

COMPLIMENTARY

OCTOBER 2020

The Smithfield Times



www.smithfieldtimesri.net



Bill and Cathy Shaw, see story on page 2.

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Smithfield Couple Keeps Local History Alive by Preserving Historical Cemeteries

By Paul Lonardo

Many people see cemeteries as gloomy places that have little impact on their local area, but this couldn't be further from the truth. This time of year, in particular, these sacred final resting places come to be seen as little more than a trope for Halloween and all things creepy and ghoulish. The fact is that cemeteries have deep historical connection to their communities and they bring people together, offering insight into local history. This is certainly true for the numerous historical cemeteries in the town of Smithfield.

George "Skip" Tuetken is one of the leaders of a unique and beneficent organization, The Friends of Smithfield Cemeteries. The group consists of like-minded people who are dedicated to maintaining the town's 120 historical cemeteries. It was started by Don Burns in the late 1990's and continues today. The people who volunteer their time to do this work, "adopt" a particular cemetery and visit the site a couple times a year to keep the vegetation under control and clear any debris, leaves and branches that may have gathered there. According to Skip, most people adopt one cemetery, sometimes a couple, but Cathy and Bill Shaw, a local couple, care for twelve cemeteries in town. The Shaws go above and beyond, not just in the number of cemeteries they have adopted, but the level of work they put into their upkeep. They have purchased much of their own equipment, such as a metal detector, a battery-operated chainsaw, and a weed whacker, as well as other materials like bags of concrete mix, cans of black spray paint, and tubes of epoxy, all of which they use to repair broken headstones and recover and restore long-buried gates and perimeter fencing.

"It's something Bill and I were instantly drawn to," Cathy says. "We met Don Burns and Skip Tuetken, two excellent guys who know so much of the history, and when they started talking, it was just mesmerizing."

At the time, the Shaws were thinking about doing something in the town. They both have always enjoyed yard work, so it was a perfect fit for them. The Shaws know this activity is not for everyone. They only started about a year ago, and they are still learning about the many different locations and nuances of each cemetery.

"It may sound strange, but each cemetery has its own personality," Cathy says.

Some of the cemeteries require more care than others, or a specific type of maintenance. They also vary quite a bit in size, from those with just handful of headstones to one with up to a thousand. Some are on private property, including some that are so remote the organization can only get to them once every couple of years. With dates on stones that go back almost three hundred years, there is a lot of history to be discovered, as long as there are people like Cathy and Bill Shaw to keep nature and elements at bay.

"I'm a former teacher, and when I read the names and the dates on the stones, it makes me wonder about what their daily lives were like," Cathy says. "And if they were young, I can't help but think about where they may have gone to school, or if they were home-schooled."



The Friends of Smithfield Cemeteries receives a little funding from the town, which goes towards gasoline to operate the weed wackers and various other equipment in the upkeep of the cemeteries. Donations are accepted and can be made by writing a check to "The Friends of Smithfield Cemeteries" and mailing it to 7 Lori Ellen Drive, Smithfield, RI 02917. They still need volunteers to help them continue their work. Anyone interested in either just helping out on a Saturday morning, or adopting a cemetery of their own, should contact the Friends of Smithfield Cemeteries through their Facebook page, or by email at friendsofsmithfieldcemeteries@gmail.com or by phone at 401-595-1444.



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Therefore, if you have had a living Trust prepared to shelter your assets from nursing home expenses and enhance your chances of qualifying for Medicaid long term care benefits after a five year look back period, you should have that Trust reviewed annually and revised if necessary to be sure it conforms to the current Medicaid statutes and regulations.

It is part of my regular practice to prepare living Trusts to both avoid probate of a client's estate and protect their assets from nursing home costs during their lifetime. I also review and update those Trusts, and similar Trusts prepared by other attorneys upon request.

If you are concerned about possible long term care expenses and would like to discuss your concerns with me, please call my office for an appointment. There is no fee for the initial consultation.

— George M. Prescott

Courtesy of:

George M. Prescott

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Bryant Adjusts to New Reality

By Joe Siegel

Bryant University reopened its campus for the fall semester on August 25, with restrictions in place due to Covid-19.

The university has invested close to \$3 million in weekly testing conducted on-site for the entire campus community. Based on recommendations by the CDC, the comprehensive strategy includes preparedness, prevention, screening, rapid-turn laboratory testing, case identification and contact tracing.

“The health and safety of our community is our highest priority,” Bryant President Ross Gittell said in

The initial test for students and employees returning to campus, and ongoing weekly surveillance testing for everyone on campus, will take place in the Multipurpose Athletic Center.

Students are maintaining social distancing in the classrooms by sitting six feet apart and classroom capacity has also been reduced, according to Elizabeth O’Neil, Associate Vice President for University Relations.

During the recent move-in week, students gathered in small groups in areas which were roped off and they used

O’Neil explained. “There was never any congestion on campus at the testing location or as people were moving into the residence halls.”

In addition, face coverings are required to be worn at all times, except for meals in the dining hall and in the students’ rooms in the residence halls. Some members of the campus community are tested more than once a week.

“If you’re a commuter or a student athlete, for instance because you’re coming and going from campus, you’re tested at least twice a week,” O’Neil noted. “We secure the campus at 10 o’clock at night, so any students returning after (10 pm) have to swipe their ID and also participate in extra testing.”

Bryant has a 438 acre campus, which allows for easier social distancing.

“We’re very fortunate that we have such expansive grounds which are impeccable maintained and cleaned,” O’Neil noted. “We have really been taking advantage of that outdoor space.”

