

Flood of federal money

Feds announce \$48.5M for flood prevention in Cranston & Johnston

By RORY SCHULER

The federal government plans to help buy more than 100 properties in Johnston and Cranston, and demolish 134 structures in the Pocasset River’s expanding floodplain.

When it rains hard in Johnston and Cranston, the river often overflows its banks. Floodwaters spread from the tributary outward into business districts and residential areas.

The lobbying efforts of town and city officials in both municipalities may be paying off. The state’s federal delegation recently announced the launch of the Pocasset River Flood Damage Reduction Project, and pledged nearly 50 million taxpayer dollars toward its implementation.

“Through Senator Reed and the rest of the Rhode Island

delegation, the Pocasset River project can receive up to \$48.5 million in funding, beginning with \$12 million already secured by Senator Reed,” said Johnston Mayor Joseph Polise-na Jr. “These projects include funding for some buyouts, infrastructure improvements and flood barriers. The project itself is being coordinated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.”

The delegation, which includes U.S. Sens. Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse and Reps. Seth Magaziner and Gabe Amo, all Democrats, circulated a press release on Aug. 21, announcing the results “building on years of work to assist flood-prone residents in the Pocasset River Watershed.”

FLOOD - PAGE 4

Hulk Hogan the pizza

Beer-hawking pro-wrestling legend inspires latest Palmieri portrait

By RORY SCHULER

Johnston’s pizza artist just pinned Hulk Hogan, nailing the legendary wrestler in bell peppers and grated Romano cheese.

“I loved Hulk Hogan when I was a kid,” said Eric Palmieri, of D. Palmieri’s Bakery in Johnston. “I had a Hulk Hogan Wrestling Buddy, Hulk Hogan lunch box, and when I was 6 I had a Hulk Hogan-themed birthday party.”

Palmieri heard Hogan would be in the Ocean State on a tour promoting his own Real American Beer.

“I reached out to the Real American Beer team about making the pizza art and they were very excited about it,” said the accomplished pizza portrait artist from his family’s Killingly Street bakery.

On Tuesday night, he met up with the professional wrestler at Moonshine Alley on Pine Street in Providence.

“I partnered with them and the staff at Moonshine Alley were amazing as well,” Palmieri said. “We all met backstage before Hulk made his appearance on stage and hung out for a bit and we talked about the pizza art.”

Palmieri recalled the momentous pivot Hogan made, switching his public persona from good guy to villain. Hogan also recently offered a full-throttled endorsement of Donald J. Trump for president at the Republican National Convention.



HULK PIZZA: Eric Palmieri, of D. Palmieri’s Bakery in Johnston, presented the legendary professional wrestler Hulk Hogan with a pizza portrait. Hogan posed for photos and signed the pizza in barbecue sauce. (Photos courtesy Eric Palmieri)



HULK - PAGE 6

They’re back

Teachers, missed all summer, welcomed

By BARBARA POLICHETTI
Special to the SunRise

Welcome back. Welcome back.

Johnston parents, school administrators and students made sure that message was loud and clear Tuesday as they greeted teachers returning for the 2024-25 school year. The first day of classes was Wednesday, Aug. 28, but teachers were back on Tuesday for a day of professional development sessions.



GREASE LIGHTNING: In keeping with theme from the musical, some administrators donned jackets from the “Pink Ladies” girl group central to the movie. At right is Assistant Superintendent Edda Carmadello. (Johnston Sun Rise photo by Barbara Polichetti)

SCHOOL - PAGE 8

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

Have a Safe & Happy Labor Day



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Deborah Fellela
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Suann Demetropoulos
Tim Davey
Nicholas Paul Destefano
Carol Ratte
Alexis Ratte
Katelyn Marandola



WE RESERVE THE RIGHT OF ENTRANCE



Senior 'Spotlite'

CHAT WITH THE AUTHOR: Author Victoria Atamian Waterman visited the Johnston Senior Center to discuss her historical fiction novel, "Who She Left Behind." This week's Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" shines on the author. (Photo courtesy Richard J. DelFino Jr.)

JSC writes a new story, one chapter at a time

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

The Johnston Senior Center Book Club is growing in popularity, and it is no wonder, since they have been entertained by some of the area's most well-read authors.

Such was the case recently, here at the Center, when Victoria Atamian Waterman discussed her historical fiction novel, "Who She Left Behind."

This week's Johnston Senior Center "Spotlite" shines on the author.

Victoria claims to draw her inspiration "from the quirky multi-lingual immigrant home in which she was raised with her grandparents, survivors of the Armenian Genocide."

Victoria explained to the members that "writing a book" was on her "bucket list," and it took her three years to write.

This generational story of survival, love and motherhood from the Armenian Genocide to rebirth in a new land, is based on her own family's history.

In the comfortable and quaint setting of the Center reading room, the author shared her story with the members who truly enjoyed the opportunity and shared a perspective like none other.

Many more authors are planned for the upcoming months. If you enjoy reading and discussion, this is the membership you want to explore. Thank you again to Victoria and the club members for hosting this wonderful event.

Editor's Note: Richard J. DelFino Jr. serves as Executive Director of the Johnston Senior Center, at 1291 Hartford Ave., Johnston. The Johnston Sun Rise regularly publishes a senior profile, called "Senior Spotlight," submitted by the senior center.



BEACON MEDIA

will be Closed on
Monday, September 2

There will be an **EARLY DEADLINE**
for the September 5th Issue

DISPLAY AD DEADLINE:
Ad Copy Deadline
by Noon on
FRIDAY
AUGUST 30

CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE:
Ad Deadline
4:00pm
FRIDAY
AUGUST 30

We will re-open on Tuesday, September 3rd.
Please plan your advertising accordingly.

Say you saw it in the
Johnston SunRise

ELECTION

2024

Editor’s Note: The Johnston SunRise reached out to Johnston’s 2024 Primary candidates with a brief questionnaire. This week, the SunRise features questionnaires from the three Democratic candidates for District 25 State Senate.

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY CANDIDATES

FOR STATE SENATE D-25



CANDIDATE:

Richard J. Delfino III

Andrew Dimitri

Pamela Leary

AGE: 37

AGE: 32

AGE: 55

OCCUPATION/
PROFESSION:

Director of Community and
Legislative Affairs, Tri-County
Community Action Agency
(Formerly employed as Director of
Municipal Affairs and Legislative
Coordinator in the
Office of the Governor)

Attorney at Law

Operations Manager/
State of RI DCYF

EDUCATION:

Graduate of Providence College

La Salle graduate, 2010, URI graduate,
2014, Roger Williams University
School of Law graduate, 2017

Bryant University (PM), CCRI,
Emergency Management; FEMA
Certifications, OSHA certified

PARTY
AFFILIATION:

Democratic

Democratic

Democratic

HAVE YOU
PREVIOUSLY
HELD ELECTED
OFFICE?

Johnston Town Council and Johnston
Democratic Town Committee

I have never held elected office, but
have worked on campaigns and have
always had an interest in serving my
community.

No

TELL US WHY
YOU'RE
RUNNING
IN 50 WORDS
OR LESS:

“My community involvement,
experience in government and my
family’s long-standing dedication to
public service gives me the advantage
of promoting an effective legislative
agenda on behalf of the people of
Johnston. Today, more than ever, we
need a candidate who possesses the
commitment and the courage to lead.”

“I am running because I am deeply
invested in Johnston, my hometown
and its future. I grew up here and just
bought my own home here. I will
always work tirelessly to help families,
working people, seniors, small busi-
nesses, teachers and students, and first
responders. I will always put Johnston
first, and will not let you down.”

“I care deeply about Johnston, and
the people that live and work here.
My experience has given me the skills
to effectively: Balance budgets and
eliminate wasteful spending. Support
working people. Advocate to lower
costs for our seniors. Preserve our
environment and parks. Create good
paying jobs and great schools.”

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that flooding like what Rhode Island saw earlier this year will only continue to intensify," Reed said. "This federal funding will finally advance critical projects and programs to relocate flood-prone residents, restore natural floodplains that have been built over, and create new flood-related infrastructure to keep back rising waters."

"Flooding has become a recurring nightmare for residents who live in the Pocasset River floodplain," said Sen. Whitehouse. "The Pocasset River Flood Damage Reduction Project is off to a strong start, and I look forward to unlocking more funds to make Rhode Island more resilient to flooding — all while keeping pressure on the fossil fuel interests behind this climate crisis."

Whitehouse is a senior member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

"With our state experiencing an increase in flooding events as a result of climate change, it's critical that we're doing everything we can to help Rhode Islanders prepare for future storms," said Rep. Seth Magaziner. "These federal funds will help prevent damage to homes and businesses and protect the infrastructure we all rely on."

"Every community in Rhode Island deserves protection from the devastating effects of severe storms and floods," said Rep. Nicholas DiStasio. "The federal funding that we've secured today is a critical step in ensuring that every community in our state is protected from the impacts of climate change."

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"Every community in Rhode Island deserves protection from the devastating effects of severe storms and floods," said Rep. Gabe Amo. "I thank my colleagues for their dedicated work to secure federal resources that can help residents in flood-prone areas along the Pocasset River reduce costs associated with this damage."

"We are grateful to receive this project funding and support from the USDA, NRCS and representatives of our federal delegation," Cranston Mayor Ken Hopkins said. "Flooding along the Pocasset River has become a perennial issue with the increased frequency of extreme weather events. Investing in these strategies to protect Cranston's riverfront neighborhoods is crucial to preserve our residents' quality of life."

This project was authorized through the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (P.L. 83-566) and will be used to restore the Pocasset River's 100-year floodplain by offering homeowners in Johnston and Cranston neighborhoods voluntary property buy outs, allowing them to relocate out of flood-prone areas. As additional funding becomes available, the Pocasset River floodplain in those areas could then be restored to provide flood attenuation, community open space, recreational benefits and wildlife habitat. The project will be rolled out incrementally by NRCS and officials expect to begin outreach to eligible neighborhoods one at a time as funding becomes available.

