



Cranston Herald

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2022

2 SECTIONS • 28 PAGES • \$1.00



HEART OF THE VILLAGE: Pawtuxet Park is a gathering point for many events from concerts to the colonial encampment during Gaspee Days and the Christmas tree lighting. Here people join at the tree for a memorial luminaria hosted by Friends of Pawtuxet Village held this month. (Photo Courtesy of Marta V. Martínez)

What are appropriate CPS books?

School library policy explains book selection, provides appeal process

By EMMA BARTLETT

Those who don't approve of a certain book in Cranston Public Schools' libraries, they may soon be able to object through an official format. Librarians in Cranston Public Schools have created a policy that explains the mission and vision of libraries in Cranston, the procedures of how books are selected and purchased, and what the appeal process is if someone questions a book's presence on school shelves. The policy goes before the School Committee for a vote in January.

"You see in the news that there are some places where people come into the school and object to a particular book. So, it's helpful to have a reconsideration policy where we have a procedure if someone objects to a particular book or materials we are utilizing," said Assistant Superintendent Norma Cole at the School Committee's Dec. 12 meeting.

The district has not received any complaints, but CPS Librarian Ellen Basso wants to make sure CPS is prepared.

"When all of these challenges started happening in other parts of our state, I wanted to make sure our district was ready for this," Basso told School Committee members.

Basso explained that the district's proposed policy is based on the Code of Ethics from the American Library Association (ALA) and the Library Bill of Rights. Basso told School Committee members that she did a lot of research and found samples of how to create a policy and procedures for districts from the ALA. She also referenced other Rhode Island districts' policies that School Committees approved – such as Westerly Public Schools (WPS). Basso then reviewed the proposed policy with librarians followed by CPS's administration.

If someone does not approve of a book in the school library, there would be an appeal process in asking for its removal; a request for reconsideration form would be included in the policy. A copy of the proposed policy was not shared with the Cranston Herald at this time. The policy will be available publicly should it be approved.

BOOKS - PAGE 14

That special feelin'

Village spirit at all times of year

By JOHN HOWELL

Ray Verrocchio has been at the center of Pawtuxet for the past five years. As the proprietor of Bagel Express and Deli, he gets the morning crowd and fills up on village chatter. On the other side of the bridge, Amy Chaffee gets ready for the lunch crowd at O'Rourke's Bar and Grill. She knows many of the clientele by first name and if she doesn't she's sure to know it by the time they leave.

Ray and Amy have the village pulse and they love the beat at this time of year.

Ray paused to share his thoughts Sunday morning as customers enjoyed their coffee and scones, or whatever they had selected from the glass cases, over the newspaper or watching the commentary leading up to the World Cup playoff between Argentina and France. People weren't buried in their cell phones, but rather engaged in conversation.

Don Foster, who was by himself in a corner table, could have been dubbed the referee. He seemed to be in tune with all the conversations simultaneously. He chimed in when Gerry Quaranto described how his brother, Kenny, is doing in the wake of operations to his leg. And Foster nodded as Ray talked about Christmas in Pawtuxet.

"It actually gets a little slower," Ray said of the business. That doesn't bother him.

"Everyone comes out here. Everyone is involved and they have the holiday spirit."

He points to the lighting of the village Christmas tree in Pawtuxet Park and how the Pawtuxet Rangers led off the event, marching to the park. There has been caroling and the lighting of the Menorah. The park has also featured luminaria with the names of deceased family and friends.

Last year Ray had Santa visit the shop to share stories and the Christmas spirit. This year he set up collections for Toys for Tots and for food donations. And to share the holiday spirit with his employees, Ray and a friend and operator of a

VILLAGE - PAGE 13

Local children's book is a hoot

By STEPHANIE BERNABA

Joanne Evans of Cranston never saw herself as busy as she is today. A mother of four, new grandma, and soon-to-be two-time children's author, Evans is jogging to keep up with the pace of her new life.

On July 19, Evans' first book, "Hey There Little Owl... Do You Know Who Loves You?" was released, and Joanne's life became very interesting. Joanne has been reading her book at daycares, has sat for interviews and attended the Rhode Island Author Expo on Dec. 3, which she says she enjoyed very much.

"I had several book orders," Evans explained, "and I saw friends I haven't seen in a while. I got lots of support, so it was great."

Evans has been working in and around schools, camps and organizations like the Girl Scouts for most of her career. She has a degree in Early Childhood Education, and explained that she has had many roles in educational settings such as teacher assistant and substitute teacher. Her last role in an educational environment was kindergarten teacher assistant.

"I've been just constantly with kids. I love kids. So writing a children's book was easy for me," she said.

"Hey There Little Owl" is not only an engaging children's book, but it is, and perhaps more importantly, an homage to her mother, who passed away from Alzheimer's disease at the height of the pandemic.

"I kind of put the two together," Evans said.

AUTHOR - PAGE 12

East to expand computer science offerings

School receives \$10,000 prize from Code.org

By STEPHANIE BERNABA

Cranston High School East administrators learned Dec. 7 that the school was chosen to receive a \$10,000 prize from Code.org to assist in the implementation of a Computer Science Career and Technical program.

After a lengthy application process spearheaded by Assistant Principal Kaitlin Hitchings, she learned that East was the Rhode Island secondary school chosen to receive this award. Code.org chose one elementary and one secondary school in each state and U.S. territory to be awarded this prize.

The program will focus primarily on coding and programming, allowing enrolled students the opportunity to take two Advanced Placement courses in the concentration as well as two dual-enrollment courses taught in conjunction with the University of Rhode Island.

Students, administration and the Cranston School Department all expressed excitement about adding a Computer Science concentration to the curriculum.

"Our schools are always expanding our teaching and learning initiatives in an effort to stay on the cutting edge of 21st century education," noted Superintendent Jeanine Nota-Masse. "We want to graduate students who are college and career ready, and this prize will help us to continue to offer outstanding opportunities to our students."



WHAT CODING CAREERS ARE OUT THERE? Cranston High School East and Dutemple Elementary School students watch a short video created by Code.org on Dec. 14, emphasizing the value of computer science-related careers. Cranston East was notified in December that the school won a \$10,000 prize to help further computer science education in secondary schools.

A recognition ceremony was held on Dec. 14, after Cranston East's Hour of Code, an initiative by Code.org encouraging educational institutions to take 60 minutes to

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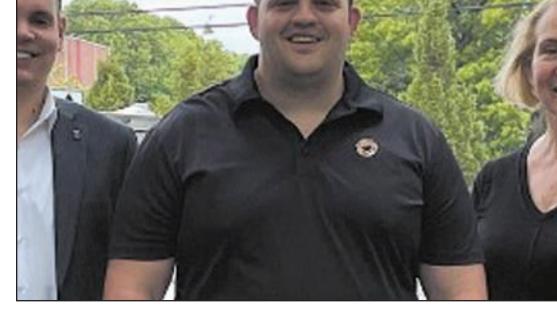
Cranston Chatter

RBG Contest

How Has Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG) Inspired Me? RWU Law Announces RBG Contest for K-12 Students – Rhode Island elementary, middle and high school students are invited to submit drawings, essays on how iconic U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has inspired them. Visit law.rwu.edu/events/essayart-contest-how-has-justice-ruth-bader-ginsburg-rbg-inspired-me for details. Contest Deadline: Jan. 31, 2023 by 5 p.m. Questions may be directed to RBGessay@rwu.edu.

CHATTER - PAGE 4

Erickson headed to Johnston



Cranston's Justin Erickson, who has served as the city's middle school athletic director for seven years, will be taking over at Johnston High School.

Sports, page 7

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² Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is effective as of 11/7/2022 and subject to change thereafter. \$1,000 minimum daily balance is required during each monthly cycle period to earn interest. Fees could reduce earnings. Substantial penalties for early withdrawal.

**A place for
coffee lovers**

Cafe Ava – a new family-owned Latin coffee shop – celebrated its grand opening on Friday at 48B Rolfe Square. The business is open Tuesday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. (From left) Xiomara Cabrera, Director of Economic Development Franklin Paulino, two-and-a-half-year-old Ava Cabrera, co-owners Andrea and Derek Cabrera, and Marivel Villavicencio. (Photo by Steve Popiel)

**POLICE LOG**

DUI
At 3:04 a.m. on Dec. 19, Cranston Police arrested Destiny Arnold, 28, of 767 Washington St., Apt. 5, Coventry, on charges of Driving Under the Influence – BAC Unknown (one count, first offense) and Refusal to Submit to a Chemical Test. The arrest was the result of an accident investigation in the area of 71 Carlton St. Arnold was issued a Third District Court release to appear.

At 7:59 p.m. on Dec. 15, Cranston Police arrested Tadeusz Dymek, 63, of 5 Asselin Ave., Webster, MA, on charges of DUI of Liquor – 0.15 or Greater (readings 0.194 and 0.190). The arrest was the result of a motor vehicle accident at the intersection of Pontiac Avenue and Route 37. Dymek was arraigned by the Justice of the Peace.

ASSAULT
At 2:12 p.m. on Dec. 17, Cranston Police arrested Ricardo Maldonado, 38, of 110 Broad St., Providence, on charges of Domestic Simple Assault and Domestic Disorderly Conduct. The arrest was the result of a call for service at 120 East St. Maldonado awaited arraignment by the Justice of the Peace.

WRONG WAY DRIVER
Impaired drivers caused two separate crashes overnight, one driving the wrong way on Route 37 and another striking a Rhode Island State Police Cruiser, according to Rhode Island State Police. On Dec. 17 at approximately 7:05 p.m., a 2017 Kia Optima entered onto Route 37 West traveling the wrong way (east) from Natick Avenue in Cranston. The operator, Jay J. Petit, 56, of 98 Williams Road, Oakdale, CT, continued along for just under half a mile in the second lane while passing multiple vehicles the wrong way. The operator then merged onto the exit-ramp from Route 295 North to Route 37 West, still traveling the wrong way, and travelled approximately 800 feet on the exit-ramp until it struck a second vehicle, a 2017 Honda Accord, head-on.

Petit fled the scene on foot and was later located and taken into custody. He was transported to Roger Williams hospital, charged with the following: Driving to Endanger Resulting in Personal Injury; Driving while Under the Influence of Intoxicating Liquor or Drugs Resulting in Serious

Bodily Injury – First Offense, BAC Unknown; Duty to Stop in Accident Resulting in Injury; Obstructing Officer in Execution of Duty; Refusal to Submit to a Chemical Test- First Offense. Petit was later arraigned by a Justice of the Peace and released to the care of Roger Williams Medical Center. The operator of the Honda Accord was transported to Rhode Island Hospital for treatment.

**OFFICER
OBSTRUCTION**
At 5:51 p.m. on Dec. 16, Cranston Police arrested Clifton Bunbury, 21, of 2185 Pacific St., Brooklyn, NY, on charges of Obstructing Officer in Execution of Duty. The arrest was the result of a call for service at Sneakers Spot on Atwood Avenue. Bunbury was arraigned by the Justice of the Peace.

At 7:30 a.m. on Dec. 14, Cranston Police arrested Brandon Rupe Bodden, 31, of 46 Westwood Ave., Cranston, on a Cranston Police Arrest Warrant for Larceny Over \$1,500 as a result of the suspect turning himself in at headquarters. Bodden was transferred to Third District Court for arraignment.

At 10:41 a.m. on Dec. 13, Cranston Police arrested Morayma Martinez Ruiz, 31, of 149 Delaine St., Providence

area of Atwood Avenue. O'Neill was arraigned by a Justice of the Peace and released.

WARRANT

At 11:38 p.m. on Dec. 18, Cranston Police arrested Edith Abreu, 27, of 861 Broad St., Providence, on an Arrest and Affidavit Warrant issued by Providence Police. The arrest was the result of a motor vehicle stop in the area of Narragansett Boulevard and Circuit Drive. Abreu was turned over to Providence Police.

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STEM Mentoring RI rebrands, introduces 2023 programming for youth

By EMMA BARTLETT

Running under the new name of STEM Mentoring RI, the organization – previously known as STEM Advantage – has announced its 2023 programs for youth. With the return of Energy Engineers in the spring and the World of Water and Environmental Stewardship in the summer, Ocean Exploration Adventures will be the latest addition for kids to engage in come the fall.

"It's [Ocean Exploration Adventures] going to be a deeper dive into looking at our ocean habitat," said Statewide STEM Advantage Coordinator Caitlyn Blankenship.

In the new program, youth will participate in hands-on activities and participate in project-based learning experiences that include real-life scenarios related to Mystic Aquarium's Animal Rescue Team and the impacts of climate change. Ocean Exploration Adventures was piloted earlier this year with eighth graders at Hugh B. Bain Middle School and Park View Middle School through grant funding. In the program's activity guide, kids learn about the past, present and future of ocean exploration along with creatures of the deep sea, ocean exploration tools and what it's like to share a fishery.

STEM Mentoring RI seeks to "provide equitable STEM after-

school and out-of-school time pathway opportunities for K-12th grade youth through collaboration, youth voice and peer mentoring." At Cranston West on Dec. 14, in addition to sharing program offerings, Blankenship and Mystic Aquarium partners announced the program has rebranded and will change its main Rhode Island based partner from Cranston Public Schools to its new fiscal agent Southern RI Conservation District.

"We're really excited that we're able to step in for the next couple of years and host the statewide coordinator for this great program and help it grow," said Gina Fuller from Southern Conservation District.

Southern RI Conservation District's mission is to "promote and achieve a healthy environment and sustainable use of natural resources for the people of Kent and Washington Counties and the State of Rhode Island, now and for the future, by coordinating partners to provide technical, educational and financial resources."

Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships for Mission Programs at Mystic Aquarium Ayana Melvan said STEM Mentoring RI is thankful that Cranston housed the program for so long and that they are "passing the baton to another partner to house it, but will remain great partners."

Over the last several years, Cranston Public Schools embarked on the partnership with STEM Mentoring RI and worked closely with Blankenship to design and grow programs for students. In the beginning, they started with providing after school programming at two elementary schools. Based on feedback from students and teachers, the programs' waitlists grew – causing the addition of two more schools and a six-week summer program. In 2022, STEM Mentoring RI served 575 youth and in 2021 served 445 individuals across the state. The programs' demographics are 35 percent white, 20 percent Hispanic, 17 percent multiracial, 13 percent Indigenous, 13 percent Black and seven percent Asian; Seventy-five percent of these youth qualify for free-reduced price lunch. The STEM Mentoring RI model pairs youth mentees ages six to 10 with either an adult or near peer-aged mentor in small group sessions. Funding for the program currently comes from the Rhode Island Foundation and some supplemental funding from other community partners.

While STEM Mentoring RI's overarching goal for the program has not changed from STEM Advantage, the FY2023 plan is to secure commitments for funding to sustain the program for FY2024 and beyond; this work includes



TEACHING THE NEXT GENERATION: Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships for Mission Programs at Mystic Aquarium Ayana Melvan discussed the impact STEM Mentoring RI has on kids and how the program's mentees become mentors and inspire younger generations at the rebranding STEM event on Dec. 14.

developing strategic partnerships at the state, school district, philanthropic and municipality levels. The organization is looking to invest \$25k into its annual site fund, \$10k into enrichment programs and \$5k into environmental stewardship programs.

Katie Cubina, Acting President and CEO of Mystic Aquarium, spoke at the Dec. 14 event – adding that Mystic Aquarium's mission is to inspire people to care for and protect the ocean and planet through conservation, education and research. The aquarium has a strong focus on youth development which is what brought her to work with Melvan over a decade ago on STEM Mentoring RI. Since 2011, the aquarium has served more than 12,000 youth and 3,000 mentors in 80 sites in 31 states and territories and wants to grow initiatives in Rhode Island. Cubina said there's been a resurgence in investing in STEM careers around Rhode Island.

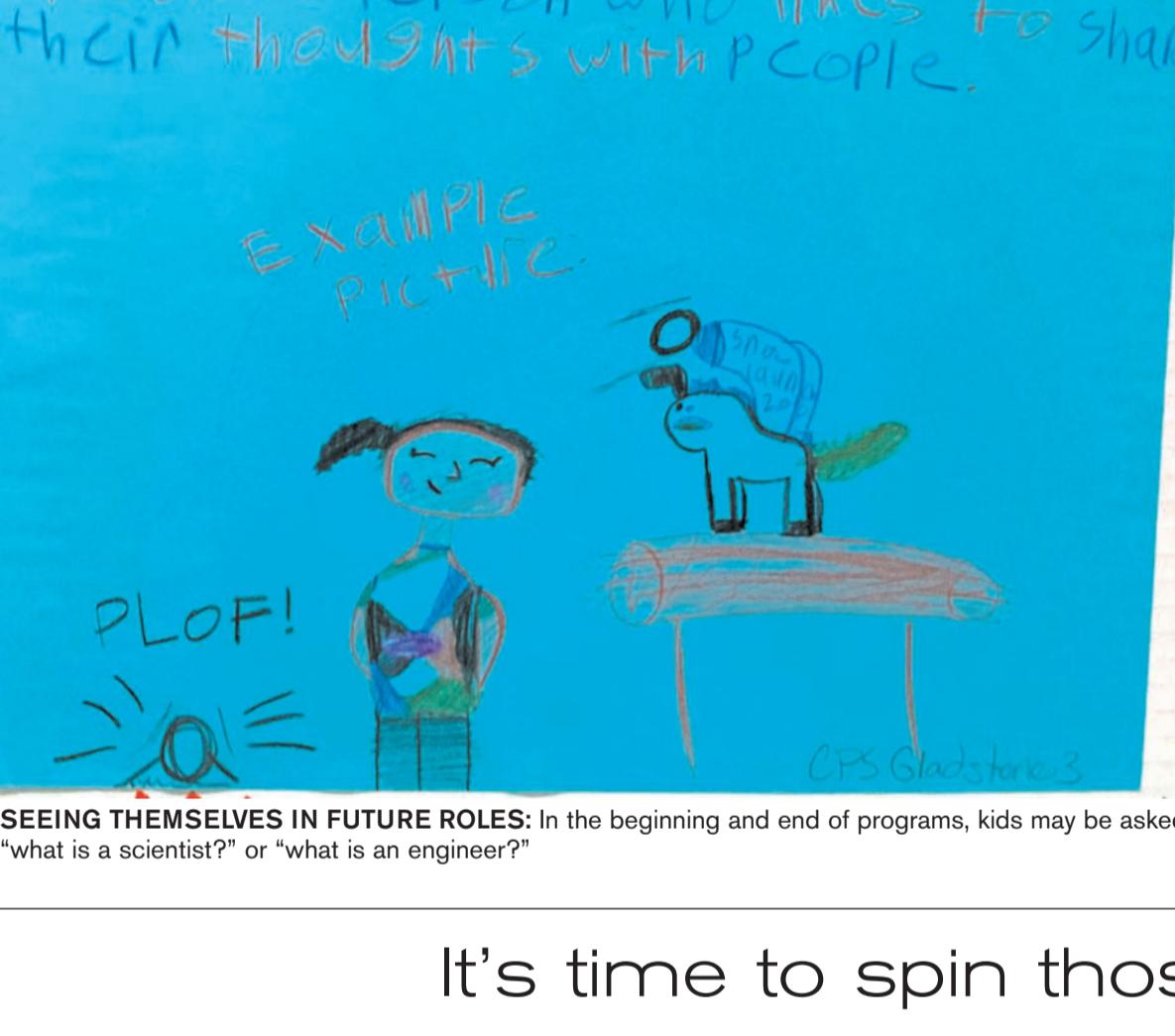
"We need to make an equal investment in the young people in our communities to make sure that they're interested in these careers, see themselves in these careers and that there's a pathway for them to enter into the STEM workforce should they decide to enter into those fields," said Cubina.

Cubina said the aquarium will see a boom in offshore wind development in the Rhode Island region over the next 10 to 20 years to reach state goals for carbon reduction and neutrality.

"It's an exciting time to be a young person with all of these interesting careers in our region for good, well paying jobs in a variety of different academic levels," Cubina said.



FUN BUT IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES: It only takes paper cups and a plate to create an anemometer to test wind speed. Program activities from STEM Mentoring RI introduce kids to meaningful knowledge and skills. (Herald photos)



SEEING THEMSELVES IN FUTURE ROLES: In the beginning and end of programs, kids may be asked "what is a scientist?" or "what is an engineer?"

It's time to spin those dreidels

By PAM SCHIFF

Hanukkah, oh, Hanukkah, come light the menorah, Hanukkah, oh, Hanukkah let's all dance the hora!

The first line of a traditional Jewish song tells so much about the Festival of Lights and how it is celebrated.

Hanukkah started sundown Dec. 18, this year and runs for eight nights.

Jewish people all over the world are lighting menorahs, eating latkes (potato pancakes), sufganiyot (jelly donuts) and playing the centuries old game of dreidel.

Hanukkah in fact, is not a holy day or holiday in the Jewish faith. In fact, it is a festival; hence the name Festival of Lights.

Hanukkah tells the story of how in the second century BCE the Holy Land was ruled by the Syrian-Greeks, and they were trying to force the people of Israel to accept and follow Greek cultures and beliefs.

A small group of strong and faithful Jews, who were led by the famous Judah Maccabee, fought to drive out the Syrian-Greeks and be able to keep their Jewish ways.

After the battle was won by Judah and his army, the Jews had to start the process of rebuilding the holy temple.

When they tried to find oil to light the menorah (a seven branched candelabrum), all they could find was a small vial. There was only enough oil in the flask to last for one night.

Miraculously, the tiny amount of oil lasted for eight days, which was long enough for them to prepare new oil.

Families will gather to light the menorah and recite the blessings. Children will listen to adults re-

tell stories of how they spent Hanukkahs in the past.

Platters of latkes will be passed, with the age old question of applesauce or sour cream for topping?

The dreidels will come out, and children will spin the four sided top to win coins, nuts or candy.

On the dreidel are the Hebrew letters; nun, gimmel, hei and shin, an acronym for "a great miracle happened there." Depending on which letter the dreidel lands on determines what is won or lost.

"In America and throughout the world today, we are seeing a

resurgence of modern-day followers of Antiochus – those who are trying to squelch Judaism and the Jewish people with threats, lies and conspiracy theories. Fortunately, we are not alone in standing up against hate. The Jewish community is deeply grateful for our many allies in churches, mosques, and other communities that are facing their own battles against discrimination and oppression. We stand together for a society free of hatred," said Rabbi Jeffrey Goldwasser of Temple Sinai in Cranston.

Shining light on the darkness of hate

By JOHN HOWELL

A candle light blessing, "to shine a light on hate this holiday season" will be held Thursday from 5:30 to 6 on the beach near the seawall in Oakland Beach, Warwick.