The university’s athletic facilities are reserved this fall for use by the Bryant community only and will be unavailable to outside visitors and members of the Smithfield community. All facilities will operate with social distancing and occupancy guidelines as outlined by the Rhode Island Department of Health, CDC, and Bryant University.

Bryant’s student population is 3200 and



a press release. “We are committed to testing on campus, which is critical for getting the rapid results that will help to keep our community safe and allow us to continue operations.”

Bryant’s plan is among the most comprehensive, with weekly testing for all students, staff, and faculty on campus – an estimated 5,000 tests per week. Results are being closely monitored to determine the need for an increase in testing frequency.

an app to check in so the university knew how many were together in one area at a particular time.

“Every student was assigned a very specific time slot, they arrived on campus, we had drive-thru testing before they exited their cars, and the move-in to the residence halls was staggered so (students) presented evidence that they had been tested, and there were only a certain number of people in the residence halls at any given time,”





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the majority are from neighboring states such as Massachusetts and Connecticut, where coronavirus has either been contained or where infection rates have declined, according to O’Neil, who said 90 percent of students live on campus.

O’Neil said Bryant has “very detailed” contact tracing protocol as well as a

different testing location for students who may be experiencing symptoms of Covid-19.

If a student is showing symptoms, they go into quarantine, are tested immediately, and then are placed in a residence hall which has been set aside for isolation.

“Most of our students are really really glad to be back on campus,” O’Neil added. “Our student government and other leaders have really been very proactive to encourage students to do what is necessary to keep the campus open. The Bulldog spirit that we have here is very strong.”



Community Events/ Update

Illuminate- The Gala, rescheduled to November 13, 2020, is postponed. In consideration of the health and welfare of the Smithfield community during an ongoing healthcare crisis, this event benefitting the revitalization of the SHS auditorium will be scheduled to a date in the future. To be announced soon.

Deadly New Virus Threatens Rhode Island's Rabbits

There is yet another insidious virus we have to contend with these days, as if COVID-19 wasn't enough. This particular virus doesn't affect humans though, only rabbits, hares and jackrabbits. But it is highly contagious, and deadly. The New England cottontail, Rhode Island's only native wild rabbit, could be at serious risk.

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus (RHDV) is considered a foreign animal disease in the United States. Though European in origin, it was first seen in China in 1984. It has since been found in 40 countries throughout Europe, Africa, North America, the Mediterranean and Asia, and also in Australia and New Zealand. A new strain, rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus serotype 2 (RHDV2), appeared in France in 2010 and quickly replaced the original strain in many of those countries. Unlike other RHDV strains which kill only domestic rabbits, RHDV2 kills both wild and domestic animals. This fast moving disease took only 18 months to spread from coast to coast in Australia in 2015.

In March 2020, RHDV2 was found by animal health officials in New Mexico, which was the third confirmed case in the United States. It was first detected in Ohio in September 2018, and then in Washington State in July 2019. The most recent outbreak has spread throughout multiple states in the Southwest, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Utah and Texas. The origin of the current outbreak is unknown.

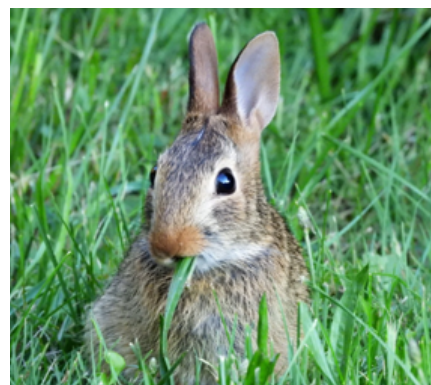
In February 2020, the disease was confirmed in New York City but was quickly isolated and eradicated. According to Dr. Scott Marshall, Rhode Island State Veterinarian, "My recollection was that it was in a domestic rabbit and not the same exact strain that

was circulating in the Southwest. My guess is that it was a case of smuggling rabbits or rabbit parts, or illegal movement of rabbits that caused the isolated case in New York." Dr. Marshall also notes "That there have been no confirmed cases in New England. Fish and Wildlife are monitoring reports of rabbit mortality here in Rhode Island ... they have high confidence that the virus is not present in Rhode Island or in surrounding states."

RHDV2 is a swift killer. Rabbits may seem perfectly healthy one day and then be dead the next. Sometimes the only clue that a rabbit has succumbed to the disease is a bloodstained nose caused by internal bleeding. According to the House Rabbit Society, other visible symptoms may include loss of appetite, lethargy, fever, seizures, jaundice, bleeding from the mouth, nose or rectum, or difficulty breathing. Often the animal dies suddenly without showing any symptoms at all.

According to the USDA, RHDV2 is resistant to extreme temperatures and can be spread either through direct contact with an infected animal or exposure to their pellets or blood. It can also spread from carcasses or any other contaminated item. People can even infect their indoor rabbit by having the virus on their clothing or shoes. A vaccine is currently unavailable in the United States, so according to the USDA, the best way to protect your rabbit is through good biosecurity practices, which are simple steps taken every day to keep germs away from your pet.

If there were an outbreak of RHDV2 in Rhode Island, the state's small population of New England cottontails could be decimated. Our only native rabbit, its listed as a Species of Greatest



Eastern cottontail.
Photo by Sandra Achille

Conservation Need in New England and New York. Their low numbers are caused by the ongoing loss of habitat due to development. These rabbits prefer early successional young forests with thick brush, and according to a recent study conducted at URI, only 1.4% of this kind of woodland exists in Rhode Island. Eastern cottontails, our other wild rabbit, are similar in appearance to New England cottontails, but are not native. They were introduced into Rhode Island in the 1900s to bolster rabbit populations for hunting, and they are abundant. The rabbits you see in your backyard are almost certainly eastern cottontails. Their populations would be drastically reduced by RHDV2 as well.