"Floodplains can provide significant

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"Floodplains can provide significant protection from flood damages to downstream landowners," said Phou Vongkhamdy, Rhode Island State Conservationist for NRCS. "This project would significantly limit future uses of land in this floodplain area to make it available to store flood water and provide open space and other community benefits."

"RIACD looks forward to helping Pocasset River watershed residents get relief from flooding problems that have plagued them for a number of years," said Richard Went, RIACD president.

The USDA estimates the project will help "nearly 1,000 residents and reduce average annual flood damages in impacted neighborhoods by around \$3.1 million."

"As recently as this January, flooding from the Pocasset River displaced or cut off access to dozens of Rhode Islanders from their homes in Johnston and Cranston and resulted in millions of dollars in damages to homes and properties," according to the Rhode Island federal delegation press release.

They said the project, carried out by NRCS in coordination with Johnston and Cranston, will include the "acquisition of more than 100 properties located within the 100-year floodplain and demolition of 134 structures located on the properties, resulting in a net restoration of 38.5 acres of floodplain."

Funds will also be spent on the "dry floodproofing of 25 structures," "construction of a bypass culvert along Simmons Brook," and "removal of a debris dam at the confluence of Simmons Brook and the Pocasset River."

Opinion

EDITORIAL

Summer vacation is over, but work for parents isn't

With the start of school this week, parents might be breathing a big sigh of relief that they no longer need to juggle schedules or make expensive payments to daycare facilities and summer camps to provide weekday care for their growing kin.

Kids, on the other hand, are undoubtedly already dreaming of next June and another summer of carefree fun away from day-to-day school responsibilities, although we certainly hope that most of them are looking forward to being around friends and challenging their growing minds with another year of academics.

And although a vacation from the significant financial burden of daycare is a legitimate reason to celebrate, we hope that parents don't view the start to school as an excuse to wholly disengage from their child's lives for the next 180 week days.

While parents injecting themselves into the lives and academic experiences of their children has made headlines quite often in the past four years for everything from mask mandates to what books they're being exposed to, we hope that less inflammatory engagements between parents and their school-going children are happening throughout the 2024/25 school year.

Fostering a love of education and learning is not something that teachers and school administrators alone should be responsible for, and in fact, a large part of generating that enthusiasm has to come from home. Parents showing interest in, and providing emotional support to students going through school is vital to reinforce a positive experience and help get to the bottom of any issues they may be having that they aren't comfortable discussing outright.

The ideal relationship between parents, kids, and their school district should be one of active engagement, communication, and understanding.

Parents should engage their children to hear about what they're learning, and any concerns they have. School districts should provide open and regular communication about any interesting events that are occurring that parents can be involved in, and always keep them in the loop about any issues happening in classrooms. And both parents and school professionals alike should foster an environment of mutual understanding with children everyone works as a team to get the best results out of each school day.

Too often in the past years, adults have taken an adversarial approach to their kids' education, interacting with the district only when they have grievances. It benefits kids to know that not only will their parent go to battle for them when things are bad, but also that they will share in their successes and show genuine enthusiasm for when things are going well.

LETTERS

Some notes from the 'town trouble maker'

To the Editor:

As elections are just around the corner fed up hardworking Johnston taxpayers concerned with what the future holds for their children and their children's children need to realize a few realities.

To end ever increasing taxation candidates need to advocate privatizing and regionalizing our municipal services and or only provide wages and benefits that reflect 90% of the non-union workforce. The reality here is because our various services are vital to our society it only stands to reason to provide them cost effectively 24/7 so never to be burdened by them.

However, recent statements of candidates that have been representing our town for many years clearly know the financial hardships government labor unions continue to create for our citizenry via endless unjust provisions, including early retirements, continued paid healthcare and insane pensions.

Here are just a few examples of the endless excesses. Our town has approximately a total of 383 employees but we now have approximately 640 retirees presently cost-

ing \$7.4 million annually for healthcare. Longevity Bounces average town employees \$3,200 annually, some over \$9,000. Vacations at 20 years range from 5 to 8 weeks. The 15 Holidays include paid Birthdays. As for minimum staffing for fire and police it's in the hundreds of thousands annually. And lets not forget the 20 sick days, 3 personal days and Severance Packages in the \$tens of thousands etc., etc...

Realizing the tip of the iceberg of the above and present day insane contractual obligations, that never should have been and inflation at 19% over these last 3 years the time has come to realize we cannot continue to go down this road, as these career politicians tell us they're looking out for our best interests.

Another reality is when civil servants of any department suggest who you should vote for those are the last people in the world you would ever want to vote in, referred to as protectionists of special interests.

Any candidate running for public office that does not address the above, including the need for school vouchers, that would save additional \$millions annually, in

my opinion is either a fake or a coward. So the million dollar question is where do we go from here? Approximately 80% of Rhode Island politicians are Democrats and have controlled our state for decades, especially our town. The reality here is to give the other party a chance to prove their worth, as we would have absolutely nothing to lose and possibly everything to gain; as liberals would say, "Do it for the children".

Lastly, and this is a big major reality, voter apathy is approximately 40% across the country; if that doesn't want to make you cry I don't know what will. To this day fellow Americans continue to give their lives and limbs to protect our freedoms; freedoms come with the responsibility of keeping up with the issues to the best of our ability and vote.

In closing, to the readers that consider themselves Patriotic and have a little backbone pass this commentary around and simply say. "Here's a little food for thought". May God continue to watch over our society?

Peter A. Filippi III
A.K.A. Town Trouble Maker

Why I'm Running for State Senate

To the Editor:

For those I have yet to meet, my name is Pam Leary, and I'm running in the primary on September 10th for the privilege to serve as your next State Senator.

One aspect of Rhode Island's electoral system that took me by surprise is how party endorsements can influence the primary ballot. In our state, if a candidate secures their district or state committee's endorsement, they get to be listed first on the ballot. Research shows that being first is a significant advantage—many voters tend to choose one of the top names listed. This system, while beneficial to established candidates, poses a challenge for newcomers like myself.

I am not a career politician. My decision to run stems from my roles as a grandmother, mother,

friend, and neighbor. I believe it's time for a change from the status quo. Our community deserves a representative who is committed to building consensus and moving past divisive politics. I am confident that together we can achieve more and create meaningful progress.

While my name may appear lower on the ballot, I bring over 20 years of experience working across state and federal agencies. Although this might not be the typical resume for a candidate, it underscores my ability to navigate complex issues and get things done. My candidacy is supported by 17 trade and labor unions, two women's rights organizations, and the Rhode Island and National Associations for Social Workers. These endorsements are a testament to my commitment and capability.

I am anything but business as usual. Despite my name being further down the list, I hope you will seek me out when you cast your vote.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible before the election. I'll be out knocking on doors and engaging in conversations about what truly matters for our future and for Johnston. If I visit your home, I'd love to hear your thoughts and discuss how we can work together to build a better community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope to earn your support and trust in this upcoming primary.

Sincerely,

Pam Leary
Candidate - State Senate
District 25/Johnston

Delfino brings over \$3M to the town of Johnston

To the Editor,

In my years as Director of Public Works for the Town of Johnston, we prioritized improvements to our infrastructure. As a member of the Johnston Town Council, Richard Delfino III worked closely with myself and other town leaders to identify and support the repair and repaving of dozens of roads throughout the town. Recently though, few people know that as Director of Municipal Affairs for the Governor, Richard Delfino III was an architect of a \$20 million initiative in the Governor's FY24 Budget. The initiative called the Municipal Road and Bridge Fund (MRF) is used for the repair of local roads, bridges, and sidewalks. This, amongst many other reasons, is why I am supporting Richard Delfino's campaign for State Senate District 25.

Through Richard's work, Johnston received \$1.8 million for that initiative. This was leveraged into \$3

million with the Town's \$1.2 million match. In Johnston, that \$3 million goes a long way.

This program was so successful that it is being implemented again and Johnston has already applied for its share of the \$7 million appropriated in the Governor's FY25 Budget. Richard Delfino has continually supported enhanced quality of life for Johnston residents—imagine how much more he can do once elected to the State Legislature.

Richard knows Johnston. He was born and raised here. His children are growing up here. Richard cares about the future of our Town. Join me in voting for Richard Delfino III on September 10th. If you cannot wait until then, early voting starts on Aug. 21. See you at the polls.

Arnold Vecchione
Johnston's former DPW Director



John Howell, Publisher Emeritus

Publisher Joy Fox - Publisher@BeaconMediaRI.com	Credit Manager Lynne Taylor
Advertising Director Donna Zarrella - Donna.Z@rhodybeat.com	Bookkeeping & Circulation Leslie Paz Andujar
Editor Rory Schuler - RoryS@rhodybeat.com	Production Manager Lisa Bourque Yuettner - LisaB@rhodybeat.com
Sports Editor Alex Sponseller - AlexS@rhodybeat.com	Production Staff Monique Rice - MoR@rhodybeat.com Ashley Mariani-AshleyM@beaconmediari.com
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Say you saw it in the Johnston Sun Rise

TOWN OF JOHNSTON

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Providence, SC.

BY: Vincent P. Baccari, Jr., Town Clerk, of the Town of Johnston, Rhode Island

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 PRIMARY ELECTION

scheduled for Tuesday, September 10, 2024.

This Greeting serves to notify and warn the Electors and Qualified Voters of the Town of Johnston to meet in ELECTIVE MEETINGS at their respective voting places, to wit, for the following purpose:

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 PRIMARY ELECTION

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

WHERE THE POLLS WILL OPEN AT 7:00 A.M. AND CLOSE AT 8:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024.

NOW THEREFORE, in accordance with the provisions of said Section, the electors qualified to vote in said Primary Election in the Town of Johnston, are hereby warned and notified to assemble on said date and record their vote for:

A REPRESENTATIVE TO REPRESENT THE SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IN THE STATE OF R. I. IN THE 119TH CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

A SENATOR TO REPRESENT THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND IN THE 119TH CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

A SENATOR FROM THE 25TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT AND A SENATOR FROM THE 7TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT AND A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE 13TH, 42nd, 43rd, AND 44TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICTS TO REPRESENT THIS TOWN IN THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SAID STATE.