Two events this summer, both of which happened in Oakland Beach, prompted Samantha (Sam) Grabelle to do something in response to the distribution of anti-Semitic and racist flyers. In a phone call Monday, Grabelle, who lives in Gaspee said she felt the community should show its unity following reports of the incidents. She was surprised by the reactions she received. While the incidents happened virtually in their backyard, she said her Jewish friends and others were ambivalent and responded as if this had happened a world away.

If others weren't going to do anything, she and her son, Julius, decided to observe the fifth day of Hanukkah and light the fifth candle on the Menorah while saying a blessing on the sands of

Oakland Beach. She wasn't planning a rally or thinking those who might join her would be part of an organized program, but she wanted people to know what was happening. She contacted state Senator-elect Matthew LaMountain who recommended she speak with his counterpart, Senator-elect Mark McKenney whose district includes Oakland Beach.

At the time of the incidents McKenney was troubled by the nighttime flyer drops that appeared to be targeted at individuals based on their religious beliefs or color. He wanted to speak out, however, police recommended it would be best not to over react as this would play into the hands of those who did it.

Learning of what Grabelle has planned, McKenney emailed officials to let them his thoughts and what is planned Thursday evening.

"This is no longer a single incident; our community has now experienced multiple hate crimes. Moreover, some resi-

dents appear to have been specifically targeted," McKenney wrote. Meanwhile, as we're in the Hanukkah and Christmas season, we have Kanye West and white supremacists are in the news. I'm sure some folks are condemning these outrageous incidents in their own circles. Yet we've not spoken out, as a community, against the injury that's been done - to all of us - here in our hometown."

McKenney outlined what Grabelle planned, writing "This is not a march – it's a gathering that's in keeping with the Hanukkah "Festival of Lights" & Christmas "Light of the World" concepts. I've told Sam I will join her. I hope you will, too."

McKenney who met with Jody King and his wife Liana on Monday at the Warwick Public Library said "it is time to speak up forcibly against it." The Kings live on Ottawa Avenue. As Jody climbed into his truck early on the morning of Nov. 17 he noticed postcard sized flyers strewn across the street. The flyers de-

cried the Black Lives Matter movement and called on whites to take back the country. Jody is Black. About a week earlier flyers encased in plastic zip bags and containing pellets thought to be rat poison were found on nearby streets. The pellets turned out to be pellets for a wood stove. The flyers were of an anti-Semitic nature.

Both incidents were reported to Warwick and state police and the FBI. No arrests have been made.

Grabelle called the distribution of the flyers as "hate crimes" and from the moment the first incident was reported she wanted to say, "hate is not welcome here."

"We're not trying to speak to the people who did it. This is a small community that was attacked. There needs to be some love," she said.

Coincidentally, she notes, Thursday is the fifth day of Hanukkah and the fifth candle symbolizes love.

"It is so appropriate," she said. She plans to read the blessing of

love while lighting the candle. (Reader) We light these candles to celebrate our coming together. They reflect the light in our lives and the warmth we find in our community. They connect us to our many traditions and to all humanity.

(All) May our time together bring us joy and a renewed sense of commitment to our friends and loved ones, and to all humanity.

(Reader) As these candles give light to all who behold them, so may we, by our lives, give light to all who behold us.

(All) As their brightness reminds us of all that can be bright in our lives, so may we, by our actions, make the world a brighter and warmer place for all.

She is hopeful Julius will read the poem:

Where is my light? My light is in me.

Where is my hope? My hope is in me.

Where is my strength? My strength is in me – and in you.

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Warwick Rotary Now Accepting Applications For Charitable Grants

Warwick Rotary is soliciting grant applications to support Non-Profits located in or serving the Warwick Community and/or its residents.

Projects/programs must be consistent with the policies and programs of the Rotary Club of Warwick and benefit the local community.

Grant applications are due by
January 31, 2023

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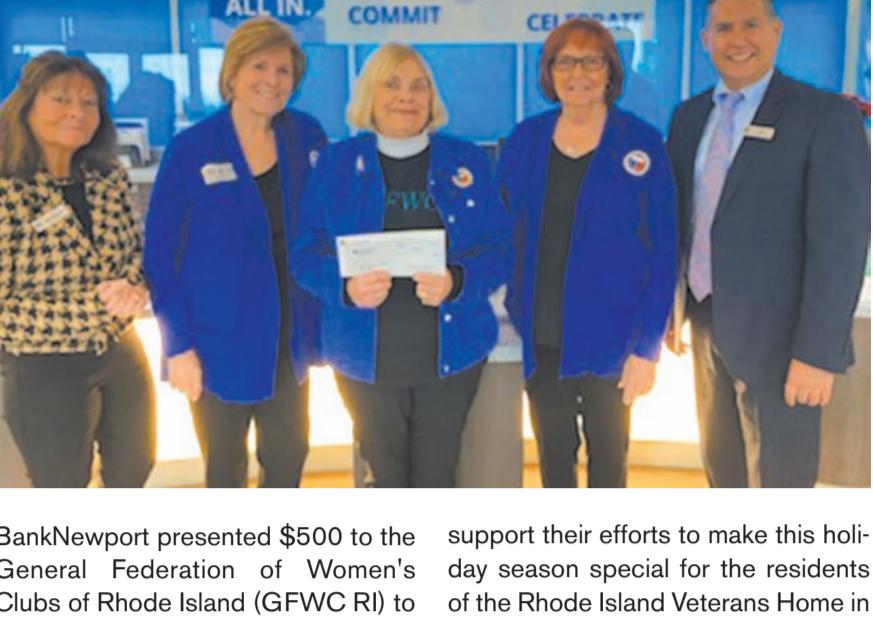
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All proceeds to benefit non-profits supported by the Warwick Rotary Club

Making the holidays brighter for veterans



BankNewport presented \$500 to the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Rhode Island (GFWC RI) to support their efforts to make this holiday season special for the residents of the Rhode Island Veterans Home in

Bristol. The nonprofit is purchasing gifts of clothing for the veterans' home residents, including lounge pants, pajamas, t-shirts, underwear and sneakers. Founded in 1895, the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Rhode Island is dedicated to community improvement and leadership development through volunteer service, with active clubs in Cranston, Warwick, East Providence, Bristol County and South County. Pictured from left: BankNewport Assistant Branch Manager Michele Horner, GFWC State President and President of GFWC/Cranston Club Paula Andrews, GFWC Board Member/Bristol Club and Chairman of Veteran Affairs Karen Leach, President of GFWC/Warwick Club Janet Trombetti and BankNewport Chapel View Branch Manager Ron Greenwood. (Submitted photo)

■ Chatter

(Continued from page 1)

Youth Ushers Program

Are you a high school student aged 16-18 who loves theater? If so, you can learn about professional theater and see shows for free – plus earn community service hours. It's easy and fun! For details visit gammtheatre.org/youthushers. Roles include: scanning tickets, directing patrons in the lobby and the theater, stuffing and/or passing out programs, seating patrons and answering patron's questions. In return, you have the option to earn community service hours and see Gamm productions for free! Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Lauryn Sasso at 401-723-4266 x 163 or volunteer@gammtheatre.org with any questions. Performance Dates: It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play, Dec. 9 - 24, 2022, Faith Healer, Jan. 12 - 29, 2023,

Bad Jews, March 2 - 26, 2023, The Children, April 27 - May 14, 2023.

Looking for New Oaklawn Grange Members

The Oaklawn Grange is looking for new members. Anyone interested in learning more or joining, please contact Maria Manzi at 401-499-0796.

PrepareRI Internship Program

The 2023 applications are now open for the PrepareRI High School Summer Internship Program. If you are, or have, a rising senior this summer, this paid opportunity is an excellent one for college or career resumes. Students attend a one week paid (\$15/hr.) boot camp which prepares them for interviews and work-related skills as well as helps them to determine things like their strengths and weaknesses, and then are matched to a full-time, paid (\$15/hr.), five-week summer internship that gives them hands-on, real world work experience in a possible career interest. Hundreds of students across RI participate in these internships and the application process is a multi-phased process including submitting essays, a resume, participating in an orientation and interviews. It is an amazing opportunity for all students. If you are in need of appropriate work clothes, technology or transportation, PrepareRI will work with you.

Holiday Ornament Arrival

The new 2022 Cranston Police Department holiday ornament has arrived. The cost is \$20 and all money raised from the sale will go directly to families in need this holiday season. More information at cpdcare.com/company.site.

Photos with Santa

Come visit Santa in his cozy cabin outside the Garden City Center gazebo now through Dec. 24 for a meet and greet and photo with the most holly jolly guy in the neighborhood. Reservations are strongly encouraged. Walkups are welcome but will be given a return time upon arrival. Pet photos are available every Monday. To register and for times/dates, visit gardencitycenter.com/event/santa-photos-2022.

Need to Wrap Presents?

Need a place to wrap presents without your kids finding out? The Huddle Center at 70 Gansett Ave. will be having open wrapping hours during the month of December for wrapping all Holiday gifts. They will provide the materials; you just need to bring the presents. For more information, contact Brandi Silvia at bsilvia@comcap.org.

Warm Clothing Drive

Councilwoman Aniece Germain – in partnership with the Artists' Exchange and Hope and Change for Haiti – will host a clothing drive for neighbors in need on Dec. 21 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. They will be collecting warm clothes such as coats, gloves, socks and hats. The drop off location will be at the Artists' Exchange (50 Rolfe Square). Please reach out to aniecegermain2@comcap.org.

Free Movie Night

The Gamm Theatre (1245 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick) is hosting free movie nights where individuals can enjoy their favorite films in stadium theatre seating. The theatre will show "The Prestige" at 7 p.m. on Jan.

16. Drinks and snacks will be available to purchase at concessions. No tickets necessary.

Join Phillips' Chime Choir

Phillips Memorial Baptists Church (565 Pontiac Ave.) is looking for children ages six to 10 who are interested in participating in a Chime Choir led by Minister of Music Martha Sobaje. The rehearsals won't be too long and will occur at 11:15 a.m. after church on Sundays. This is an exciting and fun opportunity to learn music and a great way to meet others. If you are interested, contact Martha Sobaje at msobaje@gmail.com.

Call for Poetry Submissions

Notable Works Publication is working with Crosswinds Poetry on the third edition of "Voices of the Earth: The Future of Our Planet." The theme is awakening a resolve for rediscovery, resolution, adaptation, growth and a call for continued action. Poets accepted for the publication in this book will receive a complimentary copy upon completion. Three prizes will be awarded from entries. (\$100 for first place, \$50 for second place and \$25 for third place.) Poets may submit up to three original works not previously published, each one formatted in Times New Roman, not exceeding 60 lines (which includes title and any spaces in-between). No more than 66 characters on each line (which includes spaces and punctuation). The submission period runs from Jan. 1, 2023, to Feb. 15, 2023 at midnight. Please email your original poetry submissions to noreenglesi@cox.net or info@notable-works.org. Or, mail to Notable Works PO Box 8122, Cranston, RI 02920.

MAE Organization Gala

The MAE Organization will hold its annual Be the Light fundraising gala on Feb. 18, 2023 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick. The cost is \$100 for general admission and \$125 for VIP admission. To order tickets, visit maeorg.org/event.

Humans of Cranston Nominations

OneCranston Health Equity Zone is starting a new initiative with the Cranston Herald and local photographer Timothy McFate called Humans of Cranston; they will be interviewing Cranston residents to gain a deeper understanding of and celebrate those who live here. Those interviewed will be featured in a new column and on OCHEZ social media. If you are interested in nominating a Cranston resident, please email JB Fulbright at jfulbright@comcap.org or call 401-208-3487.

To submit your news from the community, email Emma at EmmaB@rhodybeat.com. This includes virtual events, which should be submitted two to three weeks ahead of the event. Photos in jpg format are accepted and news can include community events, promotions, academic news and nonprofit events. Email today and see your news in our column in the Cranston Herald.

A mayoral visit on her 103rd birthday



GIFT FROM THE CITY: Antoinette McGovern receives a special citation from the City of Cranston celebrating her 103rd birthday. (Submitted photos)

By EMMA BARTLETT

At 103 years old, Antoinette McGovern is a huge Red Socks fan. Mayor Ken Hopkins discovered this when he visited her at Cra-Mar Meadows on Seven Mile Road for her birthday and saw the baseball poster on her wall. Showing her excitement for the sport, Antoinette started singing "Take me out to the Ball Game."

On Dec. 8, Hopkins presented Antoinette with a citation as a dozen guests gathered at the nursing home to celebrate the birthday girl. Antoinette was all dressed up with her birthday tiara, painted nails and a blue outfit – her favorite color. The nursing home provided pastries and the facility's hairdresser came in a day early just to do Antoinette's hair for the special occasion. Pat Brzostecki, Antoinette's daughter, said her mom was very thankful for the mayor's visit and also thanked Jami Midence and Sue McCoy for the work they put into the event to make Antoinette's day special.

Antoinette was born to Medora and Aime Dionne on Nov. 30, 1919. She was one of six kids – having three sisters and two brothers. Growing up in Providence, she attended Our Lady of Lourdes School. Pat said her mom loved school and going to Providence's Nickerson House for sewing lessons. Antoinette won an award for one of the outfits she made and would eventually use her skills to create clothes for her three daughters: Joan, Maureen and Pat. Coming from a French and Irish background, Antoinette spoke French and English – today she will still sing French hymns.

A lifelong Rhode Islander, Antoinette met her future husband – James McGovern – at Roger Williams Park. The couple married on Nov. 28, 1940, and spent 64 years together. They lived in a three-tenement home on Lockwood Street in Providence where they raised



HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Mayor Ken Hopkins wishes Antoinette McGovern a happy birthday at Cra-Mar Meadows.

their children. James was drafted during World War II and spent his military career in the Navy as a Seabee. He returned home and was awarded with a Purple Heart. Pat said he was happy to be home with family and return to work.

Pat said Antoinette was a wonderful mother. When the kids were in school, she worked at various jewelry shops; her last job was working at Providence's Imperial Knife Company. The family left Lockwood Street and moved into Antoinette's mother's home to assist her.

After she passed, Antoinette and James moved into a house on Hartford Avenue in Johnston where their residence overlooked the water. The property belonged to their eldest daughter, Joan. During their time there, Pat said her mom enjoyed going to the Johnston Senior Center with one of her friends. She also spent time with her two older sisters Dora Gagne and Malvina Champagne; they loved going out to eat and would take Antoinette to the Lincoln race track.

Today, Antoinette has five grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. She did lose one daughter, one grandson and her siblings but knows she has lots of loved ones in Heaven waiting. Pat said Antoinette jokes: "God doesn't want me and neither does the Devil." In the meantime, God has given her strong legs to keep on kicking and sometimes she'll even do some dancing with the Cra-Mar Meadows staff.

"So much more could be said about Antoinette but most important during the years not always easy she showed love and caring for her family and friends," said Pat.

Senior Enrichment Center news

Cranston Senior Enrichment Center
1070 Cranston Street
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920
401-780-6000

Our programs assist, inform, entertain and enrich the lives of individuals 55 years and older.

Year End Wrap-Up

Dec. 28 – 10 a.m.

What were the top health topics for the year 2022? What topics and health programs would you like to see offered here at the center? We are always looking for new ideas and suggestions. Please join us and share your thoughts.

Arthritis Exercise Class

Tuesdays & Thursdays – 1:15 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Beginning Jan. 3 and ending Feb. 9

Instructors: Jennifer & Nurse Marylou

This low-impact physical activity will help you keep joints flexible and muscles strong, sleep better, increase energy and improve your overall outlook. Call 780-6000 now to register for this free class.

Volunteers Needed

Donating your time and energy can be just as rewarding for you as for those you help.

Searching for meaningful 2023 New

Year's resolutions? Look no further! The Cranston RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) is looking for volunteers for the following vacancies:

Transportation Volunteers to transport homebound seniors to medical appointments and/or run errands for them.

Fraud Prevention Volunteers to provide the community with information and tips to help prevent common frauds, scams and other types of elder financial exploitation.

Recycling Volunteers to educate the community with the assistance and guidance from the RI Resource Recovery Center on a variety of topics such as waste reduction and reuse, recycling and composting.

If you are interested in becoming an RSVP volunteer, please contact Tricia at 780-6159. You must be 55 years of age or older to volunteer.

Gift Shop

New hours: Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Don't forget to visit our gift shop for new seasonal products and clearance items!

To learn the latest news from the Center, follow us on

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After 70 years, Ross-Simons gets key to the city

By EMMA BARTLETT

For 70 years, Ross-Simons has provided people across the nation with quality jewelry and luxury items at affordable prices. Mayor Ken Hopkins visited the company's corporate office in Cranston on Dec. 14 to recognize the company for its recent milestone and offer an honorary key to the city.

The first Ross-Simons retail store opened in Providence in 1952 – followed by two more stores in 1965 and 1975 as the brand quickly grew. The company mailed its first catalog in 1981, and today, Ross-Simons is a thriving, multi-channel retailer with an online business.

"We are proud to have a longstanding business like Ross-Simons in our city and employing over 300 employees," said Hopkins.

Ross-Simons President and CEO Jim Speltz accepted the mayor's citation while the company's original owner, Darrell Ross, was handed the key.

Over Hopkins' last three years in office, only two other keys to the city have been awarded; Ross-Simons is the first Cranston business to receive one.

"Today by awarding such a prize, the City of Cranston officially, symbolically places the city at their [Ross-Simons'] disposal

and may be considered one of the highest honors a non-military civilian may achieve," Hopkins said.

The history of being given a key to the city can be traced to medieval times where cities were fortified by stone ramparts and locked gates. Providing someone with a key of entrance was of high honor and trust; it meant that person was granted unlimited access to open the city gates. The key is usually bestowed upon guests such as visiting dignitaries or persons of distinction.

Speltz was thrilled to have Hopkins at the company for the special presentation. The mayor came during the company's holiday celebration where individuals enjoyed food and had an ugly sweater contest with categories for first, second and third place along with most festive, most creative and the funniest.

Speltz said he is proud to be part of a brand that is recognized around the country and noted how rare it is to be awarded a key to the city. Since the company's corporate office is located in Cranston, he said when products are distributed from the facility and bear Cranston's name on the boxes. He said it's a great way to represent the community.

"Thank you for the key to the city – this is incredible," said Speltz.

The company officially celebrated its 70th anniversary in July. Hopkins added

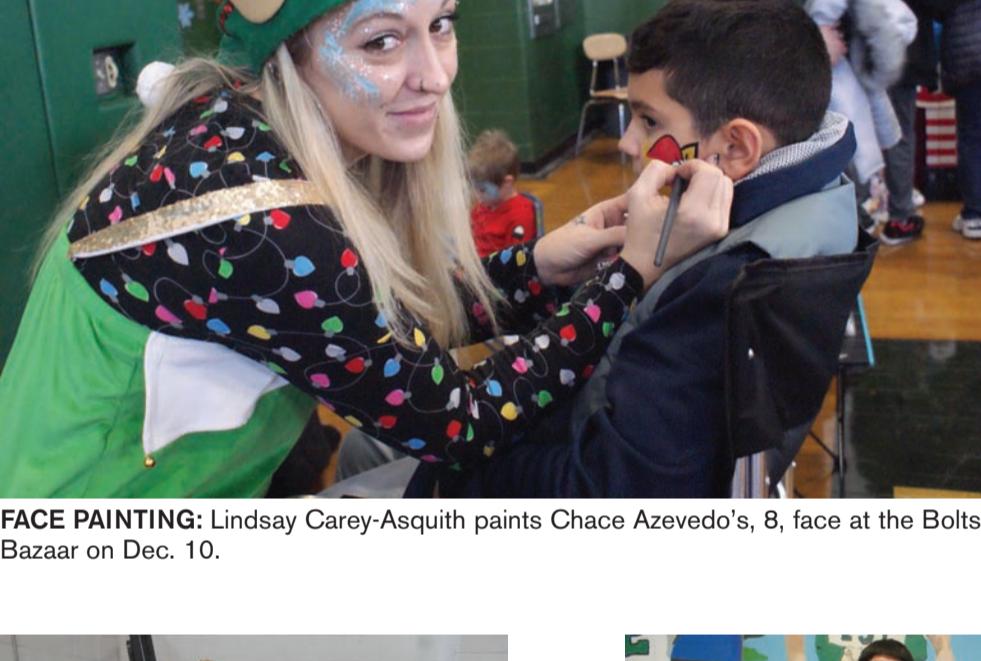


THE HONORARY KEY: Mayor Ken Hopkins hands original owner Darrell Ross the honorary key to the city. To Ross' right is current President and CEO Jim Speltz. (Herald photo)

that Ross-Simons is one of the biggest companies in Cranston. The city works on collaborating with local businesses with the mayor

mentioning the recent \$300,000 that was handed out to small businesses through the Take it Outside program. Hopkins gave

Ross-Simons his best wishes – adding that he hopes the company remains in the city for another 70 years.



FACE PAINTING: Lindsay Carey-Asquith paints Chace Azevedo's, 8, face at the Bolts Bazaar on Dec. 10.

Bolts bazaar is a success

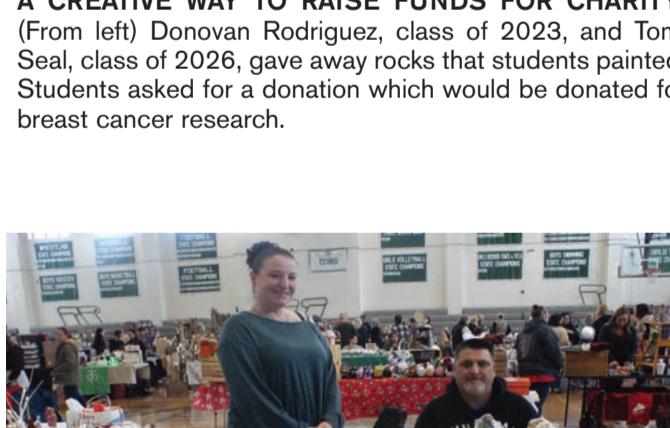
The fifth annual Bolts Bazaar was held in Cranston East's gym on Dec. 10 and featured over 50 vendors. The event raised funds for Cranston East students and faculty and included raffles, a visit with Santa, children's story time, craft table and food. (Photos by Steve Popiel)



MAKING FRIENDS: The Cranston East Thunderbolt mascot gave Santa a hug at the Bolts Bazaar.



SEASONAL SIGNS: Deb Blackmor of DABs of Paint was one of the many vendors at Dec. 10's Bolts Bazaar.



A CREATIVE WAY TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CHARITY: (From left) Donovan Rodriguez, class of 2023, and Tomi Seal, class of 2026, gave away rocks that students painted. Students asked for a donation which would be donated for breast cancer research.



THEY LOOK LIKE YOU COULD EAT THEM: Melanie McDonald of Tranquil Flame Candles sold homemade candles at the Dec. 10 Bolts Bazaar in Cranston East's gym. McDonald specializes in realistic dessert and custom-painted candles. With her, is Joe Cabral.



