd	Kathi E Moter T and Moter, Kathi E	Emmett, Kyle	1/3	\$400,000
100 Packard St	Silvestri Nancy J Est and Havican, Michael D	Watt, Caitlyn T	1/3	\$375,000	2545 W Shore Rd	Tsimikas, George and Tsimikas, Joyce	Harvey, Calene	1/3	\$408,000
101 Warman Ave	Ryan, Cecile M	Faivre, Megan M	1/3	\$180,000	509 Squantum Dr	Phillips, Thomas E and Phillips, Carrie E	Caperton, Daniel and Caperton, Lisa	1/6	\$370,000
101 Warman Ave	Terenzi Linda A Est and Ryan, Cecile M	Faivre, Megan M	1/3	\$180,000	565 Sandy Ln	Sousas Houses To Hm LLC	Bustamante, Elvia Y and Rodas, Miguel A	1/6	\$412,000
106 Fountain Ave	Rodriguez, Hilario and Rodriguez, Karina	Sandoval, Rene A and Ojeda, Diana	1/10	\$460,000	59 Wentworth Ave	Decesare Concetta Est and Decesare, Daniel A	Durand Transportation LLC	1/7	\$276,000
11 Dixwell Ave	Cote, Scott L	Degarcia, Candida C and Garcia, Ramon H	1/3	\$435,000	7 Woodridge Dr	Sheehan 4th, Christopher J and Sheehan, Karissa R	Kristen B Miranda Relt and Miranda, Kristen B	1/3	\$585,000
112 Scenic Dr	Mcgee, Edward W	Natale, Joseph J	1/6	\$338,000	86 Farnum Rd	Lussier Margaret M Est and Johnston, Michelle A	Lgc Hm Improv & Masonry I	1/6	\$307,500
116 Greenwood St	Mealey, David J	Lambert Jr, Raymond A	1/10	\$555,000	90 Huron St	French Jr, Thomas E	Mandeville Prop LLC	1/3	\$90,000
127 Columbia Ave	Ford, Donald P	Broccoli, Jarrod P and Broccoli, Rae S	1/10	\$700,000	WEST GREENWICH				
149 Yeoman Ave	Federal Natl Mtg Assn	Federal Natl Mtg Assn	1/6	\$356,181	WEST WARWICK				
157 Alto St	Bongiorno, Annie and Rodriguez, Wilmer	Varela, Noel R and Nunez, Karina I	1/9	\$550,000	259 Robin Hollow Rd	Bailey, Michael	Billias, Christopher	1/9	\$430,000
17 Fairview Ave	Spada, Matthew and Osborn, Leslie	Luong, Minh T and Greenwald, Timothy	1/10	\$586,500	WEST WARWICK				
200 Cannon St Lot 139	Rego, Duarte M	Rimal, Dikshyanta	1/8	\$290,000	1236 Main St	Matos Ft and Matos, Jose F	Day Dream LLC	1/9	\$1,100,000
21 Geranium Cir	Giardina, Joseph R	Belhumeur, Amy L	1/3	\$491,500	178 Cowesett Ave	Geary Rita M Est and Laurence, Earlene P	Sylvia, Paul D and Sylvia, Kelly	1/10	\$370,000
24 Cherry Rd	Joly, Frank J and Joly, Cynthia	Williamson, Winsor P	1/8	\$380,000	57 W Valley Cir Lot 57	Residences At West Vly In	Boucher, Charles and Boucher, Nancy	1/10	\$463,150
37 Brookfield Dr	Saint Laurent, George P and Saint Laurent, Elizabeth R	Vaca, Andrea E	1/10	\$399,000	WEST WARWICK				
45 Berry St Lot 918	Wac & Family LLC	Blue Ladder Dev LLC	1/7	\$1,050,000	1236 Main St	Matos Ft and Matos, Jose F	Day Dream LLC	1/9	\$1,100,000
45 Berry St Lot 919	Wac & Family LLC	Blue Ladder Dev LLC	1/7	\$1,050,000	178 Cowesett Ave	Geary Rita M Est and Laurence, Earlene P	Sylvia, Paul D and Sylvia, Kelly	1/10	\$370,000
45 Berry St Lot 973	Wac & Family LLC	Blue Ladder Dev LLC	1/7	\$1,050,000	57 W Valley Cir Lot 57	Residences At West Vly In	Boucher, Charles and Boucher, Nancy	1/10	\$463,150
454 Park Ave	Acevedo, Julio and Paula, Gladys	Mesa, Carlos H	1/3	\$460,000	WEST WARWICK				
56-58 Brandon Rd	Brennan, Sandra J and Brennan, Michael J	Velasquez, Baldomero	1/10	\$610,000	1236 Main St	Matos Ft and Matos, Jose F	Day Dream LLC	1/9	\$1,100,000
60 Norfolk St	Macleay, Mary P	Reynoso, Josue and Reynoso, Julia	1/8	\$341,500	178 Cowesett Ave	Geary Rita M Est and Laurence, Earlene P	Sylvia, Paul D and Sylvia, Kelly	1/10	\$370,000
60 Norfolk St	Sullivan Nancy L Est and Maclean, Mary P	Reynoso, Josue and Reynoso, Julia	1/8	\$341,500	57 W Valley Cir Lot 57	Residences At West Vly In	Boucher, Charles and Boucher, Nancy	1/10	\$463,150
66 E Hill Dr	Gertrude G Katz Lt and Katz, Debra M	Petropoulos, Georgia and Petropoulos, Peter	1/10	\$960,000	WEST WARWICK				
EAST GREENWICH					WEST WARWICK				
119 Pine Glen Dr Lot 119, Ledonne, Daniel		Hamor, Mary E	1/8	\$485,000	WEST WARWICK				

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Pilgrim cheer captains Liana Bannon and Taylor Tatarian.