AND FOR THE TRANSACTION OF SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY LEGALLY COME BEFORE SUCH DISTRICT MEETING.

TOWN OF JOHNSTON VOTING LOCATIONS

The Board of Canvassers of the Town of Johnston will use the following Polling Locations for Town Precincts 1601-1612:

PRECINCT 1601	WINSOR HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYMNASIUM, 100 THERESA ST.
PRECINCT 1602	SIMMONS VILLAGE COMMUNITY HALL, 339 SIMMONSVILLE AVE.
PRECINCT 1603	RAINONE GYMNASIUM, 45 MILL ST.
PRECINCT 1604	N. A. FERRI MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM, 10 MEMORIAL AVE.
PRECINCT 1605	IUOE LOCAL 57, 857 CENTRAL AVE.
PRECINCT 1606	N. A. FERRI MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA, 10 MEMORIAL AVE.
PRECINCT 1607	AIME J. FORAND COMMUNITY HALL, 8 FORAND CIRCLE
PRECINCT 1608	N. A. FERRI MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA, 10 MEMORIAL AVE.
PRECINCT 1609	GRANITEVILLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA, 6 COLLINS AVE.
PRECINCT 1610	SARAH DYER BARNES SCHOOL CAFETERIA, 24 BARNES AVE.
PRECINCT 1611	JOHNSTON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA, 345 CHERRY HILL RD.
PRECINCT 1612	BROWN AVE. SCHOOL CAFETERIA, 14 BROWN AVE.

The polls will open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m.

Given under my hand and the seal of said Town of Johnston, this 29th day of August, A.D., 2024.

.....

Vincent P. Baccari, Jr., Town Clerk

Providence, Sc. Johnston, R.I., August 29, 2024

Johnston Town Warrant

Primary Election

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

TO THE ELECTORS AND QUALIFIED VOTERS

OF THE TOWN OF JOHNSTON:

By virtue of the foregoing Warrant to me directed, you are hereby notified to meet in Elective Meetings at the time and at the places therein named, and for the purposes therein set forth.

JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

DUI

Around 9:13 p.m., Aug. 8, Johnston Police responded to the area of George Waterman Road in front of Our Lady of Grace Church for a motor vehicle crash.

The driver of an orange Dodge Challenger told police that he was in the breakdown lane in front of the church attempting to exit his vehicle when a gold Chevy Malibu left Lafayette Street westbound and turned right on George Waterman Road.

The vehicle allegedly traveled north into the southbound lane briefly, then crossed over into the breakdown lane, striking the driver’s side rear of the Challenger.

“The impact caused the Chevy to spin and come to rest facing southbound in the center of the road,” according to the arrest report. Johnston Fire Department rescue personnel transported the witness to Rhode Island Hospital for a head injury.

Police identified the driver of the Malibu as Ronald E. Cotoia, 58, of 136 George Waterman Road, Johnston.

Police said they smelled alcohol. According to police, Cotoia refused to consent to taking a series of standardized field sobriety tests. They read him his rights and took him into custody.

Another witness told police that Cotoia exited his vehicle after impact and walked over the front of the church, where he hid “a nip bottle and a bag with a white powdery substance in the bush.”

Police say they found one unopened nip bottle in the bush.

Cotoia was charged with DUI/Drugs/Alcohol (BAC unknown), and cited for Refusal to Submit to Chemical Test, Laned Roadway Violation, and Leaving Lane of Travel.

RECKLESS DRIVING

Around 1 a.m., Aug. 14, Johnston Police Patrolman Nicholas Defelice was driving east on Greenville Avenue when he spotted a silver Audi pass his location at a high rate of speed.

“I then turned my patrol vehicle around and drove towards George Waterman Road,” Defelice wrote in the arrest report. “It should be noted that by the time I got to the end of Greenville the vehicle was out of my sight.”

Police saw that the vehicle had taken a left onto George Waterman and Defelice was able to close the distance and initiate a traffic stop.

“It should be noted that said vehicle then proceeded to overtake traffic left of center, forcing a truck and a sedan to veer to the right of the roadway,” Defelice wrote. “I notified Dispatch that the vehicle was refusing to stop and at about that time I estimated the suspect to be going 75 miles per hour in a posted 35 miles per hour zone.”

The vehicle took a left onto Derby Avnue and came to a final stop at 26 Derby Ave. where the suspect resides, according to police. They identified the driver as Nicolas Souza, 19, of 26 Derby Ave., Johnston.

Defelice ran up to the open driver’s side door and identified Souza as the driver.

“I then took Mr. Souza out of the vehicle and placed him in hand restraints which were double locked,” he wrote in the report.

Souza was arrested and charged with Reckless Driving, a misdemeanor. He

was also issued citations for Speeding, Overtaking on Left and Intervals Between Vehicles (following too close).

ANIMAL CRUELTY

Around 12:19 p.m., Aug. 26, Warwick Police responded to 222 Sand Pond Road, Warwick, for the report of an emaciated dog with no food or water in the yard of the residence.

Warwick Animal Control Officers responded and located one severely emaciated dog with open sores in the backyard of the residence. Officers also observed and could hear additional dogs inside the residence and detected a strong odor of feces, urine and decay emanating from the inside, according to Warwick Police.

“Based on the circumstance, Warwick Police Detectives obtained a search warrant for the property at 222 Sand Pond Road,” Warwick Police said in a press release.

Following an investigation, four malnourished and emaciated dogs were seized from the residence and transported to the Warwick Animal Shelter for treatment. Additionally, three deceased dogs were also located at the residence, according to police.

At this time, based on the investigation, one resident was arrested at the scene and charged with multiple animal cruelty related offenses. Police identified the defendant as Michael J. Diaz, 22, of 222 Sand Pond Road, Warwick. He was arrested charged with the following: three felony counts of Unnecessary Cruelty to Animals, Death Resulting, and four misdemeanor counts of Unnecessary Cruelty to Animals, Failing to Provide Adequate Living Conditions, Food and Water.

Warwick Police said the investigation remains ongoing. Anyone with information is asked to contact Sgt. Nate Chea of the Warwick Police Detective Division, at 401-468-4261 or the Warwick Police Tip Line, 401-468-4233.

HOME INVASION, VEHICLE THEFT

Two Rhode Island men — from Cranston and Pawtucket — are now in custody following a Ferrari theft and car chase spanning the entire East Coast, from the Ocean State to Florida.

Around 3:20 a.m., Aug. 24, Cranston Police Patrol Officers were dispatched to 66 Crest Drive for a report of a home invasion, according to a department press release.

“The residents reported that two masked males armed with handguns made entry through an unlocked door,” according to Cranston Police. “The suspects demanded the keys to a 2018 Ferrari Spider convertible parked in the garage and a Chevy Corvette. It was clear that the suspects had intimate knowledge about the residence and the vehicles they were seeking. The keys were turned over, and the suspects left in the Ferrari.”

According to police, “the Chevy Corvette was located undisturbed nearby, where the owner had parked it. It was clear from the onset that this was not a random act, as the suspects targeted the victims and specific vehicles.”

A Cranston Police Flock camera located the stolen Ferrari in Cranston the day after the incident, according to a Cranston Police press release.

POLICE - PAGE 10

Hulk

(Continued from page 1)

“As I got older and Hulk turned heel with the NWO, his ability to entertain and make me laugh was extraordinary,” Palmieri said. “I always appreciate people that entertain me and especially make me laugh. He went back and forth between heel and babyface a few times — literally broke his body to entertain us. I think he’s had two hip replacements, two knee replacements, and has steel rods in his back and neck. Gotta

respect that.”

Palmieri doesn’t discriminate with his pizza art. He’s crafted pizza portraits of everyone from Tony Soprano to Lizzie Borden.

He said he used red and yellow bell peppers, chicken, olives, grated Romano cheese, black pepper powder, onion powder and mozzarella to create “Hulk Hogan the pizza.” The wrestler signed Palmieri’s work of art in barbecue sauce.

“Hulk was very generous with his time, humble, and gracious,” Palmieri said Wednesday. “He also tried our pizza strips and loved them! He’s a real Rhode Islander now.”

THE CAMPS OF CRANSTON, PART 1

Finding hope in a needle-stack



UNDER THE BRIDGE: Robert Acevedo and Lindsay Godfrey live under a bridge in Cranston. They've been working with Cranston Police to find a new home. On Friday, they met with Capt. Justin Dutra and SVU Detective Mike Iacone. Dutra's trying to help them cash in a pair of state housing vouchers. Used needles, like the one below, litter the site. (Cranston Herald photos by Rory Schuler)



KEEP ON KNOCKING: Cranston Police Capt. Justin Dutra moves a shopping cart and sign from the entrance to a makeshift home in a tunnel underneath Cranston Street behind CPD Headquarters.

Rat whiskers, buckets of filth and heaps of hypodermics; visiting Cranston's now-illicit encampments

Editor's Note: This is the first installment of an ongoing series examining the conditions and response to encampments in the city of Cranston. Watch for future installments in upcoming editions of the Cranston Herald.

By RORY SCHULER

A rat woke Robert Acevedo from a deep sleep last week. "I felt its whiskers on my face," he said from the mouth of the tunnel where he lives, under Cranston Street, along an undeveloped section of the Washington Secondary Bike Path. Acevedo pointed to a hole in the rock wall where the big rats poke their heads out all day long. Acevedo, 39, says he was born in Brooklyn, New York, but relocated to Providence. He has a criminal record, mental health issues and a drug habit. But he also has a regular Social Security check, a housing voucher and a steady girlfriend — Lindsay Godfrey, formerly of Johnston. She also has a housing voucher. They say they're waiting and hoping for a safer place to live. "I'm a good scrapper," Acevedo said, his feet dancing the pugilist's shuffle. "I used to be a boxer."