CHECKING IN WITH LOCAL VENDORS: (From left) Ashley Massina of Shamrock Home Loans with Jessica Moquin, the Bolts Bazaar chairperson.



Season's Greetings!

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TALKING WITH THE YOUNGSTERS: Santa greeted kids at the Grange Tree Lighting on Dec. 8.

Oaklawn Grange Tree Lighting

The Oaklawn Grange held its annual Christmas tree lighting on Dec. 8. Families enjoyed wagon rides by Confreda Farms and a visit with Santa. Individuals brought canned goods which were donated to the food bank. (Photos by Steve Popiel)



CAN'T CONTAIN THE EXCITEMENT: Elijah Love, 3, meets Santa at the Oaklawn Grange Tree Lighting held on Dec. 8.



HAPPY TO MEET SANTA: Sister and brother Gracelyn Seddon, 3, and Jackson, 5, met Santa Dec. 8 at the Grange Tree Lighting.

Cranston's Justin Erickson selected as JHS athletic director



JUSTIN ERICKSON

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Johnston High School Athletics department will be appointing Cranston's Justin Erickson as its new athletics director next week following the recent retirement of Keith Cory, who was the Panthers' AD since 2014.

Erickson, 38, has served as Cranston's middle school athletic director since 2017, where he oversaw the sports department of four schools. He is a Cranston West graduate and has coached lacrosse and football at his alma mater in that time as well.

Erickson received the first ever Michael Palmer award in 2002, which is given to players that demonstrate selfless play on the field. He is also part of the executive board for the

out," said Erickson.

Some of Erickson's goals include bringing new uniforms to Johnston's teams and also raising the level of competition. None of Johnston's teams compete at the Division I level and many have dropped to the Division III and IV ranks over the past few seasons. Johnston has historically had Division I teams, including the basketball programs. The boys currently compete in Division II and the girls Division IV.

"First thing we're doing is trying to get new matching uniforms, trying to get that Johnston Columbia blue. We want that school pride. Also, in Cranston, our teams are in the higher divisions. I think with the right tools, we can be to neck and neck with those teams," said Erickson.

The biggest hurdle lately has been the rising number of student-athletes selecting private schools over public programs. Erickson is looking to retain as many students as possible and believes that the high school offers enough amenities to get the job done. Johnston's facilities have hosted tournaments such as the Rhode Island Interscholastic League soccer championships since Cory's arrival, as well as middle school basketball championships and various youth tournaments.

"We need to establish that Johnston pride, we need to make that Panther pride stand out. We need to show that we have top-notch facilities, we have a top-notch athletic program, and it all starts by reaching out to both the middle school and high

school," said Erickson.

NOTE: As for his coaching duties in Cranston, Erickson will be stepping away from the lacrosse program to focus his full attention on Johnston athletics.

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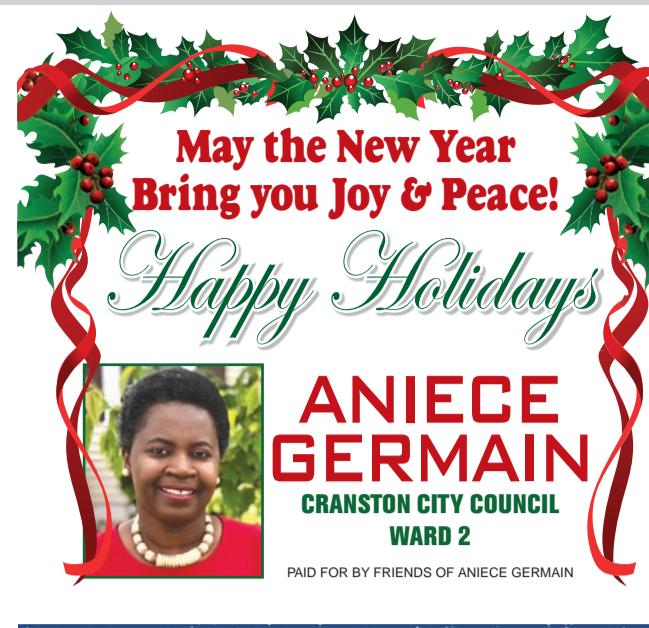
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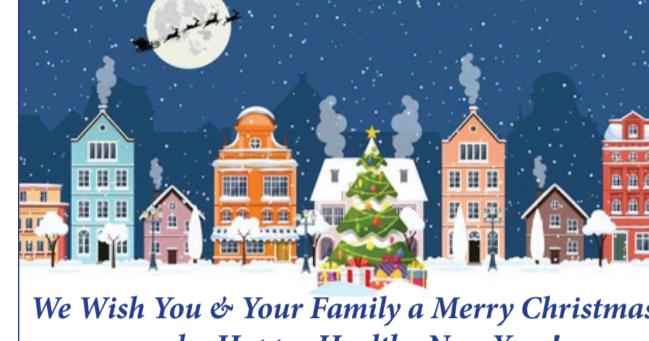
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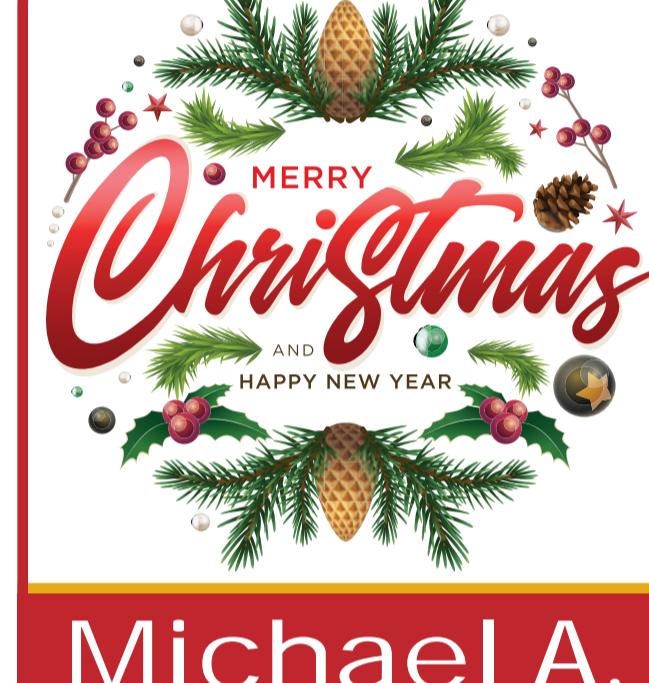


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AAA: Gas prices down

12 cents from last week

Rhode Island's average gas price is down 12 cents from last week, averaging \$3.33 per gallon. Monday's price is 44 cents lower than a month ago, and 5 cents lower than December 19, 2021. Rhode Island's average gas price is 19 cents higher than the national average.

"The cost of oil, gasoline's main ingredient, has been hovering in the low-to-mid \$70s per barrel, and that's \$50 less than the peak last spring," said Diana Gugliotta,

Director of Public Affairs for AAA Northeast. "Combined with low seasonal demand, gas prices could slide a bit more before leveling off."

AAA Northeast's December 19 survey of fuel prices found the current national average to be 12 cents lower than last week, averaging \$3.14 a gallon. Monday's national average price is 54 cents lower than a month ago and 16 cents lower than this day last year.

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EARLY HOLIDAY DEADLINES

Warwick Beacon • Cranston Herald • Johnston Sun Rise

December 29th Issues: Friday, Dec. 23 at 10 AM

January 5th Issues Friday, Dec. 23 at 10 AM

Our offices will be closed

Monday, December 26th and January 2nd

Happy Holidays
from your friends at

Beacon

Communications



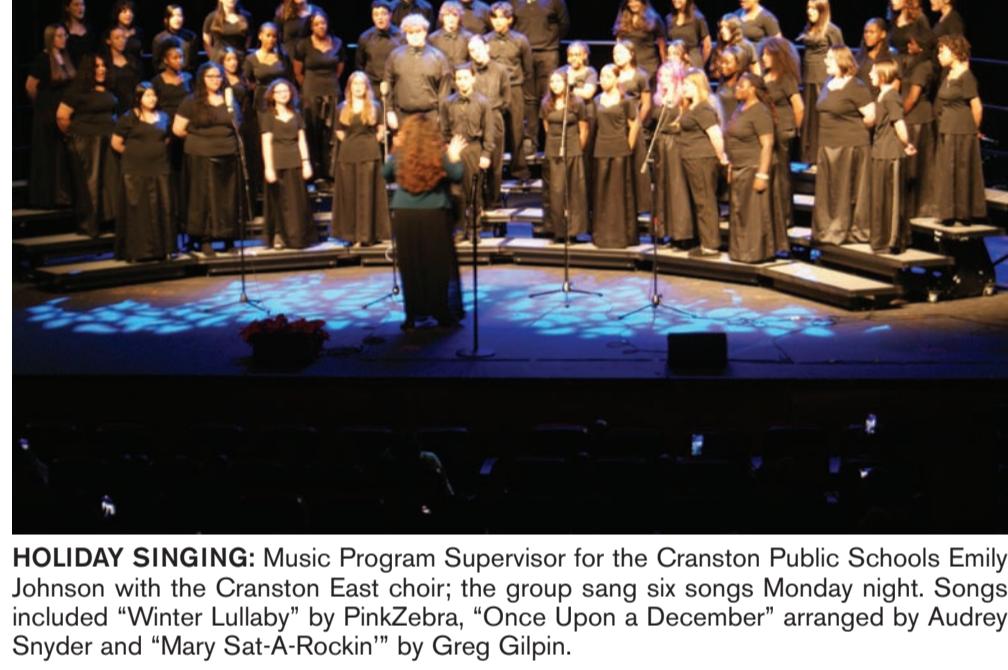
PERFORMANCE READY: Cranston West Choir Director Philip Lachance and his group of students performed seven songs Monday night. Musical selections included "The Autumn Reel" by Audrey Snyder, "Carol of the Bells" arranged by Patrick Liebergen, "A Hanukkah Wish" by Andy Beck and more.

*Jingling all
the way*

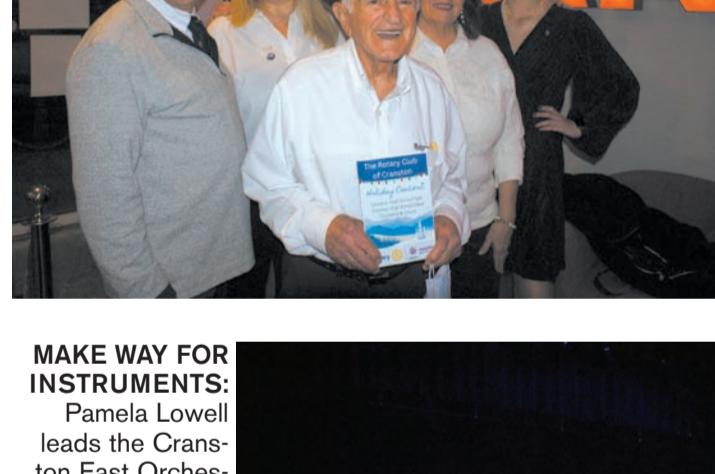
Cranston's Rotary Club hosted its first holiday concert on Dec. 19 in collaboration with Cranston High School East and West music programs. Approximately 350 guests visited the Park Theatre Monday night to listen to the Cranston East Orchestra, Cranston East Choir and Cranston West Concert Choir. Proceeds from ticket sales are still being counted and will be split between the music programs and the Rotary Club for the organization's scholarship program. (Photos by Steve Popiel)



ENJOYING THE SHOW: Emma Dimail, 4, with her grandmother Mary Ferreira attended the Cranston Rotary Club's holiday concert on Dec. 19.



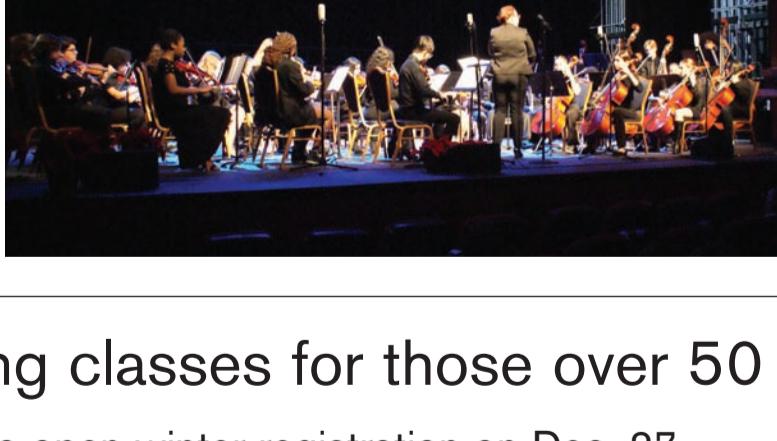
HOLIDAY SINGING: Music Program Supervisor for the Cranston Public Schools Emily Johnson with the Cranston East choir; the group sang six songs Monday night. Songs included "Winter Lullaby" by PinkZebra, "Once Upon a December" arranged by Audrey Snyder and "Mary Sat-A-Rockin'" by Greg Gilpin.



HEADING THE EVENT: Rotary Club's Dec. 19 event was headed by (from left) Roy Evans, Dina Campbell, Lou Marciano, Tom Glasgow, event chairperson Lori Adamo and Cranston Rotary President Stephanie Lemoi. Anyone interested in joining Cranston Rotary Club should contact Amanda Villanova at avillanova@navigantcu.org.

MAKE WAY FOR INSTRUMENTS:

Pamela Lowell leads the Cranston East Orchestra in six numbers. Some of the pieces included "The Silver Forest" by Stephen Chin, "Believe" from "The Polar Express," and Joy to the World by Paul Baker.



Providing classes for those over 50

OLLI to open winter registration on Dec. 27

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at URI announced Friday that registration begins on Dec. 27 for its winter semester. OLLI at URI provides classes for adults aged 50 and better. Students can enjoy a variety of classes, simply for the joy of learning – no tests, no grades.

Select from over 50 courses with offerings in literature, history, science, humanities, and current events, as well as a variety of wellness and expressive art offerings.

OLLI members also enjoy special interest programs such as a writer's group, photography group, book club and travel programs.

OLLI courses run from one-time presentations to others that are three to six weeks in length. Most classes run for one and one-

half hours, with new classes beginning every week.

A few selections for the upcoming semester include The CIA During the Cold War, Forgotten Songwriters of Tin Pan Alley, Learn to Skate, The Comedy of Monty Python and Chair Yoga.

Become a member of the OLLI community and enjoy learning in a college classroom with new friends having common interests.

Parking is available right outside the door of OLLI at 210 Flagg Rd.

Visit OLLI at uri.edu/olli or call 401-874-

4197 to learn more about yearly membership and 12 months of lifelong learning opportunities.

EDITORIAL

Where's the holiday spirit?

It's the week before Christmas, and all through the state, you might fairly assume it was just another date.

Terrible rhymes aside, we can't help but notice a palpable lack of holiday spirit during what is normally the most cheery and uplifting time of year.

Sure, there are normal holiday activities going on in the form of tree lightings, holiday concerts, and charitable endeavors put on by the hardworking volunteers and dedicated nonprofit staffs throughout our communities, but are we alone in feeling as though this holiday season has sort of rocketed past without the usual type of fanfare or excitement?

Is Covid to blame? Or the recession? Or is it just the normal course of societal division that has permeated our culture and felt especially prevalent in this election year? Perhaps it is a combination of all of these things, or something else entirely.

It's certainly not hard to find reasons to be glum and lacking in festivity, with the cost of living, heating, and groceries increasing, and the sad reminder of how much work we have left to do for many Rhode Islanders who find themselves without ample means to sleep in a warm room at night. Worldwide there is war,

uncertainty, and desperation felt by many millions.

But even acknowledging all of this, there are a bounty of reasons to feel merry and bright. We have endured a lot in the past few years, which is worthy of celebration in its own right. For those who need a sign that things may get better, scientific breakthroughs on nuclear fusion can provide hope for a future free of the kind of strife caused by insufficient and inefficient means of energy production.

For inspiration locally, take a trip to any of our wonderful senior centers, where generations of people come together to share in festive lunches and regale stories of past holidays with one another — gathering and being together as was intended for this time of year.

As we should all have learned by now, the true spirit of the holidays comes not from without, but from within. Find a way — a cause you can volunteer time towards, a nonprofit that deserves your attention or donation — to give back to the place you call home. Only through enough of these actions can the holiday season truly feel like the most wonderful time of the year.

Remember to be grateful

To the Editor,

The true meaning of the Christmas Season has been diluted over the past many years with a commercial effort to give and receive only physical gifts. That may be a good reason for our very young family members but as adults we are asked to reach out to those less fortunate and others who may have serious need for our assistance.

Yes, the holiday lights, performances and dining are a wonderful way to enjoy these winter holidays. Yet for some the

true meaning was born over 2000 years ago and still remains present in our everyday lives.

Be grateful for those who give daily to our personal safety and welfare by their presence. These are the men and women in our military, first responders and medical teams. Also, civil and private enterprises that provide the necessary products and services for us to enjoy "It's a wonderful life."

Bob Sweeney
Warwick

A stop sign for Christmas

Google, Facebook, GPS, Twitter are all telling us what to do, where to go, what to think, and who to be.

How's that working for you?
Because it's never worked for me.

News people everywhere show us the world as they see it
as the world teeters closer to the brink
back to days of hiding under desks,
and everything becomes more and more of a mess.

We took God out of the classroom but He is waiting at the door.

We took him out of society,
but He is ever hovering as before.

Ask and you will receive.
Knock and the door will be opened to you.
But we do not ask.

Our speech is more like a demand.
Prayers go to God
But defiant demands make us think
that we're too grand.

Call upon Him
Not some dumb Tick Tock star or some
reality nitwit
But keep him central in your life and
Goodness and happiness will be the
new fit.

At Christmas, let's invite him into our
schools
Into our homes, and into our hearts.
If we keep Him right by our side
This world would be a very different
ride.

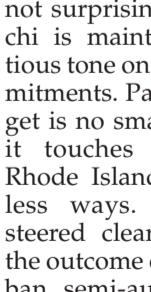
Peggy Porter Quinlan
Warwick, RI

Speakers in the spotlight, school woes on state-managed takeover

STORY OF THE WEEK

House Speaker Joe Shekarchi remains in an enviable political position heading into his second term in what is sometimes called the most powerful post in Rhode Island state government. With an even-handed, consensus-oriented approach, Shekarchi remains well-liked by his membership — and he has an impressive \$1.7 million in his campaign account. After cutting his teeth while running Paul Tsongas' Rhode Island campaign in 1992, the Warwick Democrat is at the center of the state's political life. Shekarchi is 60, 13 years younger than Senate President Dominick Ruggerio and 11 years younger than Gov. Dan McKee, meaning that he could potentially have a longer political runway. Then again, the more time speakers stay in office, the more controversy — and in some cases, scandal — tends to pile up. For now, Shekarchi remains characteristically reluctant to outline goals for the 2023 House session. Asked during a year-end interview how the state can best use an estimated \$610 million surplus, Shekarchi would commit only to using some for shoring up the state's rainy-day fund. "A better barometer would be where we are in May, when we get the May revenue numbers," he said. With a pos-

TALKING POLITICS



by
IAN
DONNIS

sible recession looming, it's not surprising that Shekarchi is maintaining a cautious tone on financial commitments. Passing the budget is no small thing, since it touches the lives of Rhode Islanders in countless ways. The speaker steered clear of declaring the outcome of proposals to ban semi-automatic rifles and to extend abortion coverage to women on Medicaid and the state employee health plan, although he said hearings will be held. Other priorities include the state's ongoing housing crisis and efforts to build a biotech/life science sector in Rhode Island. Time will tell if the state can make meaningful progress on those issues during Shekarchi's speakership.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Four former House speakers — Matthew Smith, John Harwood, Bill Murphy and Gordon Fox — returned to the chamber

Tuesday for the unveiling of ex-Speaker Nicholas Mattiello's publicly funded Statehouse portrait. Mattiello ascended after Fox's fall amid a state-federal probe and his candor marked a refreshing contrast to his predecessor's word-jazz. As Mattiello noted, their tenures coincided with the passage of same-sex marriage in 2013 and a state-based right to an abortion in 2019, along with a series of tax cuts. To critics, Mattiello was too autocratic, and he lost favor with some of his members over time. After being defeated by state Rep. Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung (R-Cranston) in 2020, Mattiello, like Murphy, is now a lobbyist. While state law allows for former governors and speakers to request an official portrait, there is no such provision for the president of the state Senate — a post that has existed only since 2003, thanks to legislative downsizing.

BUDGETWATCH

Save the date: Gov. McKee's budget proposal is slated to be unveiled Jan. 19.

GINAWORLD

Washington Post opinion columnist Catherine Rampell on some of the criticism from the left of U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo: "[E]ven if you believe that corpo-

rate America could benefit from tougher regulation (as these progressive critics generally do), it's hard to regulate companies effectively if you don't take the time to understand how they work and how they're likely to respond to any

regulatory action you take. For example, let's say you don't bother to learn what oil companies' incentives are and why they might be hesitant to ramp up drilling activity. You then might propose remedies — such as revoking drilling permits or imposing price controls — that earn you lots of retweets but accidentally exacerbate energy shortages. Raimondo, to her credit, seems to have taken the opposite approach: talk to businesses, figure out what policy changes might get them on board with the administration's objectives, and then push for those changes if and when they seem reasonable."