The main concern, Dr. Marshall says, is "When a disease like this gets into wildlife it is impossible to fully control and it will likely simply establish itself as an endemic disease. This will have two main effects: it will decimate wild rabbits and in turn harm other species that rely on rabbits as a food source, and, it will serve as a reservoir of disease that will occasionally spill over into domestic rabbits. Many commercially raised rabbits are raised outdoors and allowed to graze."

If your domestic rabbit dies suddenly, report it immediately to your veterinarian, who will then report it to the state veterinarian. If you see multiple dead wild rabbits, report it to Dylan Ferreira, Senior Wildlife Biologist at DEM, Dylan.ferreira@dem.ri.gov.




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The New "Normal"

by Sophia DeJesus



September 14th marked the beginning of school for students in Smithfield, as well as the end of an extra long summer. After being home for about six months, being able to go back to school was a huge relief. Although there's a number of changes that have taken place at Smithfield High School, it's good to be back.

Each morning, students are required to bring in an orange slip, or "ticket" to enter the school. At the doors to enter the building, you're greeted by staff. Your temperature is taken, then you hand over your ticket. On the ticket is a list of COVID-19 symptoms, and you must verify that you have not experienced any of the symptoms in order to enter the building. From there, students have the option to take a "grab and go" breakfast to take to their first period class. Masks are to be worn at all times, except while eating.

The biggest change that has occurred within the school, is the hybrid schedule. There are two separate groups of students, and your group is decided by your last name. If your last name begins

with an A-K, you fall in group A. If your last name is L-Z, you fall into group B. This is so the number of students in the building is easier to manage, and everyone can remain socially distanced in the classroom. Students are in school every other day, meaning, if a student from group A is in school on Monday, they will be at home and virtual for Tuesday.

Teachers are working extra hard in order to comply with the new guidelines. This includes building in time at the end of each class to spray and disinfect each desk. It also includes creating an assigned seating chart so students will sit in the same seat and reduce the spread of germs. With this, teachers are also learning how to use new technology in order to reach students who are virtual.

Passing time in the hallways have also been modified. All students are encouraged to stay to the right and pay attention to which stairwell they are using. There are two sets of stairs designated for going up or just going down. This reduces the number of students in the stairwell during passing

time and also helps to keep everyone socially distanced. Lunch time has also gone through a few changes so students can eat safely. Only three students are allowed at each table, and the senior courtyard privilege has been extended to accommodate all students.

Of course there's going to be a few bumps in the road, but Smithfield High School has prepared and done so much in order to prepare for the beginning of this school year. The staff is doing everything they can to make this experience as normal as they can, while also keeping their students safe. Students also have a responsibility to come to school on time, wear a mask, be respectful, and abide by the new rules.

Not everyone likes to wear a mask, but it is necessary to keep others in mind and do your part in reducing the spread of germs. Just by wearing a mask, you are keeping yourself, as well as every other person in the school safe. This is a time where we need to work together as a team and keep each other's well-being in mind. As our beloved childcare teacher, Mrs. DiSano likes to say to her classes, "I take care of you, and you take care of me."

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Health Awareness

by Diane L. Marolla, LICSW

“It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.”
– Mahatma Gandhi

Believe it or not, we are going on month seven where we have been living with COVID. I thought, since all my topics for the past few months have been related to COVID, that I would shift gears and focus on other health related topics this month. Whereas talking about COVID is important, it is also important that we do not lose sight of other health topics and concerns. Recently, I looked at healthline.com to review health awareness months

and days for October, November and December. When I look at the whole year of 2020 topics, the list is quite long. I encourage folks to go the healthline.com and review the list to understand all the health and mental health conditions that have awareness months as well as days. Recognizing health topics during a month or on a specific day brings awareness to the health topic or condition and educates all of us. Locally and nationally there

are events that we can participate in and raise money for the specific cause. This year, it will be particularly important to continue to donate to our favorite health cause as I’m going to assume many of the walks and events will be canceled due to COVID.

After I reviewed the list myself, I picked a few topics to mention in this month’s Navigating Healthcare article:

October 2020



Domestic Violence Awareness Month – Domestic Violence is a topic and cause that is near and dear to my heart. On September 30, 2018, I received a phone call that I will never forget. That year I was temporarily managing a department at one of our local health centers as the supervisor of the department was out on an unexpected medical leave. I was just getting to know and work with the team. On that evening, one of the staff members contacted me by phone. What she said to me that night brought horror to my ears. One of the team members, Michelle Benvenuti from Woonsocket was murdered by her ex-husband that day while their seven-year old was in the house. Michelle was only 45 and she was a beautiful, smart woman. Michelle was soft spoken and had the prettiest eyes. There is not a day that goes by that I don’t think of Michelle and how much she loved life, her son, and her family. Sadly, domestic violence remains an issue in this state and in this country.



National Breast Cancer Awareness Month – Breast Cancer is personal for me. When I was a sophomore at Bryant College in 1985 my mother Elsie Marolla was diagnosed with breast cancer. I still remember the morning she came in my bedroom and told me. She was crying and I began to cry. My mother was an intensely private person and did not want anyone to know. I told a few friends for moral support, but other than that nobody knew. In 1991 her cancer metastasized and sadly she died in September of 1992. I was devastated and to this day, I still have difficulty talking about it. I was blessed with a loving, caring mother. I went from being her youngest daughter to being her primary caretaker as I was single and still at home with my father. The experience I had all those years ago, together with my father becoming ill and dying from a stroke in 1996 is what propelled me to go back for my master’s degree and become a Social Worker. I am grateful that today, I can help others when they are going through difficult times.