The Visits

In the meantime, Cranston Police have been making regular visits. Cranston Police Capt. Justin Dutra and Special Victims Unit Detective Mike Iacone visited the tunnel Friday morning. Dutra shouted into the tunnel. Godfrey waved and walked into the light, toward the officers. "Thank God, I'm getting all my ducks in a row," she told Dutra. She met the police at the entrance to the tunnel. "House of Hope just came here, at 7 o'clock this morning," Godfrey told Dutra. "They said

that they're going to try to do their best too, to help us." "That's good, we can get it from all different angles," Dutra replied. A voice sounded out from behind, down the trash-carpeted path toward the end of the developed section of the bikeway, behind a busy Dunkin' Donuts. The outline of a dark silhouette appeared — into focus from the foliage. "Hey bud," Dutra shouted to Acevedo, who was approaching from the opposite direction, behind the officers. He closed the distance and greeted both Dutra and Iacone with a fist bump. Over time, Dutra has learned the couples' stories and now he's trying to help them find a real home — indoors, in a building lawfully permitted for habitation. "Again, I'm not going to run you [through a criminal background check] or anything like that," Dutra told the couple. "That's not my mission. I'm not even saying that you are wanted or anything. That's not my concern. That's not my job here today." Acevedo and Godfrey provided their birthdates, full names and a shared contact number with the officers for their records. They both consented to brief interviews and photographs for the Cranston Herald. "They've got their issues," Dutra said later. "But they're trying."

The Tunnel & Path

This stretch of littered pathway and tunnel, while within the city of Cranston, belongs to the state, according to Cranston Mayor Kenneth Hopkins's office. Spokesman Zack DeLuca said "the area of the encampments is located on state

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School

(Continued from page 1)

Thanks to the efforts of
the school community, it
was also a day of treats,
surprises and lots of
smiles.

With music from the
movie “Grease” blaring
from outdoor speakers,
teachers were greeted
with parents and students
waving signs, wellness ac-
tivities, a raffle (for ice
cream sundae kits), snacks
and more. Although the
teachers were from all
grades, they were at John-
ston Senior High School
for the professional devel-
opment day and high
school Principal Matthew
Velino said that every-
thing was planned to
make sure they know how
important they are to stu-
dents and the community.

“We have about 400
teachers,” he said, “and
want each of them to
know that they are ap-
preciated. They are special
to us.”

The same sentiment
was echoed by members
of the district’s Parent
Teacher Student Organi-
zation, who were outside
the high school at 7:30
a.m. with their signs.

They said that a lot of
planning goes into the
event, and it was evident
in all the details that went
into carrying out this
year’s “Grease” theme.

There were a lot of
leather jackets, retro sun-
glasses, ponytails for the
women and carefully
slicked back hair for some
of the braver men.

Assistant School Super-
intendent Edda Carmad-
ello and some other ad-
ministrators even sported
silky “Pink Ladies” jack-
ets — the signature ward-
robe essential for the girls’
group in the movie.

“This is just great,” said
math teacher Anna Her-
bert, smiling at the festi-
val welcome. “It’s a won-
derful way to come back
to school.”

Editor’s Note: Barbara Pol-
ichetti is a Cranston resi-
dent, freelance writer and
frequent contributor to the
Cranston Herald and John-
ston SunRise.



COOKIE ANYONE? Vincent Verardo, assistant principal at Winsor Hill Elementary School, brings in a plate of cookies while rocking his look from the movie “Grease.” (Johnston Sun Rise photos by Barbara Polichetti)



COTTON-EYE JOE ACCIARDO: Above, wellness activities for the professional development day included line dancing and self defense. Here, physical education teachers find out what it's like to be in class, not in front. From left to right: Joe Acciardo, Brian Iafate and Jason Corsini.



WE APPRECIATE YOU:

Members of
the high
school's
National Honor
Society said
they got up
early to make
sure teachers
know they
appreciate the
work they do...
See Page 9
for more
photos.



HIGH NOTE: Johnston state Rep. Deborah Fellela (right) says it's important to make sure teachers start the year on a high note and know they are valued by their community. (Johnston Sun Rise photos by Barbara Polichetti)



MORE SNACKS: Matthew Tsonos, principal of Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School, arrives on the teachers' first day with provisions.



GUITAR HERO: Dr. John Mendelson, an assistant principal at the high school, holds one of the fun props that added to the festive atmosphere.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES: The signs say it all. Members of the Johnston Parent Teacher Student Organization make sure teachers know they were missed.



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■ Camps

(Continued from page 7)

property. It is not located on city property, nor is it the responsibility of the city. Mayor Hopkins has addressed this with the state, and they are aware of the matter.”

From the entrance to the tunnel, you can see the top of the chain-link fence around the police impound lot.

In 2022, U.S. Sen. Jack Reed’s office issued a press release announcing \$3.2 million in federal funding to finish the path, which ends abruptly about 50 feet from Godfrey and Acevedo’s camp.

“To our knowledge, the money is being spent for renovation of the entire bike path,” DeLuca said. “For more details on the project and grant sending, we would refer you to RIDOT (the Rhode Island Department of Transportation).”

“The new \$3.2 million in federal funding will allow RIDOT to accelerate the design and construction of the final 1-mile stretch of trail needed to connect Providence to the existing bike path in Cranston,” Reed’s office announced two years ago.

Earlier this week, RIDOT Chief of Public Affairs Charles St. Martin said that “the funds ... from Senator Reed will be used in a project set to begin in 2025 ... The project will be led by the City of Providence, as part of a sub-recipient agreement with RIDOT.”

According to Reed’s office, the Washington Secondary Bike Path is a “rail trail” stretching 19 miles from Cranston to western Coventry.

“The new \$3.2 million in federal funding will allow RIDOT to accelerate the design and construction of the final 1-mile stretch of trail needed to connect Providence to the existing bike path in Cranston,” Reed’s office announced in September 2022. “This project will help fill a ‘missing link’ between the city and the Cranston portion of the existing path, allowing cyclists and pedestrians to travel safely from Providence to western Coventry. Design engineering is underway to determine permitting needs ...”

When the work eventually does start, construction crews may find the humble semi-temporary home of Godfrey and Acevedo.

“Where there is a homeless encampment, RIDOT’s policy is to have R.I. Housing and local municipalities work with the occupants to find suitable solutions for them,” St. Martin explained via email Tuesday morning. “Once RIDOT has been notified that the site has been vacated by the occupants, and their personal possessions have been removed from the site, RIDOT will then send in its maintenance crews and its hazardous materials clean up contractor to clean up any hazardous materials and regular trash. Our role is just to clear out the site after we have received assurances that the persons in question have been removed from the site and their personal belongings have been removed.”

‘No One Home’

Construction rages above the tunnel, which is located between the blooming Trolley Barn Plaza and the Smoke Shop Hookah House. A new car wash is under construction, and debris fell from the site onto the path below as Dutra spoke to Godfrey and Acevedo.

The pair, Godfrey and Acevedo, their tents and assembled accommodations (like propane tanks and jugs of Sunny D) are plugging up the tiny tunnel, located almost directly behind Cranston Police Headquarters and close to the Achievement First Charter School next door.

The ground is covered with trash and used hypodermic needles. There’s a bucket — the bathroom.

The tunnel has become their home. They’ve been there for quite some time — at least a year. They get a lot of unwelcome visitors, but they say they trust Capt. Dutra.

Godfrey and Acevedo are unhoused, or unsheltered, in the technical sense. But they have tents pitched inside the tunnel. They’ve blocked the passage with debris and

■ Police

(Continued from page 6)

Cranston Police officers responded to the area but were unable to find the vehicle, police said.

“Members of the Cranston Police Department Detective Division identified two suspects, one of whom had an indirect connection to one of the residents,” according to police. “This suspect had previously been inside the Crest Drive residence and knew where the keys to both vehicles were stored. A bulletin about the stolen Ferrari was shared with surrounding police departments. Last evening, a Rhode Island State Trooper saw the vehicle and attempted to stop it.”

Police said the Ferrari’s driver led multiple state troopers and local officers on a high-speed pursuit, through Rhode Island and Connecticut, but “eventually lost sight of the vehicle.”

“Later that night, New York State Troopers pursued the car, but the

suspects again evaded capture,” according to Cranston Police.

On Monday night, Cranston Police Detectives obtained arrest warrants for Jonathan Costa, 20, of 77 Stony Acre Drive, Cranston, and Logan Slezak, 18, of 77 Lee St., Pawtucket, for Breaking and Entering with Felony Intent, Using a Firearm While Committing a Crime of Violence, and Conspiracy.

Cranston Police Detectives partnered with the Rhode Island State Police Violent Fugitive Task Force and U.S. Marshalls to apprehend both suspects, according to Cranston Police.

“A short time ago, Sheriffs from the Flagler County Sheriff’s Department observed the stolen Ferrari after receiving an alert from a license plate reader and attempted to pull it over,” according to a CPD press release. “The driver refused to stop and took off at a high rate of speed. A helicopter air unit was utilized to track the stolen vehicle. The suspects were initially able to evade capture, but they were later tracked to a local residence, where the Ferrari was re-

a shopping cart in which they erected a hand-scrawled sign — “No one home!! Do not enter!!”

A guy they know, but “not really a friend,” moaned low from a second tent. He was sleeping off a hangover and refused to leave the tent to speak with officers. They briefly chatted through the dome tent’s entrance and the police focused on the pair who said they wanted their help.

“Yesterday I obtained the phone number for the new interim housing secretary for the state of Rhode Island, who works for the governor, and I’m going to call him directly and see what he can do for the both of you,” Dutra told them.

Godfrey and Dutra discussed her “rapid re-housing voucher.” The police captain promised he’d make the call and do what he can.

“But I’m just a cop,” he told her.

Acevedo has a different kind of voucher — a permanent supportive housing voucher.

Back at City Hall

On Monday night, Cranston City Council briefly discussed the issue of encampments on city property, the mayor’s proposed camping ban ordinance, its tabling by the Ordinance Committee, and ultimately Hopkins’s Executive Order (bypassing the council).

City Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli also visited the camp behind police headquarters with Dutra earlier last week. She met Godfrey and Acevedo and opened their eyes to some of the resources available.

In return, they opened Renzulli’s eyes to the conditions people are living in the approximately one dozen encampments around the city (Dutra estimates the city has at least 12 populated camps within city limits; though many are on private and state property, rather than city property).

“When I requested that the issue of homeless encampments be added to our council agenda ... it was after spending many hours alongside our police officers, personally visiting these encampments,” Renzulli explained. “At that moment, I wasn’t aware an executive order was forthcoming, and I was deeply concerned that we were delaying the urgent attention this situation demands, especially after witnessing it firsthand.”

Hopkins enlisted Cranston Police Chief Col. Michael J. Winquist to make the case before the council to enact an ordinance banning encampments on city property, permitting the city to disband the camps and fine violators living on the premises. City Council objected to the ordinance along party lines (the council’s six Democrats objected to the ordinance while the three Republicans voiced support).

Dutra spoke at the City Council Ordinance Committee and invited city officials and members of the public to contact him for an escorted visit of the sites. All three Republican members requested tours early last week; followed by Democratic members Robert Ferri (who’s also running for mayor) and Kristen E. Haroian.

The Ordinance Committee voted to continue discussions on the proposed ordinance for the next three months — into the winter months. Hopkins said the need was immediate so he issued an Executive Order granting Cranston Police “immediate authority to enter onto any City owned property for the purpose of inspecting any such housing or encampment, and shall have the authority to coordinate with the City of Cranston Department of Public Works to remove any such encampment or housing, however not before contacting and cooperating with any social services necessary in an effort to relocate and provide temporary housing for any violator of this executive order.”

“If any individual refuses to cooperate with any offered services, their encampment or housing shall be removed by the DPW forthwith and they shall be issued a no trespass warning not to return to the immediate property,” the Aug. 21 order concludes.

■

CAMPS - PAGE 20

covered unoccupied and hidden under a tarp. Sheriffs surrounded the residence and were able to take Jonathan Costa into custody immediately. Sheriffs have established a perimeter around the residence and are in the process of obtaining a search warrant in an attempt to apprehend the second suspect Logan Slezak.”

Cranston Police Maj. Todd Patalano announced Slezak’s apprehension Tuesday evening around 5 p.m.

“We are in constant contact with all participating agencies from other states and hope to have the second suspect apprehended shortly to put an end to this case,” Patalano said. “This was a difficult case in order to apprehend the suspects because of their reckless disregard and dangerous high speeds over 130mph to evade capture, putting all law enforcement and the innocent motorist public at risk, along with being armed and dangerous. The Cranston Police also thanks the residents and neighbors for their cooperation and patience in assisting us to bring this to a quick conclusion.”

RhodyLife



By RORY SCHULER

Filling the need, and a bunch of cavities

RIDA & CCAP sponsor Pediatric Dental Day

The Ocean State has far more tiny teeth than the requisite dental providers needed to keep them clean and healthy. By mid-morning, the ladies stationed outside the Cranston Street Community Action Program & Health Services (CCAP) building had given out more than 100 toothbrushes, tubes of toothpaste and small multi-colored molar-shaped stress balls.

The CCAP staff was abuzz at 1090 Cranston St. all day Thursday as young patients flooded the exam rooms during the organization’s debut Pediatric Dental Day, scheduled to precede the first day of school (in Cranston this Thursday and Friday).

The same event rolled out at CCAP locations in Warwick and Coventry. “We were excited to have had a dedicated Dental Clinic Day focused on pediatric care,” said CCAP’s Tara Pratt, Director of Dental and Mobile Health programs. “Recognizing the high demand for children’s dental services in our community, we are committed to ensuring that every child has access to essential oral healthcare. CCAP has been operating the West Bay Smiles and RMCM, Molar Express Dental programs in our school system since 2006, to help bridge the gap and meet this critical need.”

CCAP had some help pulling together last Thursday’s event.

The Rhode Island Dental Association stepped up to help fund the event and recruit other sponsors. RIDA Executive Director Aaron Guckian introduced participants as they bounced from room to room via the congested CCAP hallways.

“We are committed to working hard because every child deserves a happy and healthy smile,” said CCAP’s Chief Dental Officer Daksh Bhatt. “Our dedicated team is focused on providing the highest quality care and support to meet the dental needs of all children in our community.”

A pair of staffers met in the hallway with laughs and hugs. Dot Benton, a CCAP medical referral tracker, was dressed as a giant tube of toothpaste. Tenin Traore, a CCAP dental assistant, was dressed as a giant toothbrush. They were a matching pair. They posed for a photo holding a giant pair of sparkling choppers.

“We are so appreciative of the support from our community partners, UHP, RIte Smiles for connecting kids in need of care and RIDA Executive Officer Aaron Guckian for bringing awareness to such an important cause,” Pratt said. “Together we are making a meaningful impact to improve the lives of those who need it most.”

Guckian said the Rhode Island Department of Health, Colgate and UnitedHealthcare joined RIDA in making the CCAP Pediatric Dental Day a success.

“Oral health and attendance are directly correlated,” Guckian explained. “We want to thank Gov. [Daniel] McKee, [RI Department of



GETTING READY FOR THE FIRST DAY: The CCAP staff was abuzz at 1090 Cranston St. all day Thursday as young patients flooded the exam rooms. One young patient’s mother anxiously awaits the end of her daughter’s appointment.



LARGER THAN LIFE: Dot Benton, a CCAP medical referral tracker, was dressed as a giant tube of toothpaste. Tenin Traore, a CCAP dental assistant, was dressed as a giant toothbrush. They were a matching pair and posed for a photo holding a giant pair of sparkling choppers, demonstrating proper brushing technique.

■ DENTAL - PAGE 18

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By JENNIFER COATES

Nelson Mandela once penned the words: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." The idea that education is the way to "change the world" by nurturing and enriching the minds of the youngest among us is the mantra of Rhode Island's Dreamland Learning Centers. This family of childcare centers, located in Johnston, Pawtucket, and West Warwick, is dedicated to this goal and mission. Schedule your tour today to see how one of these centers could help support your family.

The local Dreamland Learning Center in Johnston is a comfortable, homey, and cheerful center where learning is fun and where every space is designed to stimulate the growing minds of the many children who come here. This learning center was opened in 2015 and has been evolving and expanding ever since to meet the needs of today's modern working family.

The mission of this early learning community is to "provide quality care that will enable each child to explore and discover the infinite possibilities available to them through the power of learning. Our environment was created to enhance a child's natural curiosity and desire to learn.

At our center, situations are designed to help children prepare to make the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical adjustments they will need in life. We believe children learn best from their own experiences. In a positive learning environment, we help promote self-awareness, perceptual motor skills through planned activities and give children the hands-on experience they need for total growth and development."

Every space in this center is thoughtfully planned and designed to be developmentally appropriate and intentional. Child-size furniture makes each room look comfortable and adapted to the



It's not too late to enroll your child in Johnston's playful and welcoming learning center, Dreamland Learning Center on Hartford Ave. Come check out spaces like this that inspire your child's imagination!

needs of pint-sized early learners, while shelves are filled with toys and walls are strewn with artwork. Individual centers are set up for imaginary play, arts & crafts, building, science, music and story time. The outside playgrounds are the perfect place for youngsters to run off all that childhood energy. The after-school room provides ample space and designated areas for homework time. In fact, the whole facility is Bright Star® rated for excellence.

The curriculum and staff-to-child ratio requirements here meet the strict standards of the state while all staff are licensed and CPR certified. The staff here work as a team with one goal in mind and that is to offer a safe and supportive environment for all

the children over whom they have been given this special trust.

Dreamland Learning Center is now accepting enrollment for children ages 6 weeks through age 12 years of age (enrollment forms can be found online). The center is located at 1253 Hartford Avenue. To answer your questions or concerns, call 401-280-1400 or visit their informative website at www.dreamlandlearningcenter.com. Hours are 7:00am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.

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

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Sports

Panthers ready for fall season

By ALEX SPONSELLER

The high school fall sports season is underway with teams practicing this week and games less than two weeks away. Here is a quick look at Johnston's teams heading into the 2024 season.

FOOTBALL

Last year's finish: 6-1 (Fell in semifinals)
Key returners: Matt Clements, Dean Paris, Michael Abbruzzi
Key losses: NeAri Vasquez, Mike Carlino, Alex Fedorchuk, Steven Finegan, Jahaziel Rodriguez
Outlook: The Panthers fell to eventual champ Middletown in heartbreaking fashion in last year's Division III semifinals, with the Islanders getting the win in a late fourth-quarter drive. Johnston's offense proved to be among the elite last season with the emergence of quarterback Matt Clements and the versatility of guys like NeAri Vasquez, Mike Carlino and Steven Finegan. Although those three pieces have graduated, Clements enters his senior year and second season

under offensive coordinator Tom Centore, whose system elevated the unit to new heights last fall. Dean Paris, who was an all-division player on the defense, will be relied on to keep that side of the ball afloat as the Panthers look to make another run in a newly-aligned division.

BOYS SOCCER

Last year's finish: 1-15 (Missed playoffs)
Key returners: Sebastian Saucedo, Miguel Santamaria
Key losses: Logan Brennan
Outlook: The Johnston program has been building from the ground up the past few seasons and took its lumps last year. The good news for the Panthers, is that nearly its entire lineup returns in 2024 as they look to take a step forward with experience. The team said bye to senior captain Logan Brennan, but returns all-division standouts Sebastian Saucedo and Miguel Santamaria. The team will still be relying on underclass-



BACK AT IT: Johnston's Matt Clements. (File photo by Mike Zawistoski)

■ FALL - PAGE 14



HALL OF FAMERS: Bill Bennett and his family (left) and Tim Regan with his wife Kathy (right). (Photos courtesy RI Hockey Hall of Fame)

Bennett, Regan headline RI Hockey HOF class

By ALEX SPONSELLER

Two Cranston legends were inducted into the Rhode Island Hockey Hall of Fame this month, as Bill Bennett and Tim Regan heard their names called as they were enshrined in a loaded 2024 class. Bennett spent the majority of his career at the AHL level, where he became a legend with the Rochester Americans as a big left wing. He reached the NHL on two different occasions, playing for the Boston Bruins and Hartford Whalers.