■ Cheer

(Continued from page 19)

to help their team succeed.

Coach Levin stated, "We hope the team first and foremost has a fun, memorable season. We strive and expect our cheerleaders to maintain good attitudes, be willing to work hard, and attend all practices, games, and competitions."

When asked about expectations for this season. The coaches set up their team for great wins, while also maintaining a fun and lighthearted atmosphere.

Coach Levin also shared that part of the team's success can come from "mat talk," which is "when our alternate cheerleaders, coaches, and alumni all provide vocal support to the cheerleaders on mat. Words of encouragement when pushing through a full out and repping out skills provides motivation for the team."

These words of encouragement pushes them to do their best, while still feeling like someone is cheering them on at all times.

This year's captains are Liana Bannon and Taylor Tatarian.

Liana and Taylor both take a different approach to captaining, but still are great friends and come together in the best way to offer help and support for their teammates and each other.

Liana referred to herself as more of a strict captain when it comes to getting stunts, dance moves, or cheers right. While Taylor, tries to take a more calm approach to help her teammates correct their mistakes.

Taylor stated that an overall team goal this season is to "put on one of our hardest routines and execute it well ... we would like to show that our program is advancing."

Taylor and Liana both have that similar goal in mind for this year and both have high hopes that it will be achieved. Taylor also shared that although their competitions started in December, they start preparing for their competitions in the summer, in order to have the best routine for their team.

Community Champion Series: Sadie Martiesian

By **BRETT TAYLOR**
Special to the Beacon

Meet this week's Community Champion, Sadie Martiesian.

Sadie is a freshman at Lafayette College where she is currently on the lacrosse team. Sadie graduated from the Wheeler School just last year, where she was a star on the lacrosse team.

Growing up in Pawtuxet Village, Sadie's dream was to play the sport she loved at the highest collegiate level. Once she achieved this task, she realized it was time to educate others about the great sport of lacrosse.

Sadie was able to perform this task this past summer when she and fellow Rhode Island lacrosse players ventured to the country of Armenia to teach the country's children about lacrosse. With the help of the MAM school, Sadie and her fellow lacrosse ambassadors began to showcase the basic rules of lacrosse.

"Getting to spend time with the young children in the villages of Armenia was such a special opportunity. I enjoyed bonding with the kids over our love for sports, movies, and music," said Martiesian.

Sadie is now weeks away from the start of her freshman year of college lacrosse and focused on the upcoming season. Yet, based on her experience this past summer in Armenia, she will never forget the opportunity she had to spread the game of lacrosse overseas and meet so many interesting people willing to learn a new sport.

Here is a Q&A with Martiesian:

BT: Looking back, what advice would you give your younger self?

SM: I would tell myself to always be confident. Believe in yourself more and trust your abilities. Confidence doesn't mean knowing all the answers, it means being willing to try, make mistakes, and grow. Don't let the fear of failing hold you back. Speak up, even when you're unsure, because your voice matters. Confidence isn't about being perfect; it's about showing up and being proud of who you are.

BT: Beyond your achievement in sports, what inspires you to give back to your community as well as encourage others to do the same?

SM: Growing up, I was inspired by young athletes around who gave their time, energy, and support to others. Watching their selflessness showed me the power of community and the difference that bonding through a



Sadie Martiesian and local lacrosse players on their trip to Armenia. (Submitted photo)

shared activity could have. Their example taught me the importance of paying it forward, so I aim to follow in their footsteps. Going to Armenia, I wished to inspire others to believe in themselves, through the game of lacrosse. While being in Armenia, I got to learn more about my culture while bonding with children in villages through the sport that I love so much. "Getting to spend time with the young children in the villages of Armenia was such a special opportunity. I enjoyed bonding with the kids over our love for sports, movies, and music artists."

BT: You, as a coach and athlete, continue to be a positive influence on your players and encourage them to make a difference in their community. What are some examples of the contributions made?

SM: This trip to Armenia was just the beginning of what I hope leads to many trips ahead. Getting to spend time with the young children in the villages of Armenia was such a special opportunity. I enjoyed bonding with the kids over our love for sports, movies, and music artists. Relating lacrosse to sports like basketball and soccer which the kids are so familiar with was something extra special for me as well because those are two sports I love as well!

■ Swims

(Continued from page 19)

combined to win the 400 free relay.

Pilgrim's relay team of Hannah Fitzpatrick, Amelia Holmes, Abby Killilea and Taylor Mooney won the 200 free relay. Pilgrim's Juliana Kavanagh took first in the backstroke.

The Titans improved to 3-3 with the win and have high hopes for the upcoming division championships and state championships. Leading the way this winter have been seniors Watson and Barr, while Lin has been enjoying a breakout season as a junior.

"The girls have done excellent. It's a small team with only 10 girls, but

we've been competitive in every meet. Even if they haven't won all the events, we've been in every meet and have come away with some great swims and they have won their fair share of races," said Toll Gate coach Regina Hand. "They are training hard every day. They show up, work hard and have gotten progressively stronger in their specific events. I'm feeling very confident heading into divisions."

The Titans were moved up after the Rhode Island Interscholastic League eliminated the Division IV group in its latest realignment. Although the Titans are facing tougher competition this winter with a small group, the results have been promising as they ap-

proach the end of the regular season.

The team will be in full force for the division championships and is expected to be sending its relay teams to states, along with Lin, who is on track to compete in several individual events.

Hand hopes to see the Titans swim their best in the postseason, with beating their personal records being the goal.

"A successful end would be the girls swimming their personal bests. Their times have dropped throughout the season, but there's another level," said Hand. "When you go to championship meets, you want your best, you want to push yourself and see how far you can go."



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