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November 2020



I picked **American Diabetes Month** to highlight because this chronic medical condition is so prevalent in American society. According to the diabetes.org website 34.2 million (almost 11%) Americans had diabetes. Of these 34.2 million adults with diabetes, 7.3 million were undiagnosed. Every year 1.5 million Americans are diagnosed with diabetes. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death. Types of diabetes include Type 1 (exact cause is unknown, however according to the Mayo Clinic webpage on this topic it may be a combination of genetics and environmental factors), Type 2 (exact cause according to the Mayo Clinic is also thought to be genetic an environmental, however being overweight is strongly linked to Type 2 diabetes), and gestational diabetes, a type of diabetes caused during pregnancy. Diabetes can lead to other chronic and serious conditions.

December 2020



December as a month does not recognize any health condition. It does, however, recognize **World Aids Day** on December 1st and **National Handwashing Awareness Week** (December 6-12th). I can assume that given COVID and that we will be in flu season during December, National Handwashing Awareness Week will be heavily marketed. It is hard to imagine what life will be like in the winter months once **flu season** hits.

To obtain the full list of the 2020 and 2021 Health Awareness Calendar go to www.healthline.com

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Local teacher 'ClearsTheList;' wins sweepstakes sponsored by Clorox

By Brittni Henderson

Teachers across the country were thrust into an entirely different realm of education in March when schools closed and moved to virtual learning. Now that schools are reopening across the state, the same educators have been working tirelessly to develop creative, innovative, and meaningful ways to teach safely either in person or virtually this fall.

For the new school season, Clorox teamed up with the ClearTheList Foundation to provide resources to educators on the frontlines. The ClearTheList Foundation received a donation of 1 million dollars to help teachers obtain the items they need to not only return to the classroom safely, but also take the pressure off of these individuals so they can focus their energy on what's important—their students.

Lauren Friel, a kindergarten teacher at LaPerche Elementary School in Smithfield, was one of the many fortunate teachers who applied for and was awarded funds from the Clorox grant. Friel received \$500 for her own educational supplies.

As an avid participant in social media groups supporting other teachers, Friel discovered the grant and decided to look further into it.

"When I found out I was awarded the grant, I was so excited!" Friel says. "This summer has been so much harder trying to stay excited and eager for back to school time with the uncertainty of COVID-19. This grant has helped bring the excitement of teaching and learning back during such an unprecedented time."



Preparing for the current school year has been a challenge for many, including Friel, and that it made planning extremely difficult. Teachers have had to prepare for various scenarios and spent a lot of time and money on rethinking the classroom setup and mode of instruction in order to ensure the safety of both students and teachers.

With the funds she was awarded, Friel was able to purchase flexible seating that would comply with social distancing rules and individual supplies for students. She will also be able to shift her focus on instruction and engagement in this new time.

"In order to help with in person instruction, I asked for individual book/supply bins for students' materials and floor decals to mark out student table spots and line up spots with social distancing in mind," Friel says. "I also

asked for wobble stools to help students stay engaged and comfortable during small group instruction."

If at any point in the school year they return to distance learning, Friel also asked for an active learning center that she could use to teach virtually. It has a dry erase board and will be perfect to use during live or recorded mini lessons in her home.

"This grant has given my kindergarten students the ability to take part in some flexible seating, have individual supplies and individual differentiated centers," says Friel. "We will be able to do all of the same learning, just in a different and safe way. For that, I am so very grateful!"

Educators were able to apply for this grant online until September 20, 2020. For more information, please visit [Clorox.com/support-our-teachers](https://www.clorox.com/support-our-teachers).

Ask an Expert

My name is Tom Lopatosky. I'm the President of LOPCO Contracting (www.LopcoContracting.com) and I'm honored to have the opportunity to talk to you about home improvement on a monthly basis.

I love answering your questions! Please send them to tom@LopcoContracting.com or call 401-270-2664. Thanks in advance for taking the time to read this column!



How Do You Replace a Bulkhead (aka Cellar) Door?

Depending upon where you live in the country, if you were to ask someone if they had a 'bulkhead' on their home, they may provide somewhat of an odd stare back at you.

Bulkheads are a term used to describe an entrance to the cellar from the exterior.

Another way folks refer to these are 'Cellar Doors'.

In many parts of our country, cellars purely do not exist as homes (for a variety of reasons) are built on cement slabs.

Homes in New England are where you are certainly apt to find a basement. Building code can vary from place to place (as local building code – believe it or not – will supersede even International Building Code) but in many situations, it is required to have an exit to the outside from the basement.

Sometimes this is required, but at the time the home was built, it may not have been and folks decide to add the exit later on.

If someone is adapting their basement for any type of finished purpose at all, at least two forms of egress are a must.

This may be in the form of a bulkhead, a window, or an alternate type of entrance but would be absolutely critical to exist. After a bulkhead has been in place for a number of years, naturally, it may run the

course of its useful life.

When this occurs, what typically happens is the weather/elements cause the bulkhead to rot out over time.

Even when properly maintained, it is not unusual for the bulkhead to gradually deteriorate.

Signs of this type of deterioration are recognized by the evidence of moisture and/or creepy crawlies (mice, snakes, etc.) being found within the bulkhead opening.

As the time to replace the bulkhead arrives, it is important to ensure that the bulkhead is changed out correctly, and as with many things, there a number of ways this can be done.

What is available on the market today,

is perhaps much different than what was available when the bulkhead was first installed years ago.

As an example, there are fiberglass models today where the technology was not in existence to make them years ago in this fashion.

Sometimes people get creative and transform what previously was a bulkhead into something much more elaborate (example: a fully built structure attached to the house with a roof over it, etc.).

For those wishing to stick with a more traditional bulkhead model, there are a couple of different options.