Bennett still takes part in Bruins alumni games and coaches at his family's clinics. He is the fourth from his family to be inducted into the RI Hockey HOF, following his father, Harvey, and brothers Curt and Harvey Jr. "What an incredible show, an incredible honor, a humbling honor," said Bennett of the evening. "It was great to have my wife there and my kids there. They never got to see my hockey career, so it was very special. I got to see their smiles, they were proud of their dad."

Bennett reflected back on his early days as a hockey player and remembered how his dad told him to approach the game as a big, tough wing. "My dad said, 'you're 6-6, play like you're 6-6. Hit people. Hockey is a game of time and space and I just wanted my space,'" said Bennett. Bennett hopes to see the hockey community thrive in his hometown of Cranston and believes that it needs to be built from the youth level up. He remembers the days when Edgewood churned out

some of the state's best talent, and hopes to see the city reclaim some of its former glory. "I came from a great area in Edgewood, we had 11 great players. I think somehow, we need to get that energy back into the younger crowd at the Cranston Ice Rink. We used to all have beginner packages, kids would get a flier from the school for hockey tryouts, they would be given lessons, equipment. Hockey is expensive

■ HOF - PAGE 14

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■ HOF
(Continued from page 13)

now, and we need to do more,” Bennett said.

Regan is still considered by many to be the best goalie to ever come out of Rhode Island. After being named All-State three times for the La Salle Rams, he would go on to play for Boston University, leading the Terriers to two-straight national championships and earning MVP honors in 1972. He was drafted by the Buffalo Sabers and became an AHL legend with the Hershey Bears.

Regan was excited to attend his first-ever RI Hockey HOF ceremony and was flattered by the recognition.

“It is a first-class program. It was beyond words. I knew that I knew a few people, but I didn’t realize that I knew a lot of people. I met fellas that weren’t part of ice hockey but just fans, I met fellas that played both on opposing teams and teams that I played with. It was terrific. What amazed me is that it is all through volunteerism. They do it because they love the sport. Vin Cimini and Mal Goldenberg do a great job,” Regan said.Regan looked back on the ups and

downs of his long career, and shared some advice for young players looking to make a name for themselves.

“It was a culmination of background, how difficult it was at times, and seeing it come through on a few different occasions, and sometimes you get lucky,” said Regan. “Have a goal, work hard, don’t get discouraged and be persistent. Believe in yourself, that’s the biggest thing. I grew up with no family and sometimes it was a real struggle. It’s like the adage, a squirrel will find a nut, and you need to keep that attitude and keep at it.”

Another notable inductee was Vicki Movsessian-Lamoriello. Below is her bio:

VICKI MOVSESSIAN-LAMORIELLO

For several decades, this visionary honoree has been a catalyst in the incredible rise of women’s hockey in RI and the nation. She earned All-ECAC honors three times at Providence College and also represented the USA in world play three times, capturing Olympic Gold in 1998. She founded the all-girls MA Spitfires program and later teamed with close friend Sara DeCosta to establish the RI Sting All-Girls Hockey Club in 2010.

■ Fall
(Continued from page 13)

men to fill out the majority of the lineup, but the Panthers have a chance to improve in their second year under coach Yevgen Fedorchuk.

GIRLS SOCCER

Last year’s finish: 12-2-1 (Fell in DIV championship)

Key returners: Olivia Iafrate, Ashley Lainez

Key losses: Kaylee Poole, Alexia DiLorenzo, Ava Waterman, Gianna Halliwell, Karen Lastor

Outlook: The Panthers entered last year’s postseason as the favorite to win the DIV title, but would be upset by Rogers in the title clash. Johnston faces an uphill climb as it looks to get back into the championship mix, graduating nine seniors from last year’s group including leading scorers Kaylee Poole and Alexia DiLorenzo, along with starting keeper Ava Waterman. Olivia Iafrate and Ashley Lainez earned some experience last season along with a few other returners, but Johnston will need some new faces to emerge to get back in the playoff hunt.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Last year’s finish: 1-15 (Missed playoffs)

Key returners: Noelle Patenaude, Nicole Patenaude

Key losses: Gisselly Nunez, Samantha Marcotte

Outlook: Last season was a rebuilding year for the Panthers in their final campaign under longtime coach Greta Lalli. Now, with Noelle and Nicole Patenaude firmly in control, and with a new coaching staff, the Panthers will be looking to improve and compete for a playoff berth in Division III.

GIRLS TENNIS

Last year’s finish: 5-9 (Missed playoffs)

Key returners: Lauren Dixon

Key losses: Hannah Lavergne, Alessandra Pesare, Riley Guenette

Outlook: The Panthers took a step forward last season and narrowly missed a playoff berth as they continue to rebuild their program. Top singles players Hannah Lavergne and Alessandra Pasare graduated, along with top doubles player Riley Guenette, but Lauren Dixon thrived at third singles and figures to be competitive in the top spot this season. Johnston will need some new faces to fill out the lineup behind Dixon to compete for a playoff spot.

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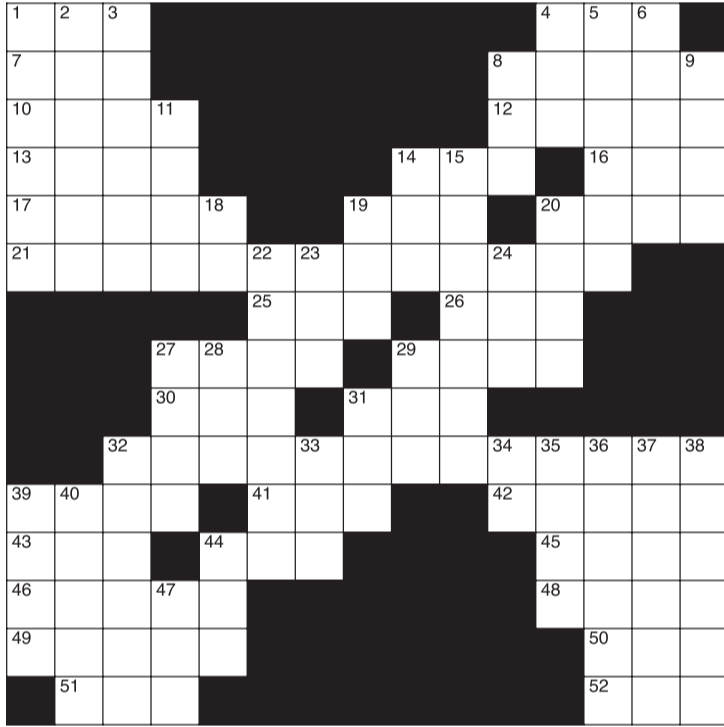
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Microgram
- 4. After B
- 7. Everything
- 8. An unfortunate development
- 10. Coat with sticky substance
- 12. Cylinder of tobacco for smoking
- 13. Minimum interval take off
- 14. Yuck!
- 16. NBA sensation Jeremy
- 17. Where some rockers work
- 19. Midway between northeast and east
- 20. Snake-like fishes
- 21. Groups of homes
- 25. Swiss river
- 26. Useful towel
- 27. “The Wire” character “Moreland”
- 29. Oafish creature
- 30. A major division of geological time
- 31. Bird-like Chinese dinosaur
- 32. Sporting events
- 39. Body part
- 41. Clerical vestment
- 42. Shows data
- 43. Some are “special”
- 44. Expression of disappointment
- 45. Students’ rights document (abbr.)
- 46. Vacation locale Costa ____
- 48. Pop singer
- 49. Distract outside a city
- 50. Mark Wahlberg comedy
- 51. Coniferous tree
- 52. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Lunatic
- 2. Actress Danes
- 3. Buttock muscles
- 4. The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet
- 5. Popular 70s rockers
- 6. Electronic communication
- 8. Trigraph
- 9. Sea eagles
- 11. Low-pitched, resonant sound
- 14. Northeastern US university (abbr.)
- 15. Home of the Bulldogs
- 18. Exclamation of surprise
- 19. Make a mistake
- 20. Advantage
- 22. Monkeys love them
- 23. Wood
- 24. Paddle
- 27. Past participle of be
- 28. Tall, rounded vase
- 29. Device manufacturers
- 31. Financial institution (abbr.)
- 32. Paper product
- 33. A type
- 34. Atomic #43
- 35. Red Hot Chili Peppers’ drummer
- 36. Behaviors
- 37. Decays
- 38. Walked confidently
- 39. Voice (Italian)
- 40. Class of adhesives
- 44. Bar bill
- 47. One-time aerospace firm

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2024 on track to be warmest year ever

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

This month the European-Union’s Climate Change Service, Copernicus, said that 2024 will likely end up being the warmest year on record.

July 2024 had an average surface air temperature of 62.44 degrees Fahrenheit registered just shy of the all-time high set in July 2023 according to the report.

The ocean continues to warm too as the global daily sea surface temperatures for July 2024 was 69.58 degrees Fahrenheit, the second highest value on record for the month.

As documented by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) these high ocean temperatures impact the health of the world’s coral reefs, cyclone activity in the Atlantic and the storms we get as well as Antarctic ice melt. According to Copernicus, Antarctic sea ice dipped to its second lowest value on record in the month of July.

Warm ocean waters, sea level rise, storms and other climate impacts have and will continue to have a profound impact on the fish in Rhode Island and the region. Not many fish caught in Narragansett Bay in August as the water was too warm. And sea level rise and storms continue to erode our coast and destroy sensitive habitat areas along the coast and Bay.

And the fish we catch today are vastly different in type and abundance. Warm water fish such as black sea bass and scup are here in abundance and cold water fish like cod, winter flounder and American lobster have left the area. Exotic warm water fish like cobia, wahoo and an abundance of tuna are being caught in our area, even a tarpon caught off a Rhode Island beach this summer.