SCHOOLS

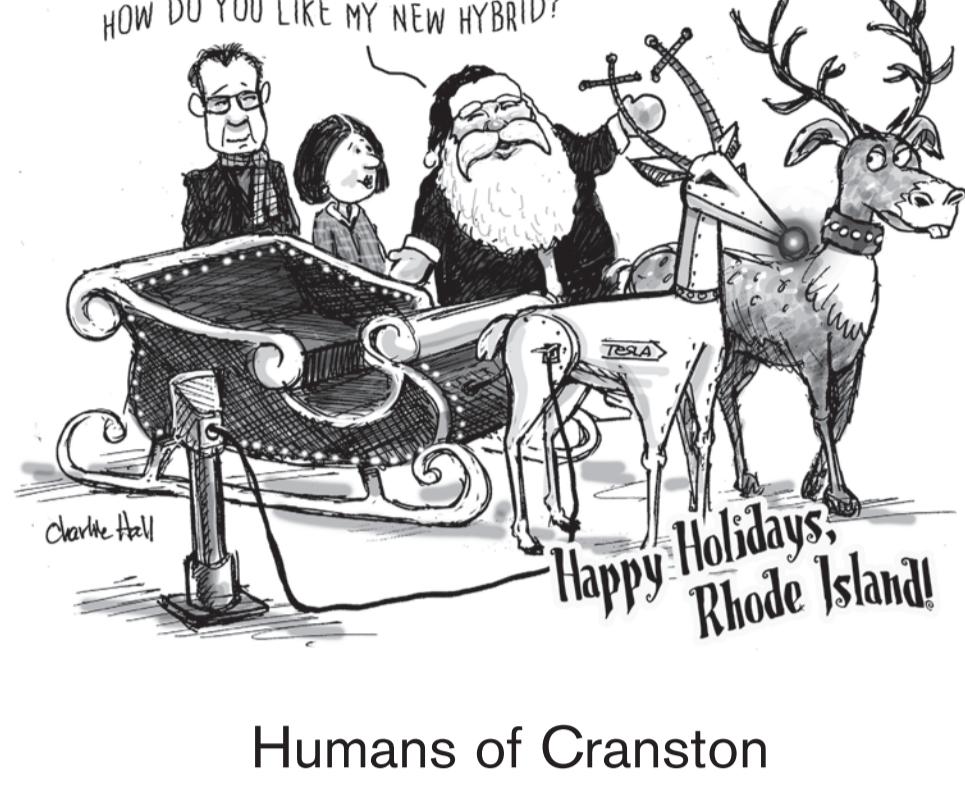
State lawmakers focused criticism on the state-man-

aged takeover of the Providence schools after the Providence Teachers Union tweeted last weekend about plans to close two schools. Here's my report from a House Oversight Committee hearing. Bonus: during the hearing, Providence Deputy Superintendent of Operations touted how the city is poised for \$500 million in school construction and improvements. Here's a breakdown of where that money is coming from, via PPSD spokesman Nick Domings: \$160M bond approved in 2018; \$140M bond approved in 2020; \$125M bond approved in 2022; \$50M in revolving capital fund; \$15M in Facility Equity Initiative awards; \$10M in ARTS, Technology and Equipment Fund, OER Lighting.

TAKES OF THE WEEK

Ward 1 Providence City Councilor John Goncalves: The greatest challenges facing Providence are the intertwined issues impacting our families: housing affordability, education, the

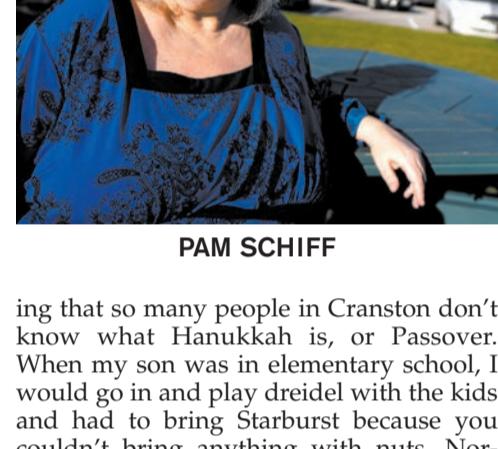
economy, and quality of life. As a new Providence City Council and mayor take office in January, one thing is certain: we must forge greater partnerships and compel our large tax-exempt institutions to pay more of their fair share. Although I'm a proud two-time Brown alumnus and I fully acknowledge the enormous contributions of institutions like Brown, I look forward to working with Mayor-elect Brett Smiley and incoming Council President Rachel Miller to urge the city's large tax-exempt institutions to alleviate the overwhelming burden from taxpayers, especially after the last revaluations in the city. It's all interconnected: more skin in the game from large-tax-exempt like Brown will help the city further tackle underlying fiscal challenges, such as our unfunded pension liability, allow us to reevaluate our tax levy, and invest more in education in our attempt to dra-



Humans of Cranston

Humans of Cranston is a recurring column showcasing the stories of Cranston residents' community involvement, diversity, and unique life perspectives.

Pam Schiff is an award-winning reporter who has lived in Cranston for 32 years. She worked for the Cranston Public School Department for 15 years and currently serves on the executive boards for several local organizations.



PAM SCHIFF

ing that so many people in Cranston don't know what Hanukkah is, or Passover. When my son was in elementary school, I would go in and play dreidel with the kids and had to bring Starburst because you couldn't bring anything with nuts. Normally you play with pennies, but no money in the school, so I had to sit after Halloween and buy the Starburst packages and sort out pink, red, yellow, oranges and make them into teams, and then as the kids got older, like third and fourth grade, they're like, 'Oh, I'm with Ben, his mom's gonna come in, we're gonna do dreidel.' I used to bring in latkes for the kids and everything, so it also helped him have a stronger Jewish identity for himself. I remember one day at Supercuts a woman said, 'did you write your letter to Santa?' and Ben was like six or seven and he goes, 'nope, I'm Jewish, I have Hanukkah,' and I was like, 'yay Ben, good for you!'

I've enjoyed my years in Cranston, and I've noticed that as my life cycle in Cranston has changed, the people I'm involved with have changed, my causes have changed, and I've matured. As my son has matured and moved out, my interests in Cranston are different and Cranston has changed, but the heart and soul of Cranston is still the same, and everybody I've met through my causes are just looking for a better Cranston. And they're not saying Cranston is bad, but no place and nobody is perfect. If you can do one thing, smile, say thank you, hold the door open! You don't need to spend a dime to be nice. Be cheap, share a smile."

This project has been made possible by a Rhode Island Foundation Community Grant, and the efforts of the OneCranston Health Equity Zone of Comprehensive Community Action, Inc. in partnership with the Cranston Herald and Timothy McFate. Want to nominate a Cranston resident to be featured? Email JB at jfulbright@comcap.org.



Peter Johnston joins CPD ranks

Cranston Police Department welcomed Officer Peter Johnston Jr. to its ranks on Dec. 16 at City Hall. According to the department, Johnston was recommended by friends, neighbors, and previous co-workers at the Rhode Island Department of Corrections where he served for one year and finished first in the corrections academy. On Dec. 16, he graduated from the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy – finishing third in his class. Johnston is proudly following in the footsteps of his father, Ret. Sgt. Peter Johnston Sr. of Warwick Police. Pictured is Mayor Ken Hopkins swearing in Johnston while Chief of Police Colonel Michael Winquist looks on in the background. (Submitted photo)

■ Dennis

(Continued from page 9)

antically rehaul our struggling Providence Public School system. In addition to our education woes, Providence has among the highest commercial property taxes nationwide, thereby hindering growth and reducing affordability. High taxes and lackluster education/quality of life continue to be a recipe for disaster, so we must tackle these issues with some serious gumption next term. Through greater PILOT payments, prudent fiscal management, and revamping our zoning laws to expand the tax base and spur greater development, we could help alleviate the tax burden from city residents and hopefully will make progress on education simultaneously, which would be an absolute game-changer for the city.

Blogfather, lawyer and soccer dad Matt Jerzyk: I was going to comment on the lurching-about of Twitter and the importance of local, online conversations, but this week, for me, was about Capital-T Trauma. Wednesday was the 10th anniversary of the brutal massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School, where 20 children between ages and 7 and six adult school professionals were shot and killed. On the anniversary date,

U.S. District Court Chief Judge John J. McConnell released a 59-page decision upholding the state's ability to enforce a ban on large-capacity magazines that hold more than 10 rounds. He noted that Rhode Island has not had a similar mass shooting and the law is "a small but measured attempt to mitigate the potential loss of life by regulating an instrument associated with mass slaughter." This got me thinking of all different kinds of trauma: The unspeakable trauma of mass shootings for parents and siblings and responding public safety officers. But also the trauma of the everyday. National data highlights how at least 70% of people experience one traumatic event before the age of 18 – that's 24 students in a class of 30. That drives

much lower school scores, decreased functional IQ, a higher likelihood to attempt suicide, to develop obstructive pulmonary disease and to develop depression. If you ever listen to local education leader Kyle Quadros, you will be stunned at the data. And kudos to Sen. Sandra Cano and Rep. Marcia Ranglin-Vassell for sounding the alarm and passing legislation to create trauma-informed schools. It is clear that we need to invest more in the mental health of our young people, especially in the age of computer screens and social media. While the stigma of therapy is disappearing, the gap in access to treatment is still huge. And what about the trauma facing our veterans? Since 9/11, 20 times more veterans have died of unnatural causes after coming home than died in combat. We must provide the necessary mental health services for those serving our country here and abroad. This holiday season, please lend your support to Operation Stand Down, HunterSeven Foundation or the Home Base Program. This new year, let's commit to tackling all of the big T and little T traumas in our state.

State Rep. June Speaker (D-Warren): It is no surprise that housing is top of mind for many state policy-makers these days. The homeless encampment continues at the State House. Speaker Shekarchi emphasized housing in his many media appearances this past week. And everyday Rhode Islanders continue to face escalating rents, sky-high home prices and high mortgage rates. Two House commissions are at work on revamping the state's affordable housing laws and reframing its land use policies. Let's hope that we can find new tools to put the governor's allocation of \$250 million to work to build thousands of units. This is hard work, with multiple stakeholders whose interests often are in conflict. But the money makes this the right moment to get this work done.

State Rep. David Morales (D-Providence): From the disastrous announcement of public school closures in Providence, the revelation that

Lifespan's top exec earned more than \$3 million in 2020, and the state's inability to effectively support people experiencing homelessness, recent headlines have demonstrated major gaps in our state's public policy. For starters, while local control over the management of public schools is important, it is clear that we need uniformed policy across the state for how school closures are managed and communicated to students, families, and staff. On hospital executive pay, there should be a limit for how much a healthcare institution dependent on tax-payer dollars should allow its executives to earn, especially as frontline staff suffer from grueling, long hours due to a lack of staffing. As for the unhoused crisis in our state, the state was once again unprepared to support people, further demonstrating the need for our government to have a policy plan centered around supportive housing and wraparound services that go beyond limited shelter beds (though those are also important). All that said, it's clear that all of us within the

General Assembly will have a significant number of issues to urgently address when we return to the legislature in January.

CLOSING TIME

The race for an open U.S. House seat in 2000 was the first campaign I covered after returning to Rhode Island. Jim Langevin had a string of advantages in the four-way Democratic primary, not least being a Warwick resident who built his public profile as secretary of state for taking the legislature to task on good government issues. Now, with Seth Magaziner poised to be inaugurated next month as the new rep in CD2, Langevin has made his last floor speech and his congressional archives will be hosted at the Adam Library at his alma mater, Rhode Island College. According to RIC: "The materials are expected to be available for public access sometime in April. This work will include the creation of a finding aid/collection guide that will be available on the Rhode Island Archival and Manuscript

Bringing the Newport Holidays to young people from BBBSRI

A Museum, a Mansion, and Mentoring: Brendan O'Donnell, CEO of Newport Craft Brewing and Distilling, and the Preservation Society of Newport County, bring the Newport Holidays to young people from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island.

The crisp winter air was in full effect on Dec. 10, but that didn't stop Bigs (mentors) and Littles (mentees) of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island (BBBSRI) from experiencing two of the most unique spots in Newport – the Audrain Auto Museum and the Newport Breakers! The afternoon was made possible by the hospitality of Brendan O'Donnell, CEO of Newport Craft Brewing and Distilling, and the Preservation Society of Newport County.

Twenty-five Big and Little pairs (Matches) first met at the Audrain Museum where O'Donnell, and the museum Director, David DeMuzio, started the morning off with a history of the museum and current exhibit: Early Landmarks in Automotive Engineering, featuring the first horseless carriage and a number of vehicles created through technological advances. Matches then toured the exhibit with excitement and, of course, took many photos! After lunch at the museum

um, provided by Amano Pizza and Gelato Food Truck, Matches enjoyed a Viking Tour Trolley ride to The Breakers, experiencing one of RI's most festive holiday traditions. From the rich history to the dazzling holiday decor, it was a spectacular afternoon! One Little shared, "I love art history and the architecture in the mansion was so cool."

BBBSRI aims to inspire young people socially, emotionally, and educationally; ignite new perspectives and interests in young people, and empower young people to see their full potential!

This activity was impactful in many ways. It provided an opportunity for connection and social engagement, something many young people are struggling with post-pandemic, while exposing them to potential new interests and careers that they may not have experienced otherwise. Experiences such as this one, and the memories they leave, often inspire young people and change the trajectory of their lives! O'Donnell states, "BBBS is a really special organization that I stumbled upon about 6 months ago in Providence. I am working with their team to help bring awareness on Aquidneck Island to this amazing organization, while also showcasing ev-

erything this special place has to offer, such as the Audrain Automobile Museum and The Breakers Mansion. I find that when you see and experience something special like a rare car or historic house, it can inspire you to do something special, and every kid I spoke to was inspired by their trip to Newport."

You can inspire and impact a young person this holiday season too! Here's how:

1. Become a Mentor – we're experiencing a male mentor shortage. 50 boys are waiting who would like a male mentor. It's easy, fun, and impactful. Visit BigsRI.org/beabig

2. Host a Match Activity – if you'd like to host a Match Activity and provide a new experience for Bigs and Littles, email mentoring@BigsRI.org.

3. Donate cloth, fabric, books, and small household items – Visit DonateRI.org for details. Each donation supports mentoring relationships throughout the state.

4. Make a Financial Donation: Help fill the financial gap BBBSRI is feeling. Donate at secure.qgiv.com/for/ku3jfx/.

KICKER

Santa, can you give the Sox a time machine to travel back to the time when Boston had Mookie Betts and Xander Bogaerts, and perhaps the perspicacity to retain their services?

ROCKY POINT LICENSE PLATES ARE HERE!

Get Yours Now!



Thanks to legislation approved this year, the DMV is now producing Rocky Point license plates. For new orders, visit the Rocky Point Foundation website at rockypointfoundation.org where you will find an order form to be returned to the DMV with payment. At this time, plates are available for passenger registrations only.

Display your love and support of a place made for memories.

OH DEER

'More deer here now than when the pilgrims arrived'

By RORY SCHULER

His sparkling white tail bounced up and down a Warwick city street like the lone working tail light of a small vehicle hitting speed humps at nearly 40 miles per hour.

The spike buck avoided the steady traffic on Warwick Avenue, bolted down Wayne Street, through a backyard, finding safety in the grassy field surrounding the quiet Vernon Street Playground.

He stood still for more than 10 minutes, catching his breath near a rusted old Little League backstop. His bright white tail caught fire in the late morning sun; a flash of glowing bleach staining the dark winter tree line.

Deer are thriving in the Ocean State; in cities, suburban neighborhoods and woodland alike. And as the state's herd swells, over the past decade, hunters have been harvesting more deer in Rhode Island than ever before in the modern era.

"Every night, they're all over the place — even on the ballfield at City Park," said Warwick resident and local wildlife enthusiast Art Dunn. "This year I've seen so many it's unbelievable."

Copious Venison

In 1977, statewide, Rhode Island hunters reported harvesting 157 deer. That number peaked to around 3,000 harvested whitetails in 2008, and has since leveled off to around 2,000 annually, according to the latest Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) 2021-22 Deer Harvest Report.

Last year's Ocean State hunting season yielded more than "39 tons of consumable venison, equivalent to about 157,000 meals," according to the report.

"This year, by far, there's many, many more than I used to see — many more than last year," Dunn said. "I see 10 to 12 every night, easily. They lay down right inside the ball field. I see them jump over the six foot fence like nothing."

Dunn has been shooting photographs of the deer he spots. Recently, he spotted a family of spotted piebald deer — a relative genetic rarity, with dark spots on a white coat — within the Warwick city limits.

One of the smallest of the piebald family approached Dunn. He admired its almost Dalmatian-like hide.

"There's three or four of them always out there," Dunn said. "The little one; that thing comes right up to you. Almost like a pet."

According to a Wall Street Journal survey of state officials and hunting groups ("Hunting Deer in Mating Season Helps Make It One of the Best Years," Dec. 4 edition), the nation's "deer hunting

season is shaping up as one of the best ever this year, boosted by an early Thanksgiving start, larger than usual herds and favorable weather."

Although DFW won't release Rhode Island's most recent hunting data until early 2023, DEM spokesman Jay Wegimont said this year's harvest has been high, so far.

"DEM won't know if Rhode Island's deer harvest is following the trends mentioned in the Wall Street Journal article until the New Year," Wegimont explained. "We can say that from date-to-date comparisons, the deer harvest is up this year but the remainder of the year (post-gun season) is highly variable. In RI, the 2022-23 deer season runs from Sept. 10, 2022 (youth weekend), to Feb. 28, 2023. While it is still too early to estimate if RI will have a record year for deer harvest, we are on track to have an increase compared to the 2021-22 season, in which deer hunters reported harvesting 2,164 deer statewide."

Black Powder & White Tails

Wildlife enthusiast Paul Landry lives off Hartford Avenue in Johnston. He's noticing the same trends in his neighborhood and surrounding areas.

"You see a lot of deer if you go to the right place," Landry explained. "Johnston's loaded with deer — Johnston, Scituate, Foster — they're all loaded with deer. There's more deer here now than when the pilgrims arrived."

According to research posted on Small State Big History, a Rhode Island history website ("When Deer Became Extinct in Rhode Island" by Christian McBurney), the Ocean State's deer population was nearly wiped out centuries ago, but has made an almost miraculous recovery.

"I was shocked to learn that by the late 1700s and well into the late 1800s, deer were extinct in Rhode Island," McBurney wrote.

The author dug into Roger Williams's early descriptions of local wildlife ("A Key to the Language of America," 1643) and "how Native peoples hunted them."

"Before the arrival of Europeans, Indians hunted for game only as they needed food and clothing," McBurney wrote.

"For generations there was a balance between large mammals and human hunters. The arrival of white settlers radically altered that balance, in Rhode Island, as elsewhere in New England and the rest of the East Coast of North America."

An influx of settlers, new commerce and new weapons transformed the region's animal population.

"The fur trade introduced by white Europeans led Indians to increase

their hunting of mammals, particularly beaver used for hats in Europe, McBurney wrote. "Guns introduced by Europeans made killing easier for Indians and whites alike. The populations of fur-bearing animals, such as beaver, fox and mink, were decimated. White settlers then began clearing the land to create farms. Numerous forests were cut down and plowed into farms. Many mammals were hunted almost to the brink of extinction including, it is hard to believe today, deer."

Hunting regulations and wildlife management have led to a booming modern day Rhode Island deer herd.

"Here in Johnston, there's lots of big bucks," Landry said. "First of all they're smart. They adapt to where they live. They adapt to living in places that you wouldn't think they could live in."

The 2021-22 DFW Deer Harvest Report recounts the state's efforts to regenerate the Rhode Island deer herd, going back to the 1950s.

"Since the first regulated hunting season in Rhode Island in 1954, there have been tremendous changes in Rhode Island's deer population, deer harvest, land use, habitat types, hunter effort, and public perception of wildlife and hunters," wrote DEM wildlife biologist and report author Dylan Ferreira. "The statewide harvest in 1977 was 157 deer; since then, harvest increased until 2008, peaking at around 3,000 deer. Since 2008, there has been a slight decline to (around) 2,200 deer harvested annually."

Killing Fields

Most deer were shot, killed and harvested on private land in Rhode Island. According to the DFW report, 72 percent (1,566) of "all deer harvested in RI are harvested on private land," while the remainder were taken from the state's Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Federal properties, Undeveloped State Parks, and Cooperative properties (co-ops) open to hunting.

The Arcadia Management Area — overlapping portions of Richmond, Exeter, Hopkinton, and West Greenwich — had the most deer harvested, 101, of all state hunting areas.

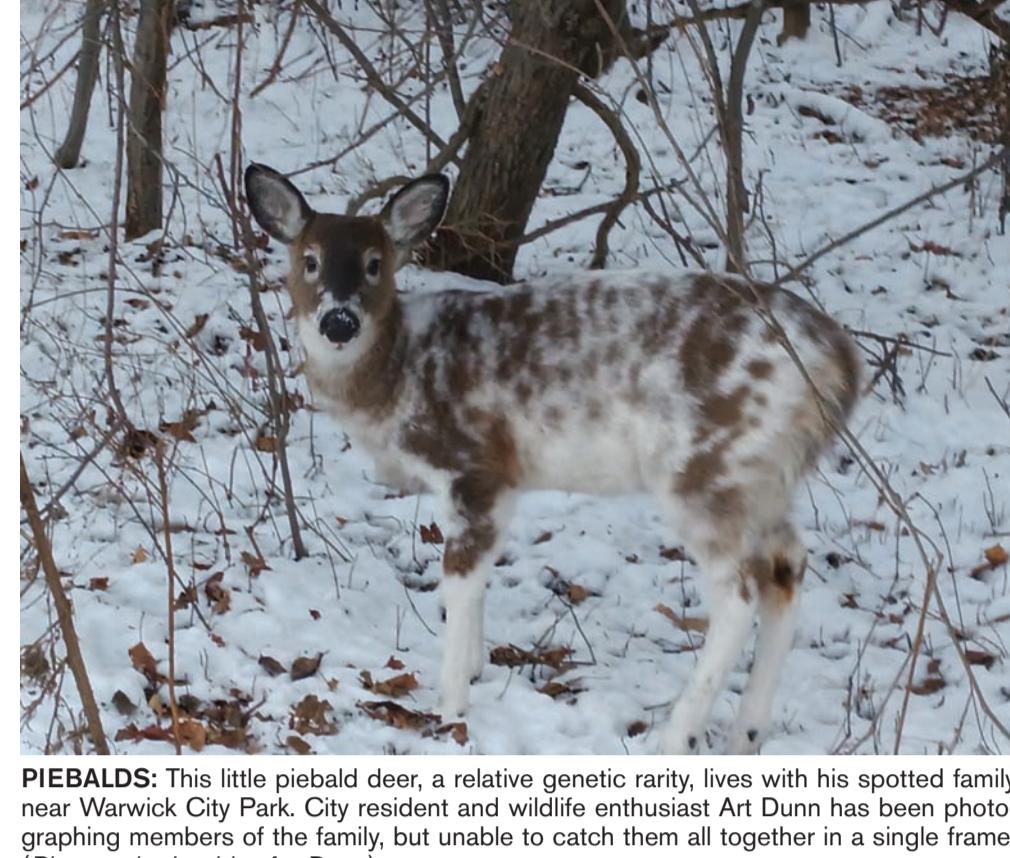
"The DFW has worked closely with private property owners such as land trusts, The Nature Conservancy, and others to open their lands to deer hunting," Ferreira wrote. "This is typically allowed to reduce deer densities at the property to mitigate the impacts of high deer densities on habitat."

Deer season in Rhode Island begins with archery (including crossbows), and runs from mid-September through the end of January.