One option is to use an "off-the-shelf" model, these are usually able to be

About Tom Lopatosky

Tom Lopatosky has run his own RI-based carpentry and painting business since 1995; LOPCO Contracting – the "Personable, Particular Professionals" – specializes in carpentry and exterior & interior painting. Recently LOPCO Contracting was named 'RI's Finest Painting Contracting Company' by ShopInRI Magazine. In 2013, Tom was named "Humanitarian of the Year" by the Painting and Decorating Contractors of America (PDCA) and a "40 Under 40" award winner by Providence Business News. He is a member of both PCA (Painting Contractors Association) and RIBA (Rhode Island Builders Association). Tom has often had weekly 'Home Improvement Tips' that have aired on the radio on 630 WPRO AM and on television on WPRI 12.

purchased from one of the box stores or through your local lumberyard and are available in a number of standard sizes.

The challenge with this option is that although one of the standard sizes may fit properly, they may not fit “like a glove”.

The other option is to have one of these traditional steel units custom-fabricated (this is the way we do it).

The biggest advantage of replacing your bulkhead door with a custom-fabricated steel unit, is that the new bulkhead can literally be made to fit EXACTLY how you need it to.

This is able to be done whether the unit is one that is installed by sitting on a cement apron or one that is a pre-cast unit (which is a version that extends wholly underground).

No matter what type of bulkhead is installed, it is extraordinarily important that it is flashed into the house properly, that the area around the bulkhead looks as natural as possible as things are completed, and that the install itself looks as seamless as possible (preferably as if it had always been there).

Although not something needed to be wary about in a good portion of the country, the importance of a properly maintained bulkhead and correctly replacing one when it is time to do so, should be a home maintenance item that is not overlooked if your home happens to be one that has a bulkhead associated with it.



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Senior Scene | by Paul V. Palange

Well-known Ocean State jazz singer wants to press the play live button again

Before the COVID-19 pandemic ground life around the world to a virtual halt, Shawnn Monteiro would have spent the summer of 2020 in cities such as Rome, Milan, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Barcelona. Instead, she summered at home in Cranston.

“This is the first time in 30 years that I haven’t spent the summer in Europe doing all the festivals,” the 71-year-old jazz singer said during a recent telephone interview. Besides missing her friends and fans in Italy, France, Spain and Germany, Monteiro is saddened that Americans are no longer welcome on the other side of the pond because of the coronavirus and politics.

She hopes the tide shifts, but on the up side, Monteiro has been able to spend more time with her husband of more than 40 years, Raymond Huelbig – an individual many Smithfield residents know because of the time he spent teaching social sciences and coaching basketball at the high school here.

The international star said one of her gifts as an entertainer is relating to audiences, and she demonstrated the same trait during our interview talking about her career and life, including her relationship with the man she married in Jersey City, N.J., on a Valentine’s Day years back.

“Love and trust” has made their marriage work, she said. They met when Shawnn was performing at a club in Boston, and Raymond, who is two weeks older than his wife and a member of the Rhode Island College and Weehawken (New Jersey) High School Athletic Halls of



Fame, bought her a drink. “When I met him, I told him this is who I am. ... The arrow got both of us. ... He will always be in my heart, and I think I will always be in his heart,” she said.

Monteiro was drawn to jazz as a child because records of that genre were the only vinyl discs in the house. Plus, her father, Jimmy Woode, played the standup bass in the Duke Ellington Orchestra, and her godfather was swing and bebop trumpet player Clark Terry. She was listening to tunes from the Great American Songbook as a toddler. She idolized the renowned jazz singer Carmen McRae and admired others such as Sarah Vaughan.

Making it in the entertainment industry is tricky, and there are many talented people who never become successful. “That thing they call fame, I can’t explain it,” Monteiro said. “I don’t know if it is fate. Sometimes it can be being in the right place at the right time. Sometimes it can be looks.” Unlike the good old days, today attractiveness has

a lot more to do with attaining fame and fortune than talent, she said, adding that many singers that were popular years ago never would have secured recording contracts if looks were the factor they are now.

Monteiro knows she’s fortunate that one of the great conga drummers and Latin jazz band leaders, the late Mongo Santamaria, saw her perform in a club in San Jose, Calif., when she was only 19 years old. Santamaria asked Shawnn to join him at his table and then asked her to join his band. She jumped at the opportunity and toured with Mongo for about three years.

During another portion of her career, Monteiro was a regular performer at Playboy clubs throughout the world, frequently opening for popular comedians such as Billy Crystal and Gabe Kaplan.

According to her biography, Monteiro has performed with many other notable jazz musicians, including Red Holloway, Ray Brown, Lionel Hampton, Frank Foster and the Basie Band, Nat Adderly, Kenny Barron, Hank Jones, Bobby Durham, James Williams, Jimmy Cobb, Keter Betts, Stanley Jordan, Ed Thigpen, Johnny Griffin and Benny Golson.

She said a highlight and cherished memory of her career is performing with her father for 15 year. “He passed away on April 23, 15 years ago, and I miss him so much,” she said.

Monteiro recently finished recording a new compact disc (CD), which will succeed her tribute to Carmen McRae, “To Carmen with Love.” At the time of the interview for this column, Shawnn

was undecided about a title for the new recording. She said it was between two songs – “Inside a Silent Tear” that was first recorded by Blossom Dearie and then by McRae and “You are There” by Johnny Mandel and Dave Frishberg.

In addition, she was concerned about when and how the new CD will be released. A release party such as the ones she has held for her other recordings is not possible during the pandemic, and “singing into a computer” for a virtual performance is something the adjunct professor at the University of Hartford’s prestigious Hartt School of Music in Connecticut adamantly opposes.