As reported our bait profiles

here our robust. Warm water has brought silversides, sand eels, squid, all types of herring and mackerel here in abundance all at the same time which has attracted larger animals to forage close to shore in areas they normally do not feed. This includes whales of all types, sharks and tuna all now just one or two miles off our coast. Last year the top three giant bluefin tuna caught in the Boston Giant Bluefin Classic were caught just two to three miles off Narragansett, RI. All of the fish were close to 800 pounds.

We as a nation need to stem the tide on climate change. Reduce our carbon footprint with renewable energy whether in be wind power, solar and other renewable energy sources being discovered.

We need to do this now to save the fish and preserve our world.

For the past two years, anti-renewable energy voices have opposed solar energy and offshore wind energy claiming that they are harmful for the environment. Offshore wind opponents have claimed the construction of offshore wind is harming whales and creating a toxic environment for fish and habitat. This is simply not true as noted in two Brown University Climate and Development Lab reports that relate detractors use disinformation, half-truths, and often non peer reviewed research and links their positioning to pro gas and oil think tanks.

As a charter captain and avid recreational angler, I see the devastating impact climate is having on the fish and habitat. I have felt privileged to be able to take people fishing and earn money doing it. I know it is a privilege and believe the oceans belong to all the people of the United States of America, even those living in Kansas



FIRST BLACK SEA BASS: Sam Cuddeback and Kyle Smith of New York with black sea bass caught off Newport this weekend. Black sea bass are a warm water fish. (Submitted photo)

as well as impoverished persons living in Providence or New York City. We own it to them, all Americans and all the people of the world to stem the tide on climate change and produce readily available renewable energy.

The days of claiming the ocean for any one interest group are over, whether it be private recreational fishers, commercial fishing, the shipping industry, wind farm developers, the aquaculture industry or charter captains like me. The oceans belong to all Americans and all the people of the world.

Multi ocean uses have proven to work in Europe that has had offshore wind farms for over 30 years. We need to work together to make it work in America.

Where’s the bite?

Freshwater. Dave Henault of Ocean State Tackle, Providence, said, “Anglers continue to target largemouth bass and are doing well but that is about to change as Rhode Island and

Massachusetts will be conducting their fall trout stocking.”

Striped bass, bluefish, bonito. Chad Ketch of Sam’s Bait & Tackle, Middletown, said, “The striped bass bite is actually getting better as we are at the being of the fall run. Slot fish and larger are being caught from the Sakonnet River to Newport and Jamestown”

“Striped bass fishing is better in the Bay now. We have more Atlantic menhaden and more bass as the water is starting to cool,” said Henault of Ocean State Tackle.

East End Eddie Doherty, Cape Cod Canal fishing expert and author, said, “Terrific surf-casting continues on the Canal. Nine-year-old James Astle reeled in a nice fish that hit an Al Gags gold Whip It while wetting a line in the Ditch with his grandfather. ‘Bucktail Bill’ Jenkinson was exploring the bottom with the lure he is famous for, his 4-ounce white bucktail, when it was hit by a nice bass over slot on an early east tide. Passionate 6-year-old Sage Nicholson continues on

her torrid pace, fooling nine fish, including five slots, with a big white Magic Swimmer on a rising east tide.”

Fluke (summer flounder), black sea bass and scup. “We still have an abundance of scup in the mid and lower Bay, and they are still large. Anglers are catching them as far up the Bay as Save the Bay at Fields Point,” said Henault of Ocean State Tackle.

Declan O’Donnell of Breachway Bait & Tackle, said, “Fluke reports have been improving this week with a good amount of fish being caught with some healthy size keepers in the mix. Most reports are coming from in front of the center wall and out to the east.”

Tautog. “Anglers are catching tautog out in front of Newport and in the lower Bay in the Newport Bridge area,” said Ketch of Sam’s Bait & Tackle.

Bluefin tuna. John Tuner on the RI Saltwater Anglers blog said, “Did a mid-day trip out of Wickford trolled the mud-hole landed 35-inch bluefin. Near the Gully we began catching small football bluefin. Not a lot of life out there. Did run into some whales between the Gully and Tuna Ridge.”

This column is dedicated to Peter Magan, my brother-in-law, who passed away last week. He was an avid reader of my column, often calling me to comment or ask a question about what I had written. He was a great man who we miss dearly.

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

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16 Windwood Rd	Bankston, Christopher and Bankston, Janna M	Bissonnette, Ian	8/5	\$365,000	1746 Elmwood Ave	MJV Enterprises LLC	Rpa Svcs LLC	8/8	\$77,000
17 Longview Dr	Gray, Liam and Gray, Sarah	Ocampo, Jessica and Gonzalez, Fabio A	8/7	\$585,000	229 Narragansett Pkwy	Dawne M Pezzuco T and Pezzuco, Dawne M	Sachs, Andrew B and Sachs, Rebecca A	8/6	\$890,000
182 Eldridge St	Heaney, Stephen M and Heaney, Lenore F	Long, Emily A and Long, Alex D	8/8	\$385,000	250 Larchwood Dr	Rittner, Fran B	Meyerson, Dmitry and Petrocelli, Chantele	8/9	\$810,000
200 Cannon St Lot 119	Susan A Warthman Lt and Warthman, Susan A	High Ridge Condo Assn	8/5	\$2,500,000	27 Torrington Dr	Worrall, Nancy L	Drolet, Vivian and Foster, Harold	8/6	\$349,900
200 Cannon St Lot 119	Susan A Warthman Lt and Warthman, Susan A	High Ridge Condo Assn	8/6	\$250,000	32 Carder Rd	Vest, Crystal M	Labaty, Josette	8/7	\$375,000
216 Alpine Estates Dr	Eacuello, Peter B	Aroyan, Joseph B	8/5	\$760,000	32 Carder Rd Lot 397	Vest, Crystal M	Labaty, Josette	8/7	\$375,000
22 Blue Gentian Rd	Machado, Erik	Zaccari, Justin and Zaccari, Kylie	8/6	\$590,000	331 Asylum Rd	Mercurio, Jonathan T	Shepherd, David	8/5	\$629,000
23 Koster St	Guerriero, Demetrio and Guerriero, Fioramante	United Bldrs LLC	8/8	\$350,000	34 Urban Ave	Series 1 Of The Jarvco LL	34 Urban Ave LLC	8/8	\$385,000
23 Ledgewood Dr	Hazian, Andrea L	Federman, Peter S and Federman, Christine	8/7	\$485,000	355 Church Ave	Emilia Invest LLC	Ravikumar, Manoj and Kasula, Thrisha	8/9	\$275,000
244 Elena St	Magnone, William and Magnone, Lucia	Grullon, Cesar	8/5	\$565,000	476 Fair St	Mary F Kiernan T and Mccaffrey, Patrick J	Facin, Jordan	8/5	\$500,000
27 Royal Ave	Savoie, Kevin J and Savoie, Damian A	Jaeger, Kelsey	8/8	\$385,000	51 Easton Ave	Rwr Re Invest Grp LLC	Fagundes, Stephanie	8/9	\$362,500
27 Royal Ave Lot 1590	Savoie, Kevin J and Savoie, Damian A	Jaeger, Kelsey	8/8	\$385,000	515 Warwick Ave	Series 4 Of The Jarvco LL	515 Warwick Ave LLC	8/7	\$235,000
32 Woods Ln	Erqou, Sebhah A and Atakite, Feven	Suslovich, Vladimir and Nanikova, Elina	8/7	\$891,000	66 Benedict Rd	Allen Beverly J Est and Harrison, Kimberly R	Rucker, Keeley A and Morrell, Marisa E	8/9	\$390,000
33 Crawford St	Chhay, Chhany	Alidadi, Katayoun	8/9	\$400,000	752 Quaker Ln Lot C206	Schnepp, Matthew	Spaziano, David	8/6	\$216,500
47 Maple St	Dchristofaro, Gianna R	Germain, James and Pajotte, Cheryline	8/7	\$505,000	914 Stratford Ln Lot 914	Whalan, Jean G	Giorno, Emilia A	8/7	\$349,900
62 Randall St	Ricci Hldg LLC	Ricci, David J	8/8	\$340,000	92 2nd Point Rd	Hockhousen Ft and Mccaffrey, Michael J	Hockhousen, Mark A and Hockhousen, Patricia A	8/8	\$330,000
651 Natick Ave	Grant, Tricia	Speights, John A and Speights, Danielle R	8/8	\$800,000	WEST GREENWICH				
69 Farrar St	Bentley, Noel M	Connell, Malcolm	8/6	\$475,000					
75 Autumn St	Chan, Jessica and Chan, Sherry	Aliferakis, Karen M and Aliferakis, Josephine	8/9	\$340,000	59 Lake Dr	Raymond, Arthur J and Marques, Cassya R	Allen Family RET and Allen, Joseph F	8/9	\$860,000
80 Doane St	Grote, Matthew J	Pride, Alejandra M	8/8	\$320,000	WEST WARWICK				
87 Camden Ln	Heim Jr, Keith A	Mercurio, Jonathan	8/5	\$1,000,000					
9 Gray Coach Ln Lot 911	Patriot Bldrs Inc	Kankarazfou, Issifou	8/9	\$360,000	110 Deerfield Dr	Goldstien, Jason H and Goldstien, Christine	Sozer, Mehmet A and Sozer, Ozlem	8/8	\$495,000
94 Orchard St	Switalla, Joseph and Matevossian, Karine	Chase, Ashley	8/5	\$375,000	12 Arthur St	Hud	Hall, Kristina L	8/9	\$207,000
99 Westfield Dr	Sintra Seven LLC	Heaney, Stephen and Heaney, Lenore	8/8	\$565,000	12 Gage St	Pacheco Jr, Antonio	Frias, Vianchell A	8/9	\$401,000
EAST GREENWICH					189-A Cowesett Ave	Ross, Dorothy R and Ross, Henry E	Connell, Roberta	8/7	\$360,000
					25 Pepin St	Hernandez, Amanda E and Cruz, Cornelio H	Iannucciili, David P	8/7	\$390,000
1142 Frenchtown Rd	Thimas, Pamela F and Lima, John P	Clynes, Kevin	8/9	\$595,000	450 Providence St Lot 47	Derderian Jr, Raffi A and Derderian, Susan F	Bassi, Estelle M	8/9	\$319,900
12 Camden Ct	Lu, Lei and Tang, Kai	Crimaldi, Gabriel and Crimaldi, Albert R	8/2	\$927,950	50 Weaver St	Galicia, Zuheily	Amore, Dennis J	8/9	\$330,000
20 Secret Ln	Haefele, Darya and Haefele, Colin	Graise, Andrew and Graise, Nermin	8/2	\$1,917,000	56 River St Lot 22	Mai Tai Investments Inc	Malloy, Collen	8/9	\$164,900
2127 Middle Rd	Jag Bldrs LLC	Maslach, Nicklas and Barry, Kayla	8/8	\$1,040,000					
50 Spring St	Greene, Adam and Greene, Heather	Schwager, Mark I and Flanagan, Patricia J	8/8	\$1,600,000					
EXETER									
35 Hallville Rd	Maiorano, Emilio	Grotta, Lillia M and Kemper, Gregory M	8/8	\$585,000					