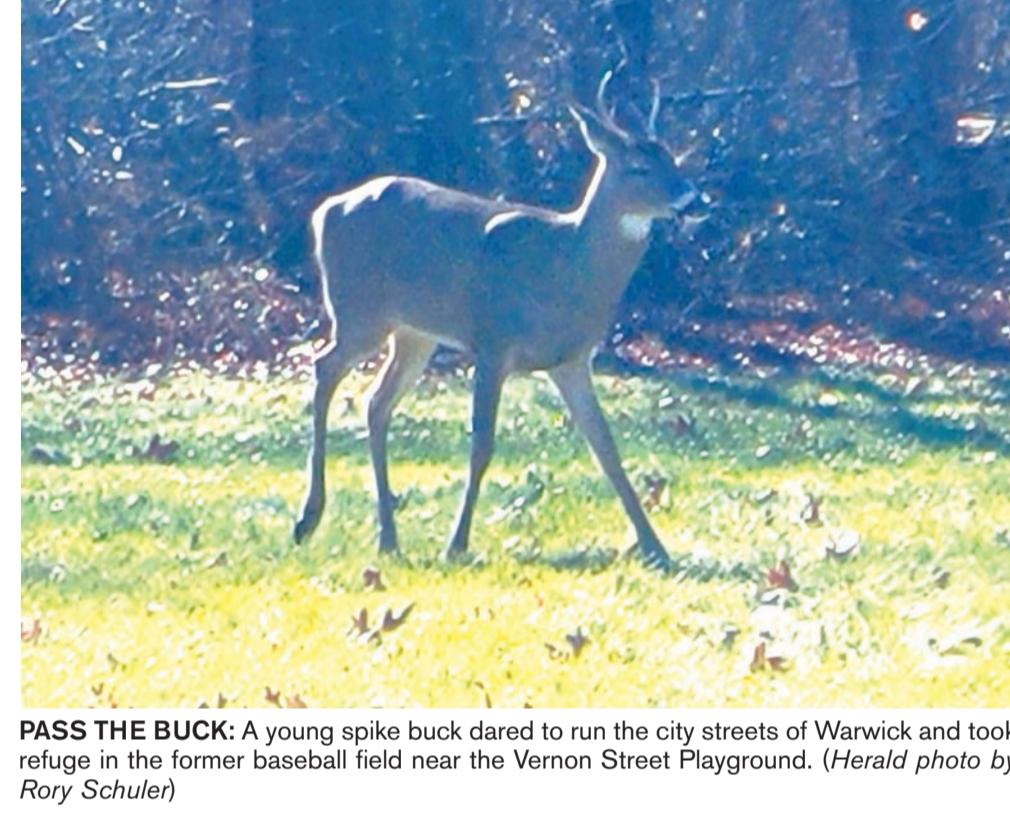
Designated time periods allow hunters to utilize a range of weapons, from bow and arrow, to rifles, shotguns and muzzleloaders. Hunters are allowed to bag "two antlered and multiple antlerless deer across the state." Rhode Island also now permits hunting on Sundays.

During the 2021-22 deer season, hunters reported harvesting 2,164 deer statewide, an 8 percent decrease from the 2020-21 season harvest of 2,348 deer. Of the year's harvest, 1,215 (56 percent) were antlered and 949 (44 percent) were antlerless, "the first time since 2010 the antlered harvest exceeded the antlerless harvest."

"(The) season ended with the largest difference between male (56%) and female (44%) harvest since 2010," Ferreira wrote. "In addition, the adult male to adult female ratio during



PIEBALDS: This little piebald deer, a relative genetic rarity, lives with his spotted family near Warwick City Park. City resident and wildlife enthusiast Art Dunn has been photographing members of the family, but unable to catch them all together in a single frame. (Photo submitted by Art Dunn)



PASS THE BUCK: A young spike buck dared to run the city streets of Warwick and took refuge in the former baseball field near the Vernon Street Playground. (Herald photo by Rory Schuler)

check stations was 1.0 to 4.7. The average from the past 10 years was 1.0 to 2.3 female to males. All methods of harvest saw a decrease in harvest except for the muzzleloader harvest. Last season, the archery harvest surpassed the muzzleloader harvest for the time on record, however this year the muzzleloader harvest was highest."

Responsive Management's most recent survey of Rhode Island hunters revealed 55 percent of the state's outdoorsmen "hunt to provide food for their families," according to the report.

"Wildlife is a renewable resource that when managed properly can provide sustenance in the form of wild, local, sustainable protein year after year to its consumers," Ferreira wrote. "For each deer harvested, approximately 30 percent of its field dressed body weight is available as consumable venison."

The state has been testing deer samples for Chronic Wasting Disease for the past two decades.

So far, "CWD has not been detected in any samples submitted for testing during the 20 years of CWD surveillance," Ferreira wrote.

Last year, the state sold 7,559 (not including previously sold, permanent, over-65 licenses) hunting or hunting and fishing combination licenses were sold in 2021-22, according to the report. The state also sold 20,232 deer permits (17,600 sold to state residents, with 2,632 purchased by non-residents).

"Most hunters, both residents and non-residents, purchased two deer permits," Ferreira wrote. "There were 1,396 successful deer hunters in Rhode Island, with the majority (89%) of hunters harvesting two deer or less. Resident hunters still harvest the most deer in the state, accounting for 1,855 deer, while non-resident hunters harvested

They're breeding like crazy."

The average Rhode Island hunter was 48 years old, and "continues to rise annually," according to the report.

"In 10-20 years, most of today's hunters will age out, leaving behind a small group of hunters to carry the hunting tradition and financially support wildlife conservation," Ferreira wrote.

Hunting license sales have dropped 34 percent since 2000, when the state licensed 11,528 hunters and nearly 19,000 deer permits.

"However, there was an increase in this year's deer hunters (7%) and deer permit (1%) sales," according to Ferreira. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, Rhode Islanders sought ways to get outside and connect with nature; this small increase in deer hunters and permit sales may be connected to this trend."

Vehicular Deer-slaughter

National public safety groups estimate vehicles collide with around 1.5 million deer annually in the United States. In Rhode Island in 2021, the state reported 1,285 "deer auto strikes," up 10 percent over 2020.

"In 2021, the number of reported deer auto strikes was equivalent to 59% of the total reported hunter harvest," Ferreira wrote, leading to an increase in bag limits in some regions of the state.

Dunn recalled twice in the past few years, when he's been unlucky enough to collide with two pairs of speeding hooves and a white tail.

"In Narragansett one night, on my way to the beach, a deer jumped over a fence and landed on my roof and windshield," Dunn said Tuesday morning. "It rolled off, stood up and ran into the woods. They're tough as nails. A year later, I hit another at the Yawgoog Ski Area ...



BIG BUCKS: Art Dunn spotted this huge rack in Warwick earlier this week. (Photo submitted by Art Dunn)

LEGAL NOTICES

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations for the City of Warwick, Kent County and the City of Cranston, Providence County, Rhode Island, Case No. 22-01-0564P. The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) solicits technical information or comments on proposed flood hazard determinations for the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), and where applicable, the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report for your community. These flood hazard determinations may include the addition or modification of Base Flood Elevations, base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Area boundaries or zone designations, or the regulatory floodway. The FIRM and, if applicable, the FIS report have been revised to reflect these flood hazard determinations through issuance of a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR), in accordance with Title 44, Part 6 of the Code of Federal Regulations. These determinations are the basis for the floodplain management measures that your community is required to adopt or show evidence of having in effect to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. For more information on the proposed flood hazard determinations and information on the statutory 90-day period provided for appeals, please visit FEMA's website at https://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/BFE_Status/bfe_main.asp, or call the FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) toll free at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).



JOANNE EVANS

■ Author

(Continued from page 1)

Little Owl is about a young owl whose mom asks her who loves her, and the owllet doesn't know.

"So she thinks about it, and thinks about it, and then she goes around the farm and talks to all of her animal friends. And her friends know who loves her, but they don't want to tell her. They want to make her figure it out on her own," Evans explained.

So, the story aims to engage readers in a bit of mystery. Evans further explained that her animal friends give the owllet clues throughout the story until she finally figures out who loves her.

Evans explained how she named the mother owl Henrietta Schmidt, a silly name she used to call her mother. She felt that through this book, published locally by Pawtucket's Stillwater River Publications, she could keep her mom's memory alive.

In addition to early childhood centers, she also performed a reading at Hope Alzheimer's Center, the facility that cared for her mother before her passing. Evans explained it is important to her to continue to support

the Alzheimer's community throughout her journey as an author.

Little Owl is also well-traveled. Evans shared that her brother, who lives in Hong Kong, has purchased and distributed several copies of the book overseas, and that a colleague of hers has also purchased several books and sent them to the Philippines. The book is available on Amazon.com and from local booksellers Barrington Books and Books on the Square.

Evans shared that she and her brother are in the process of creating plush characters of the owllet and her mom. She hopes to have those available alongside copies of the book shortly.

Evans is currently focusing on her second book, available for purchase soon after the new year. The main character of this book is Penelope the Pink Pig, a character from Little Owl. In this installment, readers can help solve a mystery that surrounds her.

Evans, though busy with work, family, and her new life as an author, is enjoying every moment she can. She is still presenting Little Owl at early childhood centers around Rhode Island, visiting and supporting memory care centers around the state, and is looking forward to her upcoming second release.

Providence Diamond reopens in new Garden City Center location

Providence Diamond, celebrated its grand re-opening in a new space within Garden City Center (105 Hillside Road). Family owned and operated since 1985, Providence Diamond's new

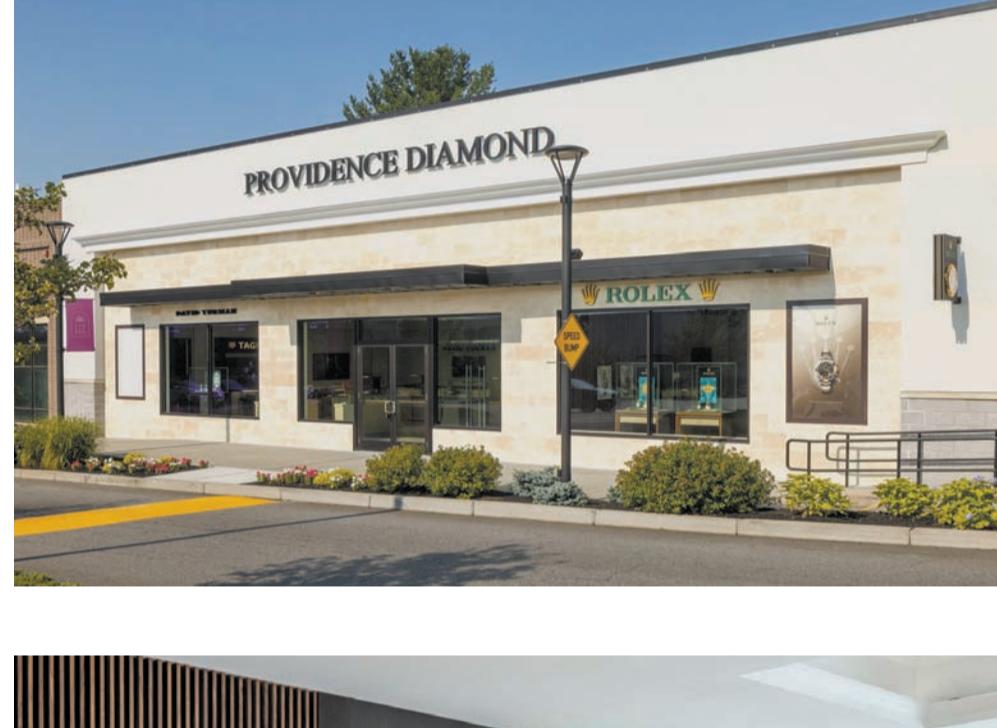
space was designed to enhance the client experience and offer expanded services and a larger assortment of luxury products. The location has an elevated atmosphere and larger footprint.

"For more than 30 years, Providence Diamond has been delivering a unique and personal shopping experience to our clients, and we are thrilled to continue that tradition of excellence with the grand reopening of our new space," said Suzanne Pritsker Salomon, owner. "We realize what an incredible privilege it is to service our clients, face-to-face, and to have the opportunity to share in their special moments and create long-lasting relationships. We're so excited to officially unveil our new store, showcase our enhanced services, and to welcome new friends into the Providence Diamond family."

Providence Diamond's newly designed 4,800 square foot showroom features:

- The only authorized Rolex service center in Southern New England
- A Rolex watchmaker on-site
- An exclusive Rolex selection within an in-store Rolex boutique
- *New* state of the art custom jewelry design and repair center
- Exclusive David Yurman in-store boutique
- *New* exclusive timepiece brand, Grand Seiko
- *New* jewelry brand Leo Pizzo
- Expanded private label offerings including gold, silver and diamond jewelry starting under \$100

The new showroom features two client lounges and a private room for intimate functions. There is also a separate bridal showroom to service a special group of clients, PDBrides. The owners used J2Contract and Acme Architect for the impressive build, designed by Taste Design, Inc.



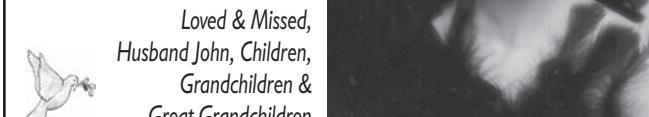
Holiday REMEMBRANCES

Beverly Hassell

CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCE

It's hard to believe
you are no longer here,
We think of you,
you feel so near.
In some small way,
every single day.
Memories of you
come our way.

Loved & Missed,
Husband John, Children,
Grandchildren &
Great-Grandchildren



Rick Zarrella

Another holiday season
without you, and
I miss you more than ever
So many special memories
of our amazing life together
On my mind and in my
heart...

Always and Forever
xxx Donna coo



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Rev. Yohan Go
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asburyumcri.org
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1753 Phenix Avenue
Rev. Richard K. Leahy
827-0770
www.solidrockchurchag.com

Christadelphian Ecclesia
2104 Cranston Street
441-7432
www.christadelphia.org

Church Of The Ascension (Episcopal)
390 Pontiac Avenue
Pastor Santiago Rodriguez
Pastor Sarah Saxe
Sun 10 am (English)
Sun 12pm (Spanish)
461-5811
www.ascensioncranston.org

Church Of The Transfiguration
1665 Broad Street
461-3142
Sunday 10 am
Holy Eucharist

Edgewood Congregational Church
1788 Broad Street
461-1344
Sunday 10 am w/coffee hour
www.edgewoodchurchri.org

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43 Scituate Ave.
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944-2771
www.faithchapelri.org
Sunday Worship 10 am

Gateway Pentacostal Fellowship
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Pastor Russell Farmer
467-3830
www.gatewayupc.org

Grace Bible Church
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481-0030
www.gbcrl.org
9 a.m. Sunday Worship
7 p.m. Wednesday Prayer

Holy Apostles Church
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Very Reverend William J. Ledoux
946-5586
www.holycatholic.com

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122 Laurens St.
Mario J. Nadich, Pastor
787-0725



LIKE FAMILY: Amy Chaffee serves Evan and Kristen Matthews their luncheon selection at O'Rourke's Bar and Grill.



SHOPPING COMPANIONS: Corgis Oliver and Fig accompany their master Andrea Leonardo as she does her Christmas shopping at Noons on the Warwick side of the bridge in Pawtuxet. (Warwick Beacon photos)



ON HIS READING LIST: Angelo Nieves was delighted to find a book on Hillary Clinton in one of several book exchange box libraries in the village.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT ABOUNDS: The business slows down but not the Christmas or village spirit says Ray Verrocchio of Bagel Express and Deli (below).



LOCAL SPARKLE: Caitlin Wiesen displays a pair of locally made earrings sold at Noons.

demographic hit. "Things became available," she said. She found the space for Lucy Juicy so named for her dog, Susie Lucy, who unfortunately is no longer of this world. She has expanded the venture making space for a record shop and rotating the works of local artists that are displayed on a back wall. The works are for sale.

"I have always loved the village," she says, apologizing as she leaves to make avocado toast for the first customer of the morning, a young couple with a stroller. Shawna hopes to partner with village businesses and has thoughts of opening more Lucy Juicys possibly in East Greenwich, Providence and Wickford. She also talked of the Christmas spirit and how it has pervaded the village.

Back at O'Rourke's the luncheon crowd has started to arrive.

"I'm Mrs. Rhode Island, they should give me an award," Amy said loud enough for patrons gathered around the bar to hear. They laugh and then lowering her voice, she says why she loves the village to the point that she's thinking of selling her house in Smithfield and moving to Pawtuxet once her daughter graduates high school.

"They're like family, they care for one another. They know you by your first name."

She's acknowledges all the work that Friends of Pawtuxet Village, The Pawtuxet Village Association, the Gaspee Days Committee and the Pawtuxet Rangers do to make for the village.

It's unlikely that Ray, Shawna or Amy would disagree that Pawtuxet Village has a perpetual case of Christmas spirit.

Village

(Continued from page 1)

couple of shops, held dinner on Sunday in a tent erected in the parking lot for upwards of 30 people.

Steps away in what is still thought of as Lindsay's Market, although that closed years ago, Shawna Gierhart had just opened Lucy Juicy, the business she started barely over ago. She has holiday smoothies and a vegan nog made with almond milk in place of eggs. She has gift boxes and also sells candles.

She said she dreamed of opening a business but as fate would have it the opportunity didn't arise until the pan-

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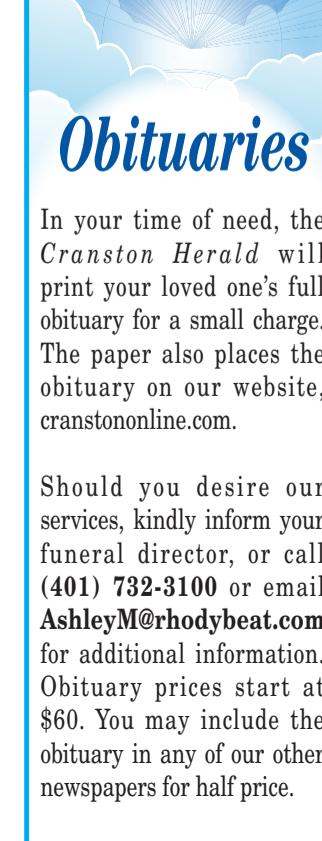
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Holiday Giving Tree leads to thousands of gifts, brightens season for kids across RI

Rhode Islanders in every corner of the state embraced this year's Bank Rhode Island (BankRI) Holiday Giving Tree program, leading to an incredible 5,556 gifts donated to brighten the season for underprivileged children served by local nonprofits. It is the most presents ever collected by the program, which recognized its 25th year in 2022.

"This was a tremendous display of generosity by so many people who simply wanted to spread kindness and help bring joy to kids at a special time of year," said Will Tsonos, BankRI's President and CEO. "Our customers... our staff... our entire community - I'm so grateful to everyone who gave, and also to our nonprofit partners for the work they do on behalf of families each and every day."

This year's Holiday Giving Tree began Nov. 1, with all 20 BankRI branches statewide displaying a giving tree decorated with ornaments featuring the name, age, and wish of a child served by that branch's nonprofit partner. Throughout the six-week effort, people visited branches, selecting ornaments and later returning to place their donated, unwrapped gifts beneath the tree.

Some of the most popular gifts wished for were LEGO sets, L.O.L. Surprise dolls, science and slime kits, board games, sports equipment, and Lite-Brite sets. Numerous bicycles were donated at the bank's Jefferson Boulevard, Lincoln, and Wakefield branches, while the Coventry location received a large number of digital learning toys for young ones. BankRI's Lincoln branch led the effort, collecting 852 donated gifts for its partner, Town of Lincoln Holiday Basket Program.

As of Dec. 20, all gifts were given to



SPIRIT OF GIVING: At its Park Avenue branch, pictured, BankRI's Holiday Giving Tree program collected 70 gifts for children served by Aids Care Ocean State. The bank's Atwood Avenue location received 147 presents to benefit kids at SSTARbirth, while the Plainfield Pike branch collected 65 gifts in support of Comprehensive Community Action Program. Statewide, the effort led to 5,556 gifts for underprivileged children. From left: Mike Reynolds, Business Development Manager, Aids Care Ocean State; Jenn Parrillo, AVP, Park Avenue Branch Manager; Linda Lussier, Senior Teller; and Nicole Pomeranz, Senior Teller.

BankRI's nonprofit partners for distribution to the kids they serve, ensuring they would reach their new homes in time for the big holiday.

The bank's partners for the 25th annual Holiday Giving Tree and the branch(es) collecting on their behalf are: Adoption Rhode Island (Pawtucket), AIDS Care Ocean State (Park Avenue, Cranston), Angel in Action RI (Coventry), Boys & Girls Clubs of Warwick (all 3 Warwick branches), Comprehensive Community Action Program (Plainfield Pike, Cranston) and Tri-County Community Action Agency (Johnston and Smithfield).

(Woonsocket), Domestic Violence Program of Crossroads RI (East Side, Providence), East Bay Community Action Program (both East Providence branches), House of Hope (East Greenwich), Jonnycake Center for Hope (Wakefield), Kingstown Crossings (North Kingstown), Lucy's Hearth (Middletown), Providence Housing Authority (Turks Head, Downtown Providence), SSTARbirth (Atwood Avenue, Cranston), Town of Lincoln Holiday Basket Program (Lincoln) and Tri-County Community Action Agency (Johnston and Smithfield).

Books

(Continued from page 1)

The Cranston Public School Library Media and Information Technology Program's mission is to "ensure that all students and staff are effective and ethical users of ideas and information. Our program aims to help students achieve academic excellence through innovative and collaborative instruction. Our goal is to create future-ready citizens who understand the importance of digital citizenship, academic integrity, and a love for the written word."

Looking at an outside district

Basso said Westerly Public Schools was one of the first districts in the state to have a book challenge. When creating Cranston's policy, she looked at Westerly's policy.

In WPS's procedure for reconsideration of library materials, the principal will request that the concerned party meets with the principal, designees and faculty using the material. If the complainant still finds the material unacceptable after a review of the school's selection policy, then alternate

reading materials will be provided.

WPS's policy adds that individuals may fill out a request for reconsideration of school library books and district administration will be notified. Within 10 days of the receipt of the completed request, the district's school library media specialist, assistant superintendent and district library media specialist will appoint a committee to review the material in question. For this meeting, the committee will have completed the following: read the book in its entirety prior to discussion; evaluate the material in light of the Westerly Public Schools Selection policy; reach a decision as to the appropriateness of the material for the school library collection; within 45 school days of appointment, make a written recommendation to retain the material in question or remove it from the collection. Following the committee's responses, the Superintendent will review the report and inform all involved parties of the decision. If the concerned individual is not in agreement with the committee's decision an appeal can be made to the Westerly Superintendent within 30 days.

Educational Pathways, which focuses on child development.

Cranston High School East held its 'Be a Bolt' Open House on Dec. 4, where the school presented its Career and Technical Education offerings. Hitchings noted the event as a "great success," drawing students from eastern and western Cranston as well as other areas of the state.



CONGRATS: Code.org's Director of Policy, Hannah Weissman, addressed and congratulated Cranston East students for becoming the benefactors of a \$10,000 prize awarded by Code.org on Dec. 14. One elementary and one secondary school from each U.S. state and territory were chosen for this prize, which will help further computer science education for underrepresented students. Cranston East will be instituting a Computer Science CTE Pathway starting in the fall of 2023.