Like many of us, Monteiro wonders what life is going to be like after the pandemic. She is “frightened about the future of jazz,” but one of Rhode Island’s musical gems plans on carrying the genre forward, singing and scatting for years to come.

Michelle Manning Pereira announces her candidacy for Smithfield School Committee.



I am thrilled to announce my candidacy for Smithfield School Committee in this November’s election. I have resided in Smithfield for 20 years with my husband, Michael, and our four daughters. I work in Smithfield at Heberts Health and Rehabilitation as a committed, healthcare PT specialist of geriatrics and rehabilitation.

I have experienced our wonderful school system from K-12, with my twin girls now in their junior year at SHS. I volunteer in many parent teacher organizations, including SHS Parent Council and The Music Boosters Club serving in leadership roles and organizing several large fundraising events, using my management abilities to benefit the schools. With my approachable personality and well-reasoned decision making, I am committed to listening to all the information presented to me, and reaching the best conclusion using experience and recommendations of trustworthy professionals.

With the school committee, I look forward to cooperating with peers, town officials, and all invested parties to create a cohesive and fiscally responsible facilities improvement and educational plan. I am excited to serve this community in a larger capacity, and I hope to earn your vote.

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A House Divided ...

By Jim Ignasher

1976 was our nation's bicentennial, and one of my high school teachers gave a writing assignment which involved predicting what America would be like in fifty years. She didn't expect to still be around in 2026, but figured most of us would be. Our predictions ranged from technological innovations and space travel, to over-population and nuclear war. Yet none of us foresaw the insanity that would come to permeate our society and divide us in a way that hasn't existed since before the Civil War.

In 1858, before he was President, Abraham Lincoln delivered his infamous "House Divided" speech at the Illinois Republican Convention, in which he stated in part, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Less than three years later America was embroiled in a Civil War, the bloodiest conflict in our nation's history.

Two issues that divided us in Lincoln's day included slavery and succession. And those issues were "absolute", with no room for compromise. Either one believed in slavery, or they didn't. Either one believed the Union should be preserved, or they didn't. And those on both sides were convinced they were right, but of course logic and common sense dictate that's impossible.

Some of the Issues that divide us today are also "absolute", only there are more of them. For example: either one believes abortion is murder, or they don't. Either one believes in secure national borders, or they don't. Other examples include sanctuary cities, global warming, the Second Amendment, voter ID requirements, civil war memorials, and religious freedom, just to name a few. And just as in Lincoln's time, those on both sides are convinced their views are the correct ones.

Unfortunately some have lost the ability to intelligently debate, and can't even "agree to disagree" anymore. Manners and civility have been replaced by radicalism and threats. Gone is the time honored adage, "I may disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." Evelyn Beatrice Hall, (1868-1956).

Some believe that those who disagree with them must be censored, silenced, and made an example of, lest others decide to express similar views. This happens in certain socialist and communist countries, but should not be happening here. And if one claims to be tolerant, enlightened, open-minded, and secure in their convictions, then they shouldn't feel threatened by those expressing different opinions, for I'm reminded of a quote by St. Augustine of Hippo: "The truth is like a lion; you don't have to defend it. Let it loose; it will defend itself."

I'm old enough to recall a time when elected officials on both sides of the political aisle were generally on the same page when it came to what was best for the country. In 1976 no politician would have supported riots, the flagrant disregard of federal law, or the destruction of public and private property.

So how did we get to be so divided? Both sides blame the other. Perhaps a better question is; how do we get to be reunited? Unfortunately there are no clear answers when it comes to "absolutes", and pride makes us reluctant to consider that our views could be wrong. Our nation definitely needs prayer.

Lincoln also said in his "House Divided Speech"; "I believe this government

cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free." Adding, "It will become all one thing, or all the other." Although he was referring to the issue of slavery, his words are applicable today, for a divided nation cannot endure.

The United States is presently at a pivotal point in its history as we move towards the November elections, and people are understandably feeling stressed. Now pretend for a minute that you have to write an essay on where you see our country in fifty years. Will we be, to use Lincoln's words, "all one thing, or all the other"? Will we be free, or enslaved? A democracy, or under socialist or communist rule? Liberal, or conservative? Dependent, or independent? A nation of laws, or lawlessness? One of religious freedom, or no religion at all? Or, will we still be hopelessly divided? Time will tell.

As to the hypothetical essay, I don't expect to be here in 2070, but to those who will be, I wonder how many of you will get it right. We didn't in 1976.



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The Chief's Corner

By Robert W. Seltzer, BSEE, EFO, MPA
Smithfield Fire Department Chief

Let's all stay healthy this fall and winter! It certainly has been a crazy year dealing with a worldwide pandemic and one of the hottest summers on record. We have all been forced to adapt our lifestyle to protect ourselves against a virus that is extremely communicable. Although we always concern ourselves every fall and winter with the flu season, this year we have to be extra vigilant. This year we have the flu season as usual, but must continue taking appropriate precautions to protect ourselves against the COVID virus.

The good news is that similar precautions protect us against both the flu and the COVID virus. Therefore, we can protect ourselves with the same set of rules.

The only exception is the availability of vaccines. There is a vaccine available for the flu, but there is no vaccine for the COVID virus. Therefore, GET YOUR FLU SHOT! You will be one up on the flu and give yourself a higher probability of NOT catching the flu.

What are all the other things you can do to protect against the flu and the COVID virus? Read on.

Wash your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- It's especially important to wash:
 - Before eating or preparing food
 - Before touching your face
 - After using the restroom
 - After leaving a public place
 - After blowing your nose,

coughing, or sneezing

- After handling your mask
- After changing a diaper
- After caring for someone sick
- After touching animals or pets
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.** Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact

- **Inside your home:** Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
- **Outside your home:** Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don't live in your household.
 - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
 - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.

Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others

- The mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Everyone should wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

Cover coughs and sneezes

- **Always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
- **Throw used tissues** in the trash
- Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Clean and disinfect

- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them.** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **Then, use a household disinfectant.**

Monitor Your Health Daily

- **Be alert for symptoms.** Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of **COVID-19.**
 - Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.
- **Take your temperature** if symptoms develop.
 - Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

Feeling ill? Think you may have the COVID virus or the flu?

- **Contact your primary care physician.** Tell your physician the signs and symptoms you are experiencing.
- There are some treatments for the flu that your physician may recommend or prescribe. Follow your physician's directions to treat the flu.
- The COVID virus may only require a period of quarantine while you are symptomatic. However, some

COVID patients become more ill over time and require medical care. Therefore, follow your physician's directions to treat COVID. However, if symptoms worsen, let your physician know so that your course of treatment may be modified.

For the most current information on both the COVID virus and the flu, it is recommended that you visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.



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For over 100 years, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island has been a guide to the great outdoors. During this trying time, Audubon supports Rhode Island's new initiative **Take it Outside!** which encourages businesses and organizations to head outdoors during the COVID 19 pandemic for meetings, classes and activities where participants may safely social distance.

The Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol, RI offers stunning outdoor space to rent for business meetings, classes, workshops or other activities for small groups. The covered patio, rustic pavilion, rolling lawns and rose-pollinator garden provide natural spaces to gather with social distancing in mind. And the trails and boardwalk to Narragansett Bay are free and available to all for exercise and nature observation. Email adimonti@asri.org for property rental details.

Looking for a place to hike? **With 13 wildlife refuges across the state that are open to the public free of charge**, there is no better way to explore nature and get outside than with Audubon. Discover trails through stunning saltmarsh properties, upland forests and rocky, steep terrain. Exploring and enjoying nature provides exercise, stress

relief and fresh air, which are so welcome and needed in this challenging time. Visit asri.org/hike to find an Audubon wildlife refuge near you as well as property details, directions and downloadable trail maps.

Pulling from years of environmental education experience and expert resources, Audubon has introduced **Audubon at Home, a free online resource for nature exploration.** There are 20 different themes to engage students, families and classrooms. One theme is all about owls, others are about frogs and snakes. Learn all about the intelligent Raven, bug out with insects, explore the shore and more! Look for videos of Audubon critters and stories, download craft ideas, explore fun facts, and discover educational activities. Engaging and fun, click here to review activities online and then get the kids outside to explore!

Audubon also offers small-group nature programs designed with safety in mind. From birding walks to outdoor family programs and even private guided nature tours for groups of four or less, Audubon guides have been taking it outside for over 100 years. Visit the Audubon calendar of events to learn more.



A few important notes if you do plan on visiting an Audubon Society of Rhode Island property:

- Remember to socially distance and do not gather in large groups.
- Please bring a mask in case it is not possible to social distance while outside.
- Visit www.asri.org for visitation and safety guidelines for the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol.
- Pets are not allowed on Audubon Wildlife Refuges.

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island is an independent not-for-profit environmental organization dedicated to protecting birds, wildlife, and their habitats through environmental education, advocacy, and land conservation. The state's first environmental organization, the Society now protects nearly 10,000 acres in a network of refuges, pristine properties and wildlife habitats. One of the largest private environmental educators in the state, in 2019 Audubon staff taught approximately 22,000 people across the region. Audubon Society of Rhode Island is not affiliated with National Audubon.

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GENERAL ELECTION
ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2020**



**The Smithfield Board of Canvassers will use the following SIX (6)
polling locations for the
General Election**

VOTING DISTRICT 1 – Raymond C. LaPerche Elementary School , 11 Limerock Road- House District 44

VOTING DISTRICT 2 – Old County Rd School Elementary School, 200 Old County Rd.- House District 44

VOTING DISTRICT 3 – Anna M. McCabe Elementary School, 100 Pleasant View Avenue- House District 44

VOTING DISTRICT 4 – Gallagher Middle School, 10 Indian Run Tr.– House District 53

VOTING DISTRICT 5 – Smithfield Senior High School, 90 Pleasant View Avenue, House District 53

VOTING DISTRICT 6 –Elks Lodge #2359, 326 Farnum Pike – House District 53

VOTING DISTRICT – Smithfield Town Hall-64 Farnum Pike– President and Vice-President Only – For residents who did not register to vote by the October 4, 2020 Deadline.

The deadline to register to vote in the November 3, 2020 General Election is **October 4, 2020**. Visit the RI Secretary of State Voter Information Center or by visiting smithfieldri.com (click on Election Information). Online Voter Registration is also available by visiting **www.vote.ri.gov**.

The polls will open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. You can view your House District, your Voting Location District, the District Map, and a sample ***General Election Ballot*** by visiting **www.sec.state.ri.us/vic** and **www.smithfieldri.com**. You can also visit **www.vote.ri.gov** to update your voter registration; register to vote; view your sample ballot; apply for an absentee ballot; find your polling place and track the status of your mail ballot.