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ANIMAL TALK

By Karen Kalunian

Local♥️Adoptable♥️Loveable



Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

Billy

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

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

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JOIN OUR PACK
BACK TO SCHOOL ADOPTION EVENT

Saturday
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Multiple Rescues



■ Dental (Continued from page 11)

Education] Commissioner [Angélica] Infante-Green, and their staffs as they continue to highlight their 'Attendance Matters' campaign across Rhode Island."

CCAP, a family-centered medical and dental care provider in Cranston, Coventry and Warwick, kicked off the full day of pediatric screenings, timed to coincide with the first day of school.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cavities (tooth decay), are the most common chronic childhood disease in the United States and the leading cause of missed school among children, Guckian shared.

"On average, 34 million school hours and 2 million days are lost each year because of unplanned or emergency dental care," according to the CDC.

"Access to dental care is not just about a smile, but about the health and future of our children," Pratt said. "When children lack dental care, they risk more than just cavities — they risk missing school, falling behind in their education, and suffering from pain that can affect their overall quality of life."

Dr. Andrew "Andy" Gazerro, RIDA president, explained the impact healthy teeth can have on a student's daily life.

"Our teeth are meant to last a lifetime and are important to a child's self-esteem," Gazerro said. "No one wants to be bullied, let alone bullied about their smile. With proper care, a balanced diet and regular dental visits, their teeth can remain healthy, beautiful and strong."

Dr. Gayathri Shenoy, who performs the annual dental school screenings for Cranston elementary and middle school children, offered a vital statistic.

"Roughly 9 million children, ages 6 to 12, miss school because of an oral health issue," he said. "Sadly, kids with poor oral health are three times more likely to miss school due to an emergent oral health condition and two times more likely to perform poorly academically."

The RlTe Smiles program covers preventive care, check ups and dental treatment services for Medicaid eligible Ocean State children born on or after May 1, 2000. As the RlTe Smiles program administrator, UnitedHealthcare contracts with dental providers and dental clinics to help connect local families with badly needed dental care.

"UnitedHealthcare welcomes the opportunity to partner with RIDA and CCAP to improve access to preventive dental care which will help reduce incidences of childhood caries and other major causes of dental pain, which will ultimately reduce school absenteeism," said Marie Jones Bridges, of RlTe Smiles.

CCAP is one of the state's "largest organizations dedicated solely to fighting the war on poverty," according to the agency.



FREEBIES: By mid-morning, the ladies stationed outside the Cranston Street Community Action Program & Health Services (CCAP) building – Michelle Gonzalez, a CCAP patient care rep, and Melanie Robinson, a community health worker – said they had given out more than 100 toothbrushes, tubes of toothpaste and small multi-colored molar-shaped stress balls. *(Beacon Media photos by Rory Schuler)*

CCAP oral health professionals are located at CCAP facilities in Cranston, Warwick and Coventry.

"Our dentists and hygienists provide a full range of comprehensive dental services to both children and adults," the agency pledges, in addition to offering "Sliding Scale discounts for patients who are financially eligible." "CCAP does not limit access to service due to inability to pay."

The state has been struggling with a drastic shortage of pediatric dental providers. Agencies like CCAP, and Tri-County Community Action Agency in Johnston (with a newly opened pediatric dental office on Mineral Spring Avenue in North Providence) have been attempting to fill the need statewide.

He called Thursday's CCAP event a "maiden voyage," and just the first of many future collaborations aimed at improving the oral health of Ocean State children.

The memorial trees of Johnston's Thornton School

An excited crowd gathered at Calef's Hall on Plainfield Street in Johnston on the evening of June 25, 1908. The hall had been gaily decorated and everyone was dressed in their Sunday best and eager to congratulate the two students who were graduating from Thornton Grammar School that night; Winifred Toomey and Asa Wisner Hall Jr., both 16 years of age.

Asa was born in Oswego, New York on Jan. 11, 1892, the son of Asa Wisner Hall Sr. and Johannah (Dugan). The Hall family had come to Rhode Island only recently and settled on School Street. The elder Asa was a longtime electrician and a father to two other children besides Asa; 14-year-old Ella and 12-year-old William.

The 1908 graduation program began with Thornton Grammar School students performing a hymn. Reverend William Henry Starr then offered a prayer. Students Essie Rice, Bessie Hanna and Joseph Alexander sang a song followed by students Dorothy Stone, Helen Dexter, Florence Bennett, Elsie Sweet and William Davis performing a dialogue. Continuing on with the program, Bessie Hanna and Joseph Alexander returned to take part in a duet and were preceded by Clarence Marriott and the two graduates each performing a recitation.

Local milk dealer and member of the school committee, Jonathan Barnes, presented diplomas to Winifred and Asa and the exercises closed with a benediction by Reverend Frederick Collins, pastor of the

Back in the Day



by
KELLY SULLIVAN

Church of the Messiah. That night, the future stretched out in front of two young people. For Asa, however, the future would be condensed into less than two years.

On May 8, 1910, the 18-year-old man expired at his home from heart failure due to the effects of chronic mitral insufficiency, a condition in which the flaps of the heart do not close appropriately, thereby allowing blood to flow backwards through the heart. Three days later, nearly every resident of Thornton moved morosely down School Street carrying bouquets of flowers. Reverend Charles Conal MacKay of the Thornton Congregational Church officiated the funeral service at the Hall home. Burial followed in Pocasset Cemetery.

In memory of their friend and former classmate, the female students of Thornton Grammar School planted a maple tree in the schoolyard and dedicated it to Asa, adding to what would become a little garden of memorial trees there. Five years

earlier, student Robert Battye Booth had been killed when he suffered a fractured skull after falling from a cherry tree not far from his home on June 29, 1905 at the age of 10. Just as the graduating exercises of the Thornton Elementary School were taking place that particular year, Robert and some other boys decided to pick cherries from an orchard that belonged to none of them. When the owners spotted the little trespassers, a threatening yell erupted. Robert's friends got away but the shout scared him so badly, he fell from the tree and struck his head on the ground. The son of George Booth, overseer of the Pocasset Mills, and his wife Dorothy, Robert was buried in Pocasset Cemetery. His classmates had planted a tree upon the school grounds in his honor.

Less than a year after Asa Hall's untimely death, Margarete Anna Augusta Haeseler passed away. Known to friends and family as "Metta," she was a former student of the Thornton Grammar School. Having come to America from Germany with her parents Emil and Margaret in 1892, she died of pulmonary tuberculosis on April 27, 1911 at the age of 25. The following month, the children at the grammar school added a tree in her memory to the schoolyard.

On Jan. 13, 1919, the Thornton Grammar School caught fire and burned to the ground due to firefighters struggling with low water pressure. The loss was estimated to be about \$32,000.

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



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NEEDLE CARPET: In the background, Cranston Police Capt. Justin Dutra and Special Victims Unit Detective Mike Iacone can be seen visiting a makeshift camp in a tunnel behind Cranston Police Headquarters. In the foreground, one of hundreds of needles littering the campsite. (Cranston Herald photo by Rory Schuler)

■ Camps

(Continued from page 10)

“Given that an executive order is now in place, the immediate direction is out of our direct control and I don’t really have a lot to say as a result,” Renzulli explained Monday night. “However, I strongly encourage anyone who hasn’t yet visited these encampments to arrange a visit through our police department. Seeing it with your own eyes is important. The conditions are not only heartbreaking but also unsafe, both for those living there and for residents in surrounding areas.”

Renzulli shared her meeting with Godfrey and Acevedo with the rest of Cranston City Council Monday night (though not by name).

“During my visit, I spoke with two individuals in one of the encampments and discovered that, despite having housing vouchers, they weren’t aware of the resources available to them and how laws had changed regarding Section 8,” Renzulli explained. “Life can become hard to manage in general for all of us, so imagine trying to navigate options while living outside, without a computer, and without basic stability. In just a brief conversation, I was able to guide this couple

toward accessing housing they didn’t realize they were eligible for and we talked through some different ideas. It became clear to me that there’s a significant disconnect.”

New Connections

“Get us out of here,” Acevedo begged Dutra. “Every night it’s dangerous.”

“There were two people trying to come in here last night,” Godfrey told police. “Shining flashlights.”

“Not the police?” asked Dutra. “No,” Godfrey replied. “Just people.” “These were just randoms?” He asked. “The police announce themselves,” Acevedo said, with certainty. “They have to.”

“You guys know you can always contact us in the middle of the night,” Dutra reminded the couple.

He wrote down his contact information and handed it to the pair.

Dutra has their number; and now they have his.

“This is a ‘judgement free zone,’” Dutra told them. “We have no issues ... I’m going to call the housing office for the state to see if we can get these vouchers cashed in ... You’re on the up and up. Heading in the right direction. And that makes you eligible to start cashing in your voucher.”