FURTHERING COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION: Cranston High School East CTE students pose with a check presented to the school by Code.org on Dec. 14 to help further computer science education for underrepresented students. Rising Cranston East ninth graders will have the opportunity to enroll in Computer Science at Cranston East starting in the fall.

■ East

(Continued from page 1)

focus students solely on computer science-based activities. The Hour of Code generally takes place during Computer Science Education Week, between Dec. 5 and 11, and is described as a "call to action to inspire K-12 students to learn computer science, advocate for equity, and celebrate the contributions of students, teachers, and partners in the field."

Fifth-grade students from Dutemple Elementary School visited Cranston East to participate in East's Hour of Code. Computer science-related stations were set up in different areas of the school, demonstrating various coding and programming skills. Dutemple's fifth graders, with the assistance of current Cranston East students, moved from station to station to participate in each coding and programming activity.

Among the students' favorites were the 'Dance Party' and 'Minecraft' activities.

Following the Hour of Code activities, Cranston East CTE students and Dutemple's fifth graders attended a

"I hope to see every student enrolled in a CS class, especially young women and students from historically underrepresented groups," he concluded.

Hitchings stated that the new computer science CTE pathway will be open to students in the fall, and applications are open now until January for rising ninth graders.

"The computer science program is a program that will only be at East, which we're really excited about because I think it will attract students from different schools and communities, who might not have necessarily put Cranston East on their list of places they wanted to go for high school," Hitchings said.

Since the award is classified as a prize, the school is now tasked with creating a 'wish list' of technology-related items for the school, submitting that list to Code.org, and Code.org will purchase and have the items delivered to the school.

Hitchings explained that a room in the library is slated to be converted into the computer science space, pending Department of Education approval. In addition to the computer science pathway, the school also intends to kick off an Audio and Sound Engineering Pathway as well as

Happy Holidays

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RHODYBEAT.COM

Tis the Season



What Kids Wish for at this Time of Year HOLIDAY CONTEST WINNERS



MOST CREATIVE Brooklyn Audette, Hoxsie School, Grade 3

This time of year means family and friends. I can play with my friends on Christmas Eve. My mom, dad, and Johnathan set cookies and milk on our table. The next day the cookies are gone. Santa eats them! We have a break from school and I get to spend time with my family and friends too. We can do fun stuff like play in the backyard and open presents. Family is special. Friends are too. Christmas is a special holiday. On Christmas, you give to others.

MOST HEARTWARMING Myah Cabral, Hoxsie School, Grade 3

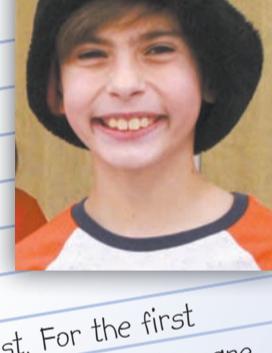
What does this time of year mean to me? Happiness. The snow is beautiful. I love Christmas cheer. There's nothing like Christmas here. Elves are everywhere. Christmas spirit is in the air. I just can't help but say "Happy Holidays!" Hot chocolate and peppermints are things I love around Christmas time. Decorating is so much fun! I wish this time of year would never end. My love for the holidays will never end. I love Christmas music, it's full of cheer. Spending time with my family is the best. I love my family so much. The holidays are great.



MOST HUMOROUS David Radcliffe, Hoxsie School, Grade 3

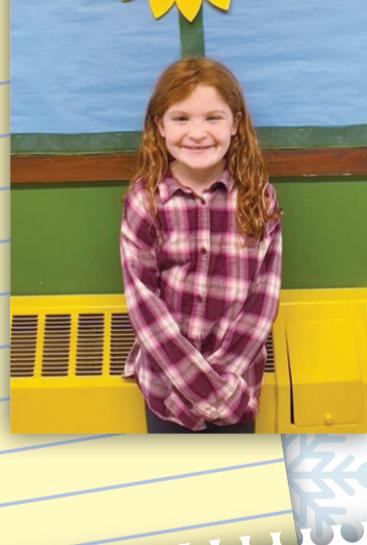
What does this time of year mean to me?

My birthday is on Christmas! I'm excited for my birthday because you can unwrap presents. You can see your family, like your grandma. You can eat cake. You pick your breakfast. For the first time, I just tried radishes with lemon and salt. They are crunchy. They are lemony. They are spicy. They are juicy. I got a new iPad. Better memory. More space. More games. Longer battery life. All in all it's been a pretty good year.



MOST CREATIVE Paige Lewandowski, Garden City Elementary School, Grade 2

Here is how to enjoy the holidays:
Step 1: Drink hot chocolate
Step 2: Give out presents
Step 3: Spend time with family



MOST HUMOROUS Aubrey Moniz, Garden City Elementary School, Grade 2

My favorite holiday memory is when my elf hid in my candy jar. It all happened when I woke up. He ate all of my chocolate. Everyone laughed because he was upside down.

MOST HEARTWARMING Lauralyna Jian, Garden City Elementary School, Grade 2

My favorite holiday is Christmas. My favorite thing about Christmas is the presents and snow. I like giving origami during Christmas. The holiday season means being warm and playing in the snow. My favorite holiday memory is when I made a snow cave and a snow chair.



CONTEST - PAGE 19

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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local Adoptable Loveable



Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

CHARLIE

Poor Charlie was found abandoned in a motel room due to his owner being taken to the hospital. This boy stayed alone waiting and hoping for his owner to return all while the motel staff tended to him. Unfortunately, his owner never returned, and Charlie found himself at the Warwick Animal Shelter in search of a new home. He is a very handsome six year old Tuxedo with striking light green eyes and a fluffy tail. He is an independent boy so no other pets for him. He'll want all of your attention to himself. Charlie is best suited for an adult home, he will make a wonderful companion! Maybe you've been searching for a furry friend to spend your life with, Charlie might be waiting for you? Please contact the Warwick Animal Shelter at 401-468-4377 for more information about how you can meet Charlie.

If you have been looking to adopt or know of an animal in need, please contact Karen directly at



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Maddie McGill exhibits a cohesive range with debut album

By ROB DUGUAY

The craft of songwriting is akin to numerous other creative mediums, such as coming up with the vision for a painting or the idea for a film and putting it on canvas for the former and on screen for the latter. The composition for a song can be wide-ranging and when it's part of an album it can be similar to a chapter in a book. There's room for versatility with a consistent foundation being the jump off point for each installment. For Providence singer-songwriter Maddie McGill, she did her own take on this process for her debut full-length "Surrender" that came out on December 10. Her skills on piano are the anchor for each track with stellar instrumentation and arrangements giving her music a well-rounded feel, tone and quality.

While the making of the album took only a couple months, everything that happened leading up to the time in the recording studio took a whole lot longer. Some songs off of the album are nearly a decade old while others were written a year or two ago.

"I wrote these songs acoustically on piano over the years," McGill says about the making of the album. "The earliest, 'Waiting For', I wrote in 2015, and 'Hope Street', 'Millennial Waltz' and 'It's Fine' were all written specifically for a band & ensemble in late 2021 while all the others came to me here & there over the years. The years definitely contributed to the different genre and style influences throughout the album as I went through different interests and periods of life."

The songs got developed and went through a couple of iterations in different bands until Alex Colburn on guitar & brass, John McCarthy on bass and Al Lombardi on drums & percussion honed in their parts and made the tracks what they are. It's humbling for me that such excellent musicians took on my songs with care and dedication every step of the way."

"We went in with our parts more-or-less written and ready to go," she adds, "but luckily we were open to exploration and happy accidents in the studio as well. The main thing about building tracks is that we don't step all over each other, so we developed arrangements that kept songs neat & tidy and allowed all of the parts to shine in their own ways; which were all put together with care and perfection by our producing engineer George Dussault. George provided the ideal environment and expertise for us to do all of that and provided his in-

Maddie McGill



sight on production when we needed it, and otherwise let us figure out our parts/arrangement decisions."

Based out of his studio at Galilee Productions in Cumberland, Dussault's production on the album takes it to an excellent level of sound. Nothing sounds off and it all sounds modern, this album isn't trying to be a blast from the past or something that it's not. It's a genuinely great collection of songs with some of them leaning towards jazz & blues while others have more of a pop & alt-rock vibe. The variety that's present is what I enjoy the most about "Surrender" along with how McGill sings. Her voice is excellent while serving as the key element that sets the mood of the entire record.

"Millennial Waltz" has a very rhythmic structure while incorporating steady doses of harmony and a kind of catchiness that sneaks up on the

senses. The sax being played in the background really makes it stand out along with the funky guitar solo. The lead single off of the album, "Hope Street" has a really cool drum beat at the beginning and it's the best example of McGill's vocal brilliance while "It's Fine" features a cool dynamic between the bass line and guitar. Other highlights off of the album include "Myth", "Got It Going On" and "Waiting For". While I did just mention a bunch of songs, I do suggest listening to the record from beginning to end for the complete listening experience.

For that particular experience, you can check out "Surrender" via Maddie McGill's Bandcamp page at madidiemcgillband.bandcamp.com. It's an excellent album with an abundance of musical versatility that can't be overlooked.



AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER (20th Century Studios)

SHOWCASE WARWICK

AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER

*** 1/2 (Joyce) *** (Don)

Sequel

Jake, Neytiri and their three children are living on Pandora, still being chased by the humans.

They escape to the outskirts which consists mostly of water. Another tribe teaches them how to survive under water, dividing the film between battles in a beige environment and battles in the beautiful, lush blue. I like the blue part better.

There are long scenes of water creatures and the undersea environment that are beautiful to immerse yourself.

The movie is three hours and 12 minutes long, and I soon tired over the endless battles and sightseeing under water.

See it at the

with
Joyce & Don
Fowler

Movies

NETFLIX

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

D. H. Lawrence's torrid love story, required reading of every teenager when I was in high school, is given a steamy interpretation that is quite true to the novel.

Connie marries Clifford as he goes off to the front and she waits patiently for him to return to take on the role as Lord of the Manor and the local coal mine that makes him Lord of the entire town.

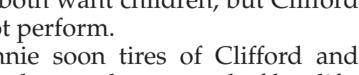
Connie soon tires of Clifford and demands complete control of her life.

She wanders over the lush property, running into the handsome gamekeeper.

They enter into a hot and heavy romance. She becomes pregnant. Rumors run rampant. She goes off to Venice.

What to do? How can the couple survive the scandal?

You must remember the ending. All's well that ends well.



Connie for his every need.

They both want children, but Clifford cannot perform.

Connie soon tires of Clifford and demands complete control of her life. She wanders over the lush property, running into the handsome gamekeeper.

They enter into a hot and heavy romance. She becomes pregnant. Rumors run rampant. She goes off to Venice.

What to do? How can the couple survive the scandal?

You must remember the ending. All's well that ends well.

Festival Ballet's 'Nutcracker' is awesome

Review by DON FOWLER

While I have seen "The Nutcracker" over a dozen times, I have never seen a production as polished, powerful and impressive as Festival Ballet's version playing through Sunday at the Vets.

Or as one young lady, dressed in her best party dress told her mother, "That was awesome."

My recommendation: Stop reading this. Go to the phone. Call 800-515-2171 for any tickets you can get.

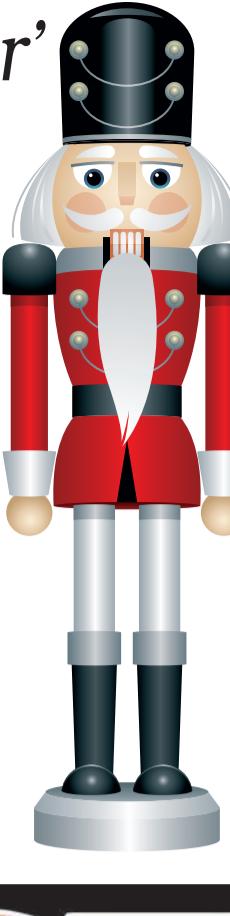
The production fills every square inch of the auditorium, and every seat is a good one.

The sets and costumes are professionally made and as colorful as the Nutcracker who comes to life for Clara and the cast and crew of hundreds, from dancing bears, mice and the sugar plum fairy to the multitude of young children who fill the stage.

Cranston's Marvin Novogrodski is the Magic Consultant for some neat little magic tricks that has Clara and the kids in the audience cheering.

There is a Boston influence in this version, including Boston Ballet guest artists, choreographer Yuri Yanowsky, and Director Kathleen Breen Combes who was a principal dancer in the Boston Ballet before becoming Festival Ballet Providence Executive Director in 2019.

If "The Nutcracker" doesn't get you in the holiday spirit, nothing will.



Newport Film Festival crosses Bridge to Warwick

By DON FOWLER

The Newport Film Festival is branching out through Rhode Island, screening the Cannes and Sundance Festivals Best Documentary at Warwick's Gamm Theatre last week.

"All That Breathes" tells the story of two New Delhi brothers who have dedicated their lives to saving Kites, birds that are important to the ecosystem.

The documentary uses the struggles of the scientists and working class fighting climate change under difficult conditions. War, sickness and poverty hold back finding no cures as the crew works in bombed out buildings and garbage heaps.

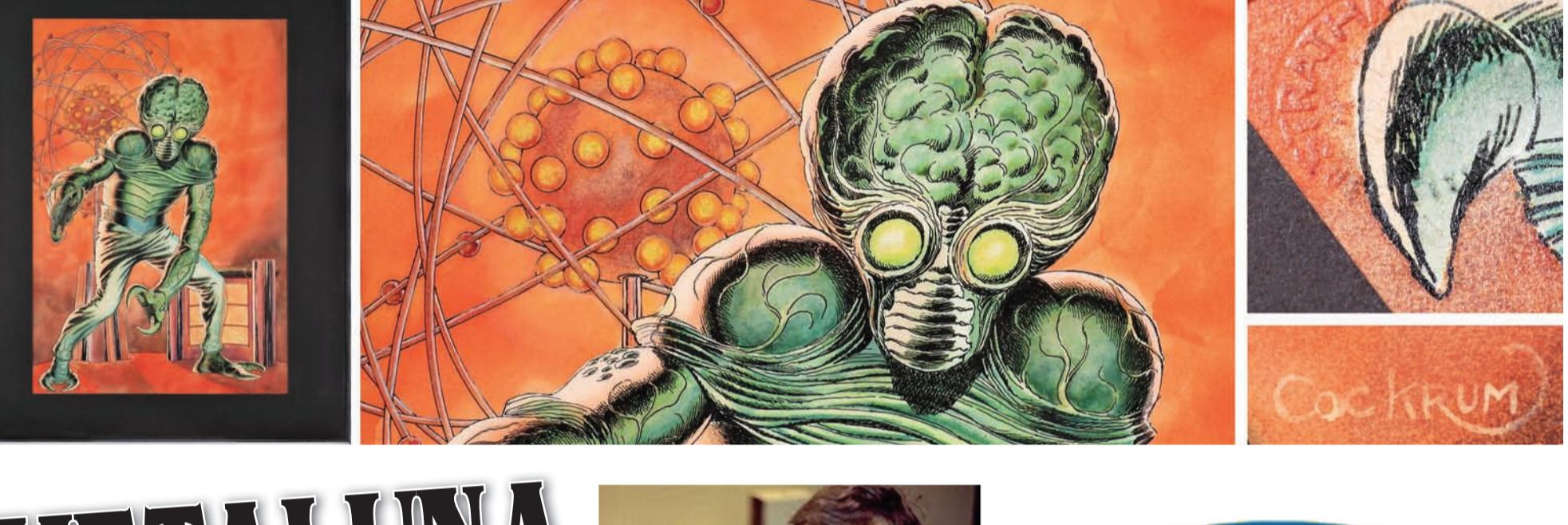
"All That Breathes" is a moving, educational film that calls people to action by telling the story without "Talking Heads," charts and graphs. The characters are very real, shot in real life.

The quality of the film is excellent (Why it won the awards, with special attention to the background sounds, especially the birds).

The film will be shown on HBO Max.

For more information on joining Newport Film and attending their many films and programs go to info@newportfilm.com. Filmmakers and experts in the film's subject lead brief discussions following the films.

COLLECTIBLES



METALUNA MUTANT



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

Over the past couple of months, you will have noticed I have written about a gentleman named Andy Yanchus a time or two. If you missed those articles, the SparkNotes version of the story is about a boy growing up in Brooklyn, New York with a yearning passion for model kits and comic books that he turned into a lifelong career. Andy had worked for Aurora Plastics Corporation as a Project Manager (1965-1975) followed by a seventeen-year stint at Marvel Comics as a staff colorist (1975-1992). This is all in addition to remaining an active member of

the collector community too! So now that you are all caught up, let's take you back in time.

The year is 1974 in Brooklyn, New York at the Aurora Plastics Corporation where Andy was working with his friend (and later Marvel Comics colleague) Dave Cockrum. The Comic, Monster, and Prehistoric model kits they created had been a long running success, but they needed a new line of model kits for store shelves. The plan was to introduce a line of science fiction film inspired kits; these included the War of the Worlds spaceship, Gort from *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and Robby the Robot with the Metaluna Mutant from *This Island Earth*. Alas, that plan never came to be, and for decades it was believed none of these models ever made it to development.

Then, in 2001 a prototype of the Metaluna Mutant surfaced online for sale followed by an illustration mockup of the design by Dave Cockrum. Presumably it was originally a guide for the sculptor to follow in the production process. During this time, the modeling community also became aware of the original production box art by Dave Cockrum, which in Andy Yanchus had in his possession. It was a piece that would ultimately be published in the Atlantis limited edition reissue. Present day, the Metaluna Mutant is one of the most famed models as the Aurora kit that never was - but was always wanted.

This New Year's Day at Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers, we are excited to announce we will be offering that original (one of a kind!) production box art of the Metaluna

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AURORA



Mutant by Dave Cockrum from the collection of Andy Yanchus. Utilizing ink and watercolor, Dave Cockrum brought the mutant to life on paper with an ominous red background, and it displays beautifully!

Comics and collectibles remain one of the hottest markets through these strange economic times. If you have a collection, we are here to help; consigning at auction and having your collection managed is the only way to maximize its potential value - You never know what you might have hidden away in a box!

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Life Matters

with
LINDA PETERSEN

love, has chosen to spend the time with a good friend out of state, and Angel lives out of state with his biological brother and his family in Orlando, Florida. Francis and his family will fly in from California for New Year's Eve and we will celebrate Christmas on New Year's Day. Of course, these many mini celebrations will be great, but they do not add up to the holiday cheer we celebrated when our family was younger and living all under one roof.

To combat the nostalgic feelings, my

mission this holiday season is to spread Christmas cheer among strangers, hoping to add a little joy to both their seasonal festivities and my own. This started on Black Friday when unbelievable toy sales blanketed the internet with ads. Always one to appreciate a bargain, especially a 70% OFF bargain, my fingers began to delightfully dance on the computer keyboard, ordering remote control vehicles, Barbie dolls and family games for under ten dollars each. The gifts were anonymously sent to a large

church in South Providence which was collecting presents for the members of their congregation. What a delightful feeling that was!

Greatly enjoying a shopping day at Ocean State Job Lot, my skills were put to good use to purchase blankets, hats, and gloves for the homeless. Not only were the prices reasonable, but as a Job Lot "Insider", I was presented with a gift card of equal value as my purchase. Hubby was thrilled with this and proceeded to go shopping to replenish all the spices in our home. He also managed to throw extra cans of vegetables in the cart, along with boxes of uncooked macaroni and cheese, cereal, dog and cat food, and scalloped potatoes which he donated to a local food pantry. It was a "win-win" situation, and both of us were happy that we were able to do something for others.

I wrote several letters to people in the military service thanking them for their service and wishing them a happy holiday. Done through the Any Soldier website, the representative who gets the letters gives them out to soldiers who have not received any mail, thereby ensuring it gets to a person who would appreciate it.

I work in a great non-profit organization that helps the homeless. For a staff of twenty-five, I purchased inexpensive keychains with a starfish on them, and printed out the cute little starfish story. (The one where a man is walking on a beach and sees a boy throwing stranded starfish into the sea. He tells him that there are so many starfish he can't possibly make a difference, but the boy swooped down, picked up another starfish and threw it into the water. "It made a difference to that one", he said.) Putting them in little organza bags, with a tag that says, "You make a difference", the little presents await dispensation closer to Christmas.

All of a sudden, I am joyful! I think I will go home and add some decorations to the Christmas tree and put those candles up in our windows.

Have a great holiday!



The joyous holiday season is here! It is time for schmoozing and partying with happy people. However, many people, I included, do not always feel so cheery during the holidays. Our house is empty because our children are all grown with families of their own. A three-foot Christmas tree, sparsely decorated, sadly sits on the end table in the living room. The windows are bare of the lighted candles that used to brightly adorn them during the holidays.

I miss "the old days", when my children were younger and we knew that on Christmas Eve we would have baked stuffed shrimp, green bean casserole and twice baked potatoes lovingly made by Hubby. After dinner we would watch The Three Stooges on television, a show Marie, who is deaf, could enjoy along with the rest of us. We laughed at their antics, and always went to bed happy. Christmas morning would come earlier than a usual morning, with the kiddos waking us up and hopping up and down on two feet anxious to open their Christmas gifts. We would have breakfast, and the youngsters would go off in different directions to play with their toys while Hubby and I would crawl back into bed to catch up on our sleep. The joy was built in because of the participants involved.

Now, our holiday celebrations are minimized with plans to go to Steven's home on Christmas Eve and Dinora's home on Christmas day. Marie, still young and in

Extractions were no 'laughing' matter, but Dr. Twitchell was captivating

Back in the Day

by
KELLY
SULLIVAN

residents suffering from cavities, tooth pain or other ailments of the mouth would make a visit to Dr. Twitchell.

Frederick Arthur Twitchell maintained a dental office in Olneyville Square which was only open in the evenings. There, he promised "teeth extracted without pain by the use of Boston Vegetable Vapor, gas, etc."

Vegetable vapor was an anesthetic invented by two

Massachusetts dentists in 1884, which was hailed as the best advancement in dentistry to come along in decades. With Americans having experienced dental care which included cavities being removed with hand-turned drills, dentures fitted with human teeth from cadavers and molars being painfully yanked from the gums with a pair of pliers, the population at large was grateful for any sort of advancements

in the world of dentistry. Before the invention of vegetable vapor, dental patients were put to sleep in preparation for their procedures through the use of anesthetics known to be potentially harmful sulphuric ether and chloroform. Sometimes nitrous oxide, also known as laughing gas, would be utilized to dull the pain. Vegetable vapor, manufactured from herbs and meant to be inhaled by

the patient, was touted as "a safe and pleasant substitute for ether, chloroform and nitrous oxide, all dangerous substances used to destroy pain in dentistry."