Early Voting- Early voting will take place at the Smithfield Town Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday from **October 14, 2020 to Monday, November 2, 2020**. **A registered voter who did not apply for an absentee by the deadline date of October 13, 2020 may visit the Smithfield Town Hall to cast their ballot for the November 3, 2020 General Election during regular business hours.**

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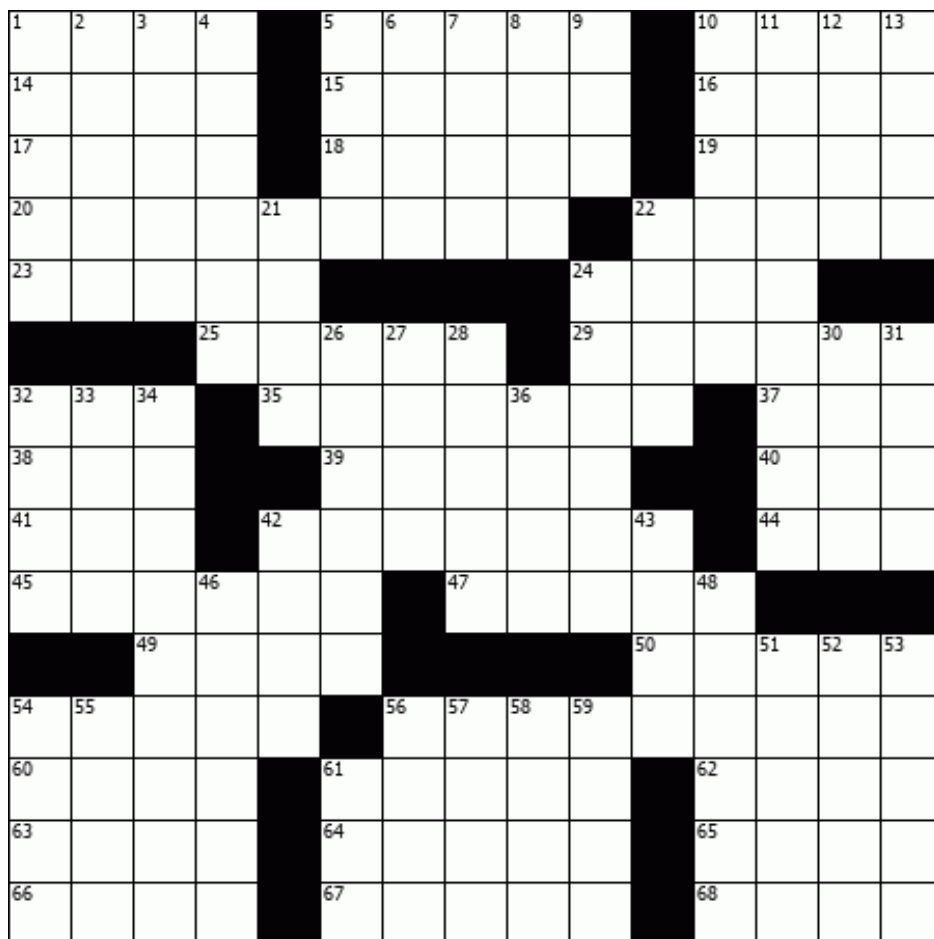


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Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. "Schindler's ____"
5. Smooths wood
10. Sleeping
14. Voyaging
15. "Aida," for one
16. Unusual
17. Scientist ____ Sagan
18. Citrus fruit
19. Nursery item
20. Listen in
22. Speed contests
23. Odor
24. Fabricated
25. Breakfast bread
29. Lash locale
32. Nibbled
35. Festive candy containers
37. Dollar bill
38. Male child
39. Singer Paul ____
40. Compass pt.
41. FBI employee (abbr.)
42. Modified
44. Poisonous snake
45. Conditional release
47. Show again
49. Summer coolers
50. Comes close
54. Mails
56. Nashville's state
60. Walk nervously
61. Sound
62. Ocean current
63. December 24 and 31
64. Awkward
65. Put down
66. Actress Mae ____
67. Thick
68. Outcomes



Down

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Shoestrings | 21. Discontinue | 43. Sand hill |
| 2. Author ____ Asimov | 22. Sunbeams | 46. Weirdest |
| 3. Dish out | 24. More unkind | 48. Cuddle |
| 4. Skill | 26. Theater walkways | 51. Japanese, e.g. |
| 5. Realtor's sign | 27. Fit of anger | 52. Redecorated |
| 6. Copier | 28. Less wild | 53. Plant beginnings |
| 7. "Finding ____" | 30. Small hotels | 54. Gush forth |
| 8. Fall | 31. Bottomless | 55. Roof overhang |
| 9. ____ Francisco | 32. Kin of PDQ | 56. Melody |
| 10. Pinball parlor | 33. Dress for Caesar | 57. Adam's abode |
| 11. Seaport in Spain | 34. Ways in | 58. Flask sips |
| 12. Albany's canal | 36. Pulled apart | 59. Brief message |
| 13. Society gals | 42. Tavern orders | 61. Support |

Answers to puzzle on page 40.

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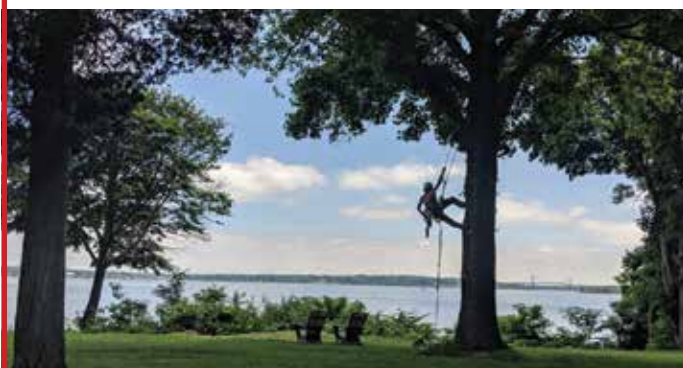
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Medicare Annual Update

Medicare's Annual Election Period begins October 15th and continues through December 7th. During this time you may consider making changes to your:

Medicare Part D Prescription Drug plan
Medicare Advantage Plan or
Medicare Supplement Plan