One Boston dentist claimed that, with the use of vegetable vapor, "Patients didn't choke or change color while inhaling." Eventually, however, it was discovered that some forms of vegetable vapor contained alcohol or opium and were not quite as safe as advertisements suggested. Up until the mid-19th century, virtually anyone with a set of tools could proclaim themselves a dentist, and those with dental problems had little choice about having their teeth yanked out by a butcher, shoe salesman or other entrepreneurial neighbor.

It wasn't until 1840 when the first school of dentistry was established in America that dentists had actual training. Dulling the pain probably meant a shot of whiskey was in order before nitrous oxide was offered in 1844, followed by ether in 1846. Once dental anesthesia became available, dentists learned that the apparatus was elaborate and expensive, consisting of a cylinder, gasometer, rubber tubing, inhaling bottle and rubber face mask. Not only were they costly but the large tank with long tubes snaking into bottles were difficult to transport and time-consuming to put together.

In 1890, Dr. Twitchell invented and patented a new device to be used in dental anesthesia, the "new and improved dental stove and blowpipe." His patent explained that, previously, oxygen and hydrogen gases had to be stored separately in large, heavy tanks that needed to be transported from their place of manufacture to dental offices. Because the transport was expensive, only highly successful dentists could afford them. His invention used gasoline vapor instead of hydrogen and necessitated only a single attachment to

a gasoline-powered stove or heater. He also replaced the oxygen tanks in the apparatus with nitrous oxide. He claimed that the invention made anesthesia more cost-efficient for dentists.

Twitchell, who sported thick sideburns and a handlebar moustache, was born in Plymouth, Maine in 1858. He graduated from Bates College in 1881 and from the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery in 1884. Later that year, he settled in Johnston and quickly became a highly respected citizen.

In 1893, he was unanimously elected chairman of the Republican Town Committee of Johnston for the third time. He also served as president of the Olneyville Business Men's Association, as treasurer of the Olneyville Free Library Association, and headed the committee established by the Johnston School Committee which oversaw the building of Johnston High School and Kelley Street School. On the evening of Feb. 12, 1896, he was among approximately 100 Johnston residents who gathered to discuss the implementation of a Johnston Improvement Society, in an effort to beautify the town.

Before he was even able to locate a chair to sit in, he had been nominated and elected to the position of society president. Twitchell accepted the position but admitted that he had "not the slightest idea of the business to be considered" and asked that the detailed purpose of the society be explained to him. Whether sitting in Twitchell's office late at night with a rubber mask over the face while inhaling questionable vapors, working alongside him to build a school, or helping him to clean trash from the roadsides, the people of Johnston greatly admired the dentist for his enthusiasm, optimism and determination.

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

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

Contest

(Continued from page 15)

MOST CREATIVE**Stella Gurney-Petreccia,
Edward S. Rhodes Elementary School, Grade 5**

When the holidays come
and there's lots to be said
when your parents sneak presents under the tree
while you're still cozy in bed.

When the holidays are
and when the holidays will be
the best thing to do
is spend time with family.

Bake festive cookies
sing a carol or two.
When it's holiday time
there's so much to do.

Hang stockings and holly
of course the signature tree.
You can kick back and relax
or throw a holiday party.

When it's the holidays
There's so much to be done.
When it's the holidays
There's no limit to fun!

A break from your work
A break from your school
When you're inside it's warm
but outside it's cool!

When the holidays are over
We're always so sad
But since spring is soon
you realize it isn't so bad!

**MOST HUMOROUS****Rachael McDonnell,
Edward S. Rhodes Elementary School,
Grade 5**

Elves. Am I right? Parents always say
don't touch them. WELL, I DID. One day I
was walking downstairs and saw that little
devil. Big brown eyes with the light passing
through them. I couldn't resist. It's not like
I gave him a hug or anything... anyway. I
went downstairs the next day, and he was
gone. I couldn't believe my parents had
been telling the truth. I felt like my heart
fell into my stomach. But then I looked
over my shoulder in the mirror and there
he was! I could almost touch him again,
but I didn't.

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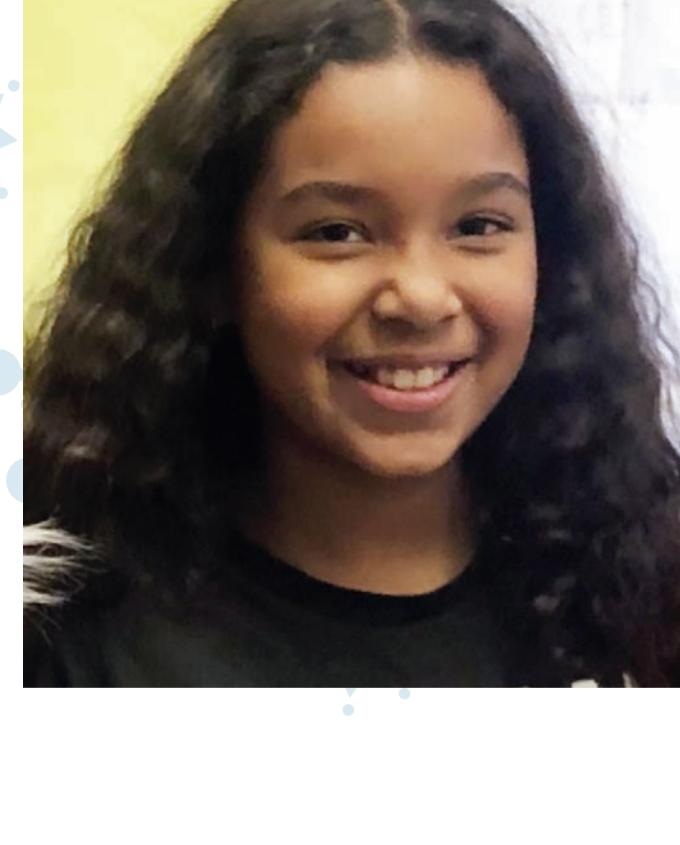
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rhodybeat.com**

**MOST HUMOROUS**
Jullian Laplume, Gr 4, EG. Robertson Elementary

What I think most about winter is family, and
friends coming over to celebrate. We make sure
to hang up red, blue, green, and white colored
lights on our house, or on the tree near our house.
We wear warm clothing to keep us nice and
toasty warm from winters cold that we dislike.
The most thing I do every winter is jumping on my
parents and say "today is Christmas eve time to
wake up", or sometimes I say wakey wakey eggs
and bakes.

**MOST HEARTWARMING**
Emily Clark- Grade 1
Robertson Elementary School

When I see family I am really
super duper happy because when I
don't see them, I really miss them
and I want to be near them. I am
half Hindu and half Greek and
Diwali is a Hindu celebration that
I celebrate, but at Christmastime
I get to see even more amazing
family. In my family, we make our
cousins our brothers and sisters.
My cousin Aria is like my sister
and my cousin Arvin is like my
brother. What could I possibly
be more thankful for than family?
So that is what this time of year
means to me.

**MOST HEARTWARMING**
**Jealy Balbuena, Gladstone Street Elementary,
Grade 5**

My favorite holiday memory was when my mom
surprised me and told me I was going to be a
big sister. I was so happy that I was going to be
a big sister then we found out that it was a girl.
That was the best moment in my life.

Why is [this] my favorite holiday memory?
Because I was never a big sister and I always
wanted to be one and now I have a sibling. I
always wanted one so bad. I love babies. And the
kids are so cute and nice. I just love babies and
kids so much.

And when my mom told me, I was crying but
happy tears not sad ones I love my sister already.
I can't wait for her to come out. And now we are a
family of four. That is the best holiday memory.

■ CONTEST - PAGE 20

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Contest

(Continued from page 19)

HONORABLE MENTIONS**Jose Izazaga, Gladstone Street****Elementary, Grade 5**

Do you know the experience of Christmas in Mexico? If you don't, then read along. This is all about my experience having Christmas in Mexico. First of all, the food is really important around Christmastime. Most of the women in your family will cook, sometimes even your grandma. Second of all, is how long the party is. Most of the time Mexican parties are very long, sometimes from the middle of the day until six in the morning the next day. That is the experience of having Christmas in Mexico.

Sally Finkle & Joel Pfeiffer, Rhodes Elementary School, Grade 4

I'm Sally. I celebrate Hanukkah. I'll tell you my favorite memory. It was Christmas Eve and my entire family got together at my grandma's house to light the menorah. It was a happy time because the rest of my family doesn't celebrate Hanukkah and it's nice to have others celebrating with us.

I'm Joel and I don't celebrate Hanukkah, I celebrate Christmas. Hanukkah seems fun because I love lighting candles and it brings families together too. My favorite part of Christmas is celebrating with my grandparents because I don't get to see them often. Happy holidays!

Ishaan Catone, Edward S. Rhodes Elementary School, Grade 5

It's Christmas day
Wake up wake up wake up
We need to open presents
Wake up wake up wake up
Knock on the door lay on the floor
Yell at my parents like I never have before
Wake up wake up wake up
It's Christmas day

Wake up wake up wake up
We need to open presents
Wake up wake up wake up
Knock on the door lay on the floor
Yell at my parents like I never have before
Wake up wake up wake up
Oh wait I forgot it's only 4 o'clock

Aubrey Andrews, Edward S. Rhodes Elementary School, Grade 5

My most memorable Christmas was when I was nine. I was at my grandma's house. She works for a baking company, so we used to make banana bread every Christmas. It was a normal night but, to me it was special because we won't go anymore. It was also special because we were there for Christmas with both my grandparents, now it's only my grandfather there now. After baking we opened presents and ate. And then my mom said we had to leave. This may have been a special memory because we never went again. That is my favorite Christmas.

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And that's a wrap!!!

As we wind down 2022, I thought we'd take a look back at what we've discussed in real estate throughout the year.

We started out with record low inventory across the residential categories, and threatening increases to interest rates for buyers. We talked about strategies for buyers in a very competitive environment and educated sellers navigating their home sales.

Another topic we reviewed was how to plan and qualify for a mortgage and the various types of financing opportunities, especially with the changing rate dynamics this year.

Home maintenance and safety is always a beneficial conversation as a homeowner, so we touched on those topics as well.

Technology continues to provide great conveniences in searching for a home to purchase, building homes through 3D technology, as well as various products throughout the home, as we've discussed. It will be interesting to see and learn what other new developments will come available as we progress.

And here we are in December already. The year certainly flew by quickly.

Below is a brief report provided by RI Realtors to



Donna DeLauro
Senior Real Estate Specialist
RE/MAX Real Estate Center
Founder of Mature Matters

sum up where we are, and what to expect in 2023.

I want to thank you all for a great 2022 and wish you a Happy Healthy and Prosperous New Year ahead!!

Enjoy your Holidays!! Donna

RI REALTORS

Rhode Island's home sale trends remain steady. At \$405,000 the median sales price of single-family homes rose 7.3%. The ratio of list price to sales price remained stable at 100%.

The number of single-family homes on the market

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Realtor with RE/MAX

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fell 7.9% year-over-year, not surprising given rising interest rates and fewer options available for sellers to move to.

Sales activity dropped 20.1% from the prior year while pending sales – those sales under contract but not through the closing process dropped 40.9% from the previous year. Pending sales are the leading indicator of sales activity in the near future.

"We're seeing an interesting real estate market right now. On the one hand, sales activity has fallen to about the same level as we saw during the economic shutdown of 2020. On the other hand, even with sales dropping, inventory is so tight that prices aren't plummeting. The good news is that inflation started to come down and if that continues, we should see a drop in rates. That will jump start the market again but even with that, we still have a supply problem to correct before we will see a balanced market again," said Bryant Da Cruz, President of Rhode Island Association of Realtors.

Donna DeLauro
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spotlight on BUSINESS

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1944 WARWICK AVENUE, WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND 02889

By JENNIFER COATES

Serving the citizens and small business owners of Cranston is the singular mission of Natalie Payette, the busy sales associate of the Cranston Herald. While relatively new to her position at the Herald, Natalie has been at the helm of Beacon Communications' Johnston SunRise sales team since October of 2019. She has been faithfully representing the small businesses, tradesmen & women, and service providers of that community over those years. Cranston's businesses, just like those of Johnston, are not just potential advertisers for Natalie, they are also potential friends and colleagues.

Natalie Payette is sincere, friendly, and easy-going but she is also hard-working, organized, persistent and a quick study. She is a studious learner who has successfully married a strong work ethic with a genuine love of people. As the production manager and purchasing agent for an East Providence-based jewelry store in her early career, Natalie has mastered the ability to work with people from all walks of life. She is ready to be your advocate.

The Cranston Herald is the perfect weekly newspaper to advertise your business. With its large and far-reaching circulation, it can be found in various drops throughout every corner of the city. The primary goal of this popular hometown paper is to inform the city's residents of all the happenings in its many neighborhoods and to direct them to merchants who provide the services and products they need. The paper attracts an audience which spans every age, occupation, and socio-economic level. As a sales associate, it is Natalie's job to help business owners to showcase their businesses and to bring in new customers



Meet Natalie Payette, the Sales Associate at the Cranston Herald and longtime sales associate for the Johnston SunRise. She pauses from a busy morning before heading out for a day of meeting with local business owners. She will put her whole heart into promoting your business.

from this diverse population.

Now is the time to push your business into the forefront! When you are ready to advertise in the Herald, Natalie will walk you through every step of the process, laying out every available option from the smallest one column, 2" ad to a full-page ad ~ and everything in between (including this business spotlight page!) She will do everything she can to help you stretch your advertising dollars and get you the "best bang" for your hard-earned buck. Natalie has learned in her years of work experience that the adage that says "you need to spend money to make money" is

true and that a well-placed ad can give her clients much needed exposure . . . and more customers!

Natalie Payette can be easily reached via both email and cell phone. Her email address is nataliep@rhodybeat.com, and her phone number is 401-486-1996. You can also reach Natalie by calling her at the Beacon Communications office at 401-732-3100.

She prides herself is being accessible, dependable, and reliable. Next to her four grandchildren and family, yours will always be her first call! Give her a call and start maximizing your advertising dollars today!

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Holiday Fun with a Joyful POP

FAMILY FEATURES

With countless ways to enjoy the holiday season from decorating and hosting parties to wintertime activities, it's a perfect time to bring family and friends together for some festive fun. One simple ingredient can be your go-to for just about any tradition: popcorn, which is an inexpensive, versatile, whole grain that makes holiday occasions better.

Consider these simple seasonal ways you can let popcorn fuel your holiday adventures.

Decorate

Strings of popcorn and cranberries add a nostalgic touch to the family tree while making popcorn trees adds whimsy to the table. Before stringing popcorn, let it sit out for a day or two as freshly popped popcorn may be too fragile to thread without breaking. Push a threaded needle through the center of each kernel then pull the kernel to the end of the knotted thread, adding an occasional cranberry, if desired. Festive trees can be made using popcorn mixed with melted marshmallows then shaped and finished with sprinkles.

Give It as a Gift

If it's your turn to host this year's holiday party, popcorn makes for a perfect party favor. Pop up a delicious treat like these Cranberry Popcorn Balls, place them in pretty jars or neatly wrap them then finish each with a bow. For an added touch, include the recipe instructions and popcorn kernels in a separate container so your guests can make it at home.

Enjoy It as a Snack

Freshly popped popcorn is a simple and delicious snack to share after a day of shopping, caroling, sledding or decorating. You can take the holiday season up a notch with creative recipes like Gingersnap Popcorn Snack Mix, White Chocolate Peppermint Popcorn Bark and Easy, Elegant Holiday Popcorn. These treats are perfect for popping up in the morning so the snacks are ready once guests arrive.

Visit Popcorn.org to find more sweet, salty and savory holiday recipe ideas.

Gingersnap Popcorn Snack Mix

Yield: 2 quarts

2 quarts popped popcorn
butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray
1/3 cup granulated sugar substitute
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black or white pepper

Preheat oven to 325 F.

Spread popcorn on baking sheet and spray lightly with nonstick cooking spray.

In small bowl, combine sugar substitute, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves and freshly ground pepper; sprinkle evenly over popcorn.

Spray again with nonstick cooking spray and toss to coat evenly. Bake 7 minutes and serve warm.



Gingersnap Popcorn Snack Mix

Easy, Elegant Holiday Popcorn

Yield: 8 cups

8 cups popped popcorn
1/2 cup milk chocolate chips
1/2 cup white chocolate chips
candy sprinkles

On serving platter, spread popcorn in thin layer.

Over double boiler or in microwave, melt milk chocolate chips. Drizzle over popcorn.

Over double boiler or in microwave, melt white chocolate chips. Drizzle over popcorn.

Sprinkle candy sprinkles over warm, chocolate-coated popcorn. Allow drizzles to set until firm.



Easy, Elegant Holiday Popcorn

**Cranberry Popcorn Balls**

Yield: 18 balls

2 cups sugar
1 cup whole berry cranberry sauce, slightly mashed
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
1/2 cup cranberry juice
1/2 cup light corn syrup
1 teaspoon vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt
5 quarts unsalted popped popcorn

In heavy saucepan, combine sugar, cranberry sauce, orange peel, cranberry juice, corn syrup, vinegar and salt. Bring to boil; lower heat and cook to 250 F on candy thermometer.

Mixture will bubble in pan; watch to keep from boiling over.

Pour slowly onto hot popcorn and mix until well-coated.

Let stand 5 minutes, or until mixture can easily be formed into balls.

Butter hands and form into 3-inch balls.

Cranberry Popcorn Balls

White Chocolate Peppermint Popcorn Bark

Yield: 1 pound

5 cups popped popcorn
12 ounces white chocolate baking chips, chopped white chocolate or white candy coating
1 cup crushed hard candy peppermints

Cover baking pan with foil or wax paper; set aside.

Place popcorn in large bowl; set aside.

In double boiler over barely simmering water, melt chocolate, stirring until smooth, or melt according to package directions.

Stir in crushed peppermints after chocolate is melted. Pour chocolate mixture over popcorn mixture and stir to coat. Spread onto prepared pan; cool completely.

When chocolate is cooled and set, break into chunks for serving.

Store in airtight container at room temperature.

Sports

Bolts fall to 1-2



EARLY SEASON BATTLE: East's Delwin Montan looks for space in transition. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

Hawks fly to 84-57 win over East

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Bishop Hendricken basketball team rolled to an 84-57 win over visiting Cranston East on Monday evening.

Senior Azmar Abdullah led the way with a game-high 33 points, shooting seven three-pointers on the evening.

"He came ready to play. He hit his

first shot, found his rhythm and his teammates found him. He had a great night, that's the kind of player he is. He's explosive and he can score multiple in a row from anywhere on the court," said Hendricken coach Jamal Gomes after the win.

The Hawks jumped out to a 23-13 lead in the first quarter, 11 of which came from Abdullah, and never

looked back. Eze Wali caught fire in the second quarter and would finish with 29 points for the Hawks as well, while point guard Mike Paquette scored nine and Marcus Sukkar seven. Sukkar got the start in place of Matt Brock, who is dealing with an injury.

East coach Isaiah McDaniel felt that

■ BOLTS - PAGE 25



SLAP SHOT: Lyric Watts fires a shot last week. (Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)

Thunderbirds in rebuild mode

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The Cranston-East Greenwich girls hockey co-op has started its season off 0-3 but is looking to make improvements as the winter wears on.

It will be a rebuilding year for the Thunderbirds, who have a large core of underclassmen to go along with some girls who have no previous experience on the ice. Although there will be growing pains this season, the players have come to practice each day ready to learn.

"They're there and want to learn. That makes me want to coach them. It's going to be a rebuilding year, we're going to be rebuilding for a couple of years. It's an inexperienced team," said new head coach Matt Davis, who was an assistant last season under former coach PJ Besette.

The team does have some roster spots locked down, including at goalie and the first line on offense.

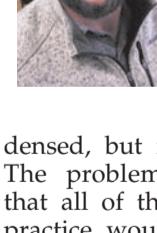
"(Goaltender) Hailey Davis is a lacrosse player by trade but joined the team as a freshman because we needed a goalie. This is her fourth year and she's been a godsend. We're also led by Mia Schenenga who is a very good skater. Also on the first line is freshman Lindsey Rowe who has been playing her whole life. We've got a strong first line, a good goalie, a couple of defenders that have experience. That is our core and we're hoping that the girls behind them see how they play and then we'll mix and match," said Davis.

Although the team may lack experience, it does not lack numbers, as the roster has grown by more than 50 percent since last year with 22 girls. Davis hopes that the wide net of players will help the team fill out the rest of

■ MODE - PAGE 28

Does the holiday break need to be addressed?

My pitch



by
ALEX
SPONSELLER
SPORTS EDITOR

ALEXS@
RHODYBEAT.COM

Last week I wrote about how winter sports are my favorite. I stand by that and believe that winter is the best sports season of the four. I love the fast paced schedule down the stretch and the tournaments ... it is always a great product.

However, there is one huge flaw in winter sports that we are about to face head on once again, and it is the two-week delay during the holidays.

This is not a Rhode Island thing, this happens everywhere. Winter sports begin, teams will play a few games and get their feet wet, then will be put on hold for two weeks.

As I write this, I am trying to think of alternatives to fix this problem. Coaches are used to it, as are the players, but from what I gather, it is a pain in the butt to deal with. Especially with rebuilding programs that are trying to gain some momentum, it's hard to see two weeks of progress be diminished thanks to the holiday break.

More established teams can work around it, no problem, but many teams struggle to figure it out.

Could we just wait until Jan. 2 to start the league schedule? We could. The schedules would have to be shortened and/or con-

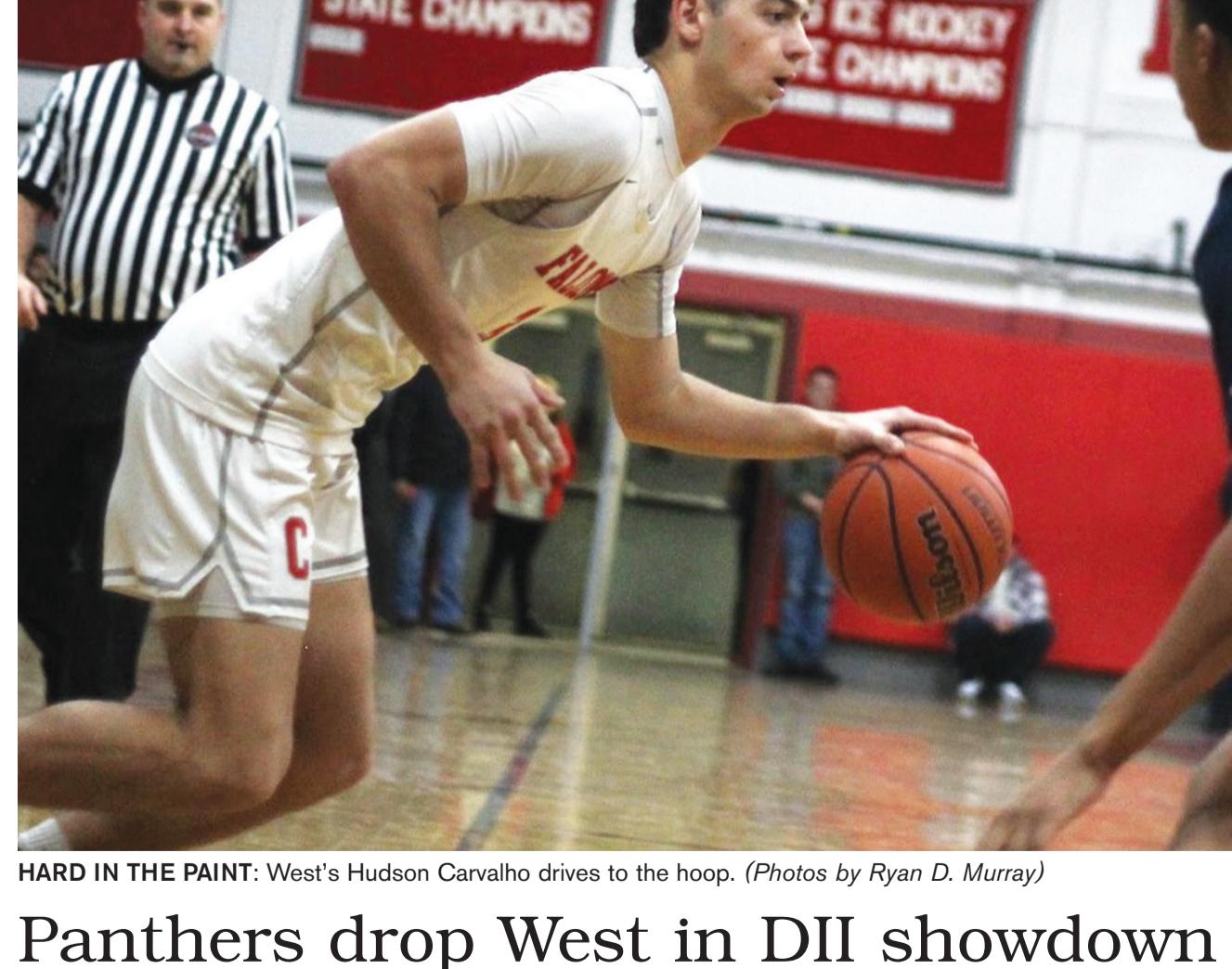
densed, but it is possible. The problem, though, is that all of the pre-holiday practice would be put on hold. My thinking is that at that point, what's the difference between stopping games or practice for a two-week break? There really isn't much of one in my opinion.

The other option would be to try to squeeze games in during the holiday. Let's be real though, no one wants that and half the players and coaches would be away for family events. That is not really feasible, either.

I guess there really is no good solution to this problem, other than to point out the good.

On the bright side, teams will enter the break with an idea of what they have and it will give them time to re-

■ PITCH - PAGE 27



HARD IN THE PAINT: West's Hudson Carvalho drives to the hoop. (Photos by Ryan D. Murray)

Panthers drop West in DII showdown

By RYAN D. MURRAY

The Johnston Panthers went to Cranston High School West on Monday night and pummeled the Falcons 92-73 in front of a packed house dur-

ing a Boys Division II Basketball showdowm.

Johnston was led by junior guards Anthony Corsinetti and Derek Salvatore. Corsinetti finished the contest with 22 points and Salvatore chipped

in 17 points.

"Anthony is a leader on this team and he's our scorer," Panthers head coach Mike Bedrosian said. "He's our guy. He gets things going off-

■ WEST - PAGE 28



LEADING SCORER: East's Naz Milien handles the ball on Monday.

■ Bolts

(Continued from page 24)

his team's defense did not play with enough urgency, especially when guarding Abdullah.

"Azmar is a great player. He hit the open shots tonight and I don't think we did a good job contesting them. He didn't have a hand in his face tonight and I think that contributed to it. He hit them, but we didn't contest them," said McDaniel.

Naz Milien led the Bolts with 24 points. Da'Qwon Foster scored 10 and Davian Berry eight.

"(Milien's) going to be our scorer, most nights he is our leading scorer. He needs to do a little bit of a better job of getting the other guys involved when he can, but we're looking for him to do a lot for us this year," said McDaniel.

The Hawks improved to 3-0 on the season, and Gomes was pleased with the contributions from Wali and others, especially considering the absence of Brock and Devin Lynch, who is also dealing with injuries.

"Eze showed a lot of consistency throughout the game. From short range, mid range, finishing around the basket. (He and Abdullah) are two of the top

players in the state and we're very blessed and fortunate that they're with us. Mike Paquette distributed the ball, got it to where it needed to be. I was very happy with Marcus, who played well on both defense and offense tonight," said Gomes.

However, Gomes is expecting more from the Hawks' defense, which had some trouble putting the game away in the third quarter.

"I wasn't happy with the defense in the second half. Our goal is to give up 50 points or less and we did not do that so we talked about that after the game. We gave up 16 points in the third. It's early in the season so we have some work to do. We are also trying to take those lulls in the game and shrink them. Extend the positives and shrink the lulls. We'll get there," said Gomes.

The Bolts dropped to 1-2 with the loss, and McDaniel hopes his team can regroup while riding its deep back court.

"Our guards are definitely the strength of our team. We don't have much size, but we'll go down and we'll scrap and we'll bang. We're just trying to get better every day," McDaniel said. "You have to take this with a grain of salt, it's only the third game of the season. We're 1-2, so all we can do is build on the loss and try to get better."



MOVING FORWARD: Will Outar works his way up the court.

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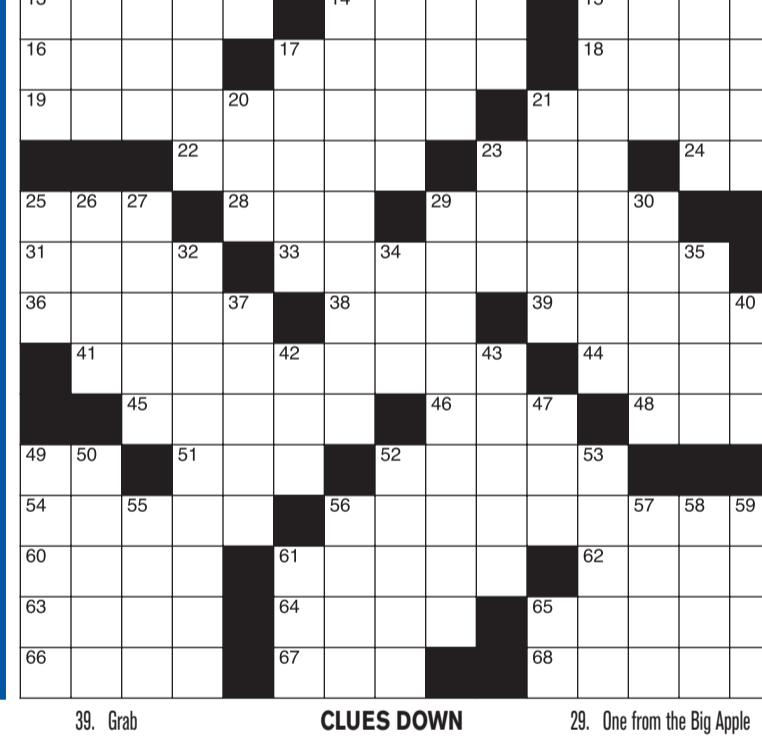
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- 50. The back side of the neck
- 51. A type of imine
- 52. Partner to "Pa"
- 53. Puts together in time
- 54. Lucid
- 55. Transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm
- 56. Demonstrates the truth of
- 57. Ancient Greek City
- 58. Nishi language
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- 60. Ottoman military commanders
- 61. Gatherer of fallen leaves
- 62. Norse personification of old age
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- 66. Instant replay in soccer
- 67. Have witnessed
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- 69. Slang for a cigarette
- 70. Large pile
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- 91. Confederate soldier
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Holiday gifts for anglers

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Here are some last minute suggestions on holiday gifts for anglers. From stocking stuffers to rods and reels bait & tackle shop owners have suggestions. Most local tackle shops are open right up to and including Christmas Eve day and have qualified staff to help you make a selection that fits your budget. They are in business to make anglers successful, so I have always found them to be very helpful.

Fishing lures and rigs from \$5 to \$30 are great gifts and stocking stuffers. Bait rigs and jigs used to catch bottom fish like summer flounder, black sea bass and tautog that anglers love to catch and eat make great gifts. Elisa Cahill of Snug Harbor Marina, South Kingstown said, "We have some new fluke rigs from H & H (they make flounder pounder rigs) and Buddy Rigs."

"We sold a lot of rubber shads, poppers and lures as stocking stuffers," said John Littlefield of Archie's Bait & Tackle, Riverside. Jonathan Woodman of Watch Hill Outfitters, Westerly, said, "Fishing lures to catch striped bass, bluefish, false albacore and more both from shore or boats make great gifts. SP Minnow, Super Stride lures and soft plastic lures from Joe-bags range from about \$20 to \$30."

Waterproof charts about \$60. I use these to plan my fishing trips the day before fishing to find structure for tautog fishing or to select spots for fluke fishing. The charts I have include Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island and Block Island Sound in a handy large spiral bound book with soft plastic case. These waterproof charts are great on the boat and cover fishing areas in complete detail, and pinpoint dozens of fishing areas and the fish caught in each area. Choose areas from Maine to the Bahamas, and points inland too. Available at West Marine stores or online at www.westmarine.com.

Membership in the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA), \$50. Purchase a

gift membership for a family member or friend. The association is created by and for recreational saltwater anglers and the monthly seminars, magazine and education programs on fishing techniques and tactics are outstanding. Visit www.risaa.org.

General fishing or learn how to fish charters, \$350 to \$800 (depending on number of people, species targeted, boat size, duration of trip, etc.). Hire a charter to help teach adults or children how to fish or to take experienced anglers fishing. Visit www.rifishing.com, the Rhode Island Party & Charter Boat Association website for a list of boats and captains. Can also find party boat trips there for under \$100 to \$135 per person.

StickTite Lenses, from \$19.99, even if they arrive after the holidays. This item is from Todd Corayer's "Holiday Gift Guide for Anglers" in the RI Saltwater Anglers December magazine issue.

If your angler fishes with sunglasses but also needs cheaters, StickTite lenses are a game changer. Available in magnifications from 1.25 to 3.0, they arrive smartly packaged and are easily applied. Find that sweet spot on the bottom of your favorite glasses, apply, wait a few minutes then ditch those cheaters. If you have a collection of fancy shades for all occasions, change your outlook in minutes and even swap lenses between glasses. Starting at \$19.99 www.sticktitelens.com.

Striped bass on the chopping block again

Massachusetts and Rhode Island have held webinar hearings to discuss commercial quota transfers for striped bass between coastal states as outlined in Addendum 1. The aim of the Addendum to the striped bass management plan is to maximize the commercial harvest of striped bass by allowing states to transfer unused commercial quota to other states that currently maximize their allotment. This proposal is largely supported by striped bass commercial fishers.



CATCH AND RELEASE: Ninety percent (90 %) of striped bass caught by recreational anglers are released alive. (Photo from the American Saltwater Guides Association)

In an announcement from the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA), Tony Friedrich, Vice President, said, "Anglers need to attend this hearing on Monday and voice their concern over commercial transfers. According to the 2022 Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update, the stock remains overfished. Therefore, efforts to intentionally increase striped bass removals are antithetical towards rebuilding goals and objectives."

"Commercial quota transfers have long been rejected by the Striped Bass Management Board. They were once rejected in the past due to the stock being overfished," said Friedrich. "Historically, the commercial quota has gone underutilized. Increasing commercial landings, at such a pivotal time for the stock as today, will go against assumptions made by managers and disrupt projections on the stock and rebuilding success."

The ASGA said in an advisory, "Bottom line—the striped bass stock is still overfished and rebuilding success hinges on

maintaining low fishing mortality rates while poor recruitment persists, purposefully increasing commercial landings is not rationale and the Board should oppose this action."

You can still comment online until 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 13, 2023 and should be sent to comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum I).

Where's the bite

Freshwater. Anglers are reminded to renew their licenses for salt and fresh water for 2023. For licensing information and a list of trout stocked ponds in Rhode Island visit www.dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/freshwater-fishing/freshwater-fishing-faqs; and in Massachusetts visit www.mass.gov/freshwater-fishing-information.

Striped bass fishing has slowed a great deal. "We still have plenty of peanut bunker around with bait being pushed up on the shore but anglers have not been hooking up at all with no great reports from shore anglers or those fishing salt

ponds," said Jonathan Woodman of Watch Hill Outfitters, Westerly.

Cod, tautog and black sea bass are general being target together on party boats. Cahill of Snug Harbor Marina, South Kingstown said, "The Island Current got out a couple of times last week and came back late afternoon. The bite seemed to come later in the day for them." Party boats fishing for cod this winter include the Frances Fleet at www.frances-fleet.com, the Seven B's at www.sevenbs.com, and the Island Current at www.islandcurrent.com. Rates vary but are about \$135 per adult for a full day of fishing, call to check schedules and make a reservation.

Dave Monti holds a captain's master 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.

College Notes: Cranston freshmen making noise on court

By BRENDEN SOARES

For both Cranston West product Kaitlyn Antonucci and Cranston East graduate Kathy Hernandez, the 2022-23 season represents a new beginning as they both take their first dribbles up the collegiate hardwood. Antonucci is suiting up for Lasell, where she has come off the bench on a semi-regular basis for the Lasers, averaging 16.3 minutes per game across the six contests that the ex-Falcon has seen action in.

Her debut came in Lasell's third game of the campaign, an 87-82 defeat to Maine-Presque Isle on November 18 in which she pulled down three rebounds, but was unable to sink either of her two attempts from the field.

After also going scoreless against Maine-Farmington and Mitchell, Antonucci broke her duck on December 3 in the Lasers' 62-44 victory over Johnson & Wales, chip-

ping in with six points to help Lasell snap a two-game losing skid.

More recently, the guard earned her first start as a member of the Laser five in the team's last tilt of 2022, logging 23 minutes and blocking a pair of shots in a 75-58 setback to Saint Joseph's of Maine on December 10.

While Antonucci has elbowed her way into the starting lineup, Hernandez has yet to make such a breakthrough at Eastern Nazarene, where she had to wait until the Lions' ninth game of the campaign to make an appearance.

However, the former Thunderbolt has done her best to make up for lost time since making her bow on December 8 versus Salem State, getting on the court in each of ENC's contests since.

When it comes to making an impact on the scoreboard, Hernandez has shown remarkable consistency, scoring four points in every game she has played, in-

cluding wins over Nichols on December 12 and Wentworth four days later.

Averaging nine minutes per contest, she has made other contributions to the Eastern Nazarene cause in addition to nailing seven of her 11 field goal attempts, grabbing three rebounds and dishing out a pair of assists.

Hernandez's Lions are 4-8 on the winter after dropping a 74-62 decision to Maine-Augusta last Thursday, whereas Antonucci's Lasell squad will be hoping for improved results in the new year after stumbling out of the gate to a 2-7 mark.

The Lasers are currently in the middle of their holiday break and will start the 2023 portion of their slate on January 3 versus Elms, while Eastern Nazarene will close out 2022 with a New Year's Eve matinee against UMass-Boston.

Pitch

(Continued from page 24)

lax and assess.

For a team that struggles out the gate, they can use the two weeks as a way to regroup mentally and physically while the coaches try to identify the problems. For the teams that get off to big starts, they can celebrate the holidays and have something to look forward to once they return.

Don't get me wrong, I am not talking myself into liking the break. I just believe that there is no better option. Any change would be more disruptive than just sucking it up and hanging out for two weeks.

Similar topic, but I have to admit, I am not wild on holiday tournaments.

I guess my biggest gripe about them is that these exhibitions are real, true exhibitions.

Teams are usually not fully rostered, there is

nothing actually on the line. They can be fun

to watch because they are so lighthearted, but

still, what are we doing here? If you are going

to have a holiday break, have a holiday break.

Not trying to be a Grinch. I love the holidays and they are some of the best days of the year. I just like to whine and question the world around me.

Now that we have the first few games under our belts here, my biggest takeaway to this point is that our girls basketball teams are

going to be a ton of fun to watch this season.

Pilgrim is coming off of two down years,

but started off 2-0 and beat some quality oppo-

nents including Lincoln on the road. The

Pats seem to have finally found an offensive

rhythm with girls like Faith Meade, Gianna

Ramos, Jenna Madden and company. Pilgrim

seems to be back in it this winter.

The Toll Gate Titans lost their best player

from last year Adeline Areson, but also start-

ed off 2-0 by beating Narragansett and Cen-

tral. Toll Gate beat Central by 35 points on the

road, making a statement that it will be a

factor in Division III.

Johnston also tipped things off by going 2-0 in league play. The Panthers had a rough go last season but now also seem to have taken a step forward in Division IV. I am totally on board with the league adding this new division and the Panthers are already reaping the benefits, which will be a lot of fun to watch.

Cranston West started 2-1 and 0-1 in league play while East sat at 0-2. Although it has been a mixed bag for our Cranston teams, I expect them to compete for playoff spots as well.

Overall, our five girls teams have been outstanding collectively. I figured we'd see improvement from last year, which was a down year overall, but it looks like we could wind up with five playoff clubs.

Speaking of playoffs. The latest debacle on Sunday eliminated the Patriots from true playoff contention in my opinion. Sure, they are still mathematically in it, but it won't happen.

Between the Bengals, Dolphins and Bills, there is virtually no chance that New England pulls itself back into this thing. The Pats would be lucky to win one of those games. They will probably have to win two, minimum, to even have a chance. Not happening.

That final play to end the game was atrocious and 100 percent on the coaches in my eyes. Sure, the players took the fall and said they acted off script with the laterals. Still, it is up to the coaches to enforce discipline and make sure that those things don't happen.

The players panicked. I am not sure why considering the game was tied and the ball was in their hands, but they totally collapsed. Never would we have thought that a Bill Belichick team would crumble in a moment like that, but it happened in spectacular fashion.

If I were Robert Kraft, I would be in Belich-

ick's ear, demanding something big be done

this offseason. Whether it is a trade, a signing,

a termination, something has to give.

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MAKING AN IMPACT: Jaymien Aponte looks to drive to the hoop.

■ West

(Continued from page 24)

sively, and when he's on, he's tough to stop. And he has a lot of range. More importantly than anything, he's a leader on this team, and he's the glue that keeps us going."

"He and Derek Salvatore, those two guys are our guys," Bedrosian said. "We run through them two. So, as well as they're playing, the team's going to follow suit. And it's been showing early on in the season."

Johnston also saw two other players reach double-digits in scoring with Neari Vasquez, a junior forward, recording 12 points, and Brandon Testa, a sophomore guard, adding 11 points.

"The two best practices that we had all year were the days before games," Bedrosian said. "And these guys buy into the game plan of what we expect."

"We have an identity that we found earlier this year than we did last year," Bedrosian explained. "Last year, we didn't find our identity until about nine or ten games in. This year, we knew our identity from Day 1 and the guys are proving it. We could have scored 120 points tonight if we wanted to."

West junior forward Jaymien Aponte topped all scorers with 23 points.

"Jaymien is an absolute pleasure to coach," Falcons head coach James Sweeney said. "He works hard every single day. He is coachable. He does everything he's supposed to do, and to me, he leads by example almost better than anyone else in our program, on how to approach every single day's practice and games. And he's a hell of a player. He's getting better and better and better, and he's given us chances to win, and he's a major part of this team. I love coaching him and we need him. So, he's been phenomenal this year, and I know he's going to have a breakout junior season, and I just love to root for that kid."

Adreyann Perez, a junior guard, added nine points for West, while Anthony Veltri, a senior guard, and Ryan Zarrella, a junior guard, rounded out the Falcons scoring with eight points and seven points, respectively.

The game began with Johnston's Salvatore and West's Nick Masse trading buckets, but the Panthers assumed complete control after that.

Vasquez made a layup, following a feed from Salvatore, and that put the Panthers on top 4-2.

Next, Corsinetti made a pair of free

throws and extended the Johnston advantage to four.

Soon after, Corsinetti buried back-to-back treys from the top of the arc, before Salvatore added a 3-ball, and then a put back, and increased the Johnston cushion to 19-4.

The Panthers continued to pad their lead in the second quarter.

Corsinetti started the frame with a four-point play where he made a 3-point shot while he was fouled, and then added a free throw, which extended the Johnston buffer to 25-6.

Johnston ballooned its lead to 41-15 with under three minutes to play in the first half when Vasquez sank a 3-pointer.

The Panthers closed the third quarter with an 11-2 run and held its largest lead of the game at 74-37, briefly, before bringing a 35-point lead into the final frame.

West went on a 6-0 run midway through the fourth frame, featuring a put back from Aponte, a running bank-shot from Alex Ceseretti, and a layup from Hudson Carvalho, which inched the Falcons within 79-46.

Perez scored back-to-back buckets for West with 1:21 remaining in the contest and that cut the Falcons deficit to 87-67.

Then, with 23.8 seconds on the clock, Aponte scored an old-fashioned 3-point play and got West within 92-73, and that's how it ended.

Johnston sat at 3-0 in the league after Monday night's win. The Panthers played again on Wednesday at home versus Hope, but the score was unavailable at press time.

West fell to 1-2 in the league with the Monday night defeat.

"Obviously, it's disappointing when it comes to results," Sweeney said. "Any time you play at home in front of a packed crowd, you want to give everything you can for a chance to win, and you want to put a good product out on the court."

"But we're really focused on just being better every day," Sweeney said. "Learning from our mistakes, learning from what we didn't do tonight. We have good senior leadership. We have good camaraderie with our players, and I know we're going to come back to practice tomorrow and give it everything we have. And it hurts to lose. It's not fun. Especially, in your home gym. But the reality is, it's one loss and we've got a big game Wednesday at Mt. Hope and we've got to move forward."

The result for Wednesday's game was unavailable at press time.

■ Mode

(Continued from page 24)

the lineup and put the pieces in place for the future.

"It's a great number. Last year we had 14 girls because of COVID. Before that we had 28 girls which made it easier, we could see who was athletic, there was more to choose from. We lose a lot of girls to (private schools), so it is good to

have these numbers and to be able to co-op with towns like East Greenwich," said Davis.

The Thunderbirds have one game next week and will be looking to enjoy the process this year.

"We're trying to keep them motivated, trying to do team stuff, keep it fun," said Davis. "We're hoping that if we can keep it fun, it will also help them keep an edge."



KICK SAVE: Hailey Davis makes a play in the net.



ALONG THE BOARDS: Michelle Kim battles for the puck.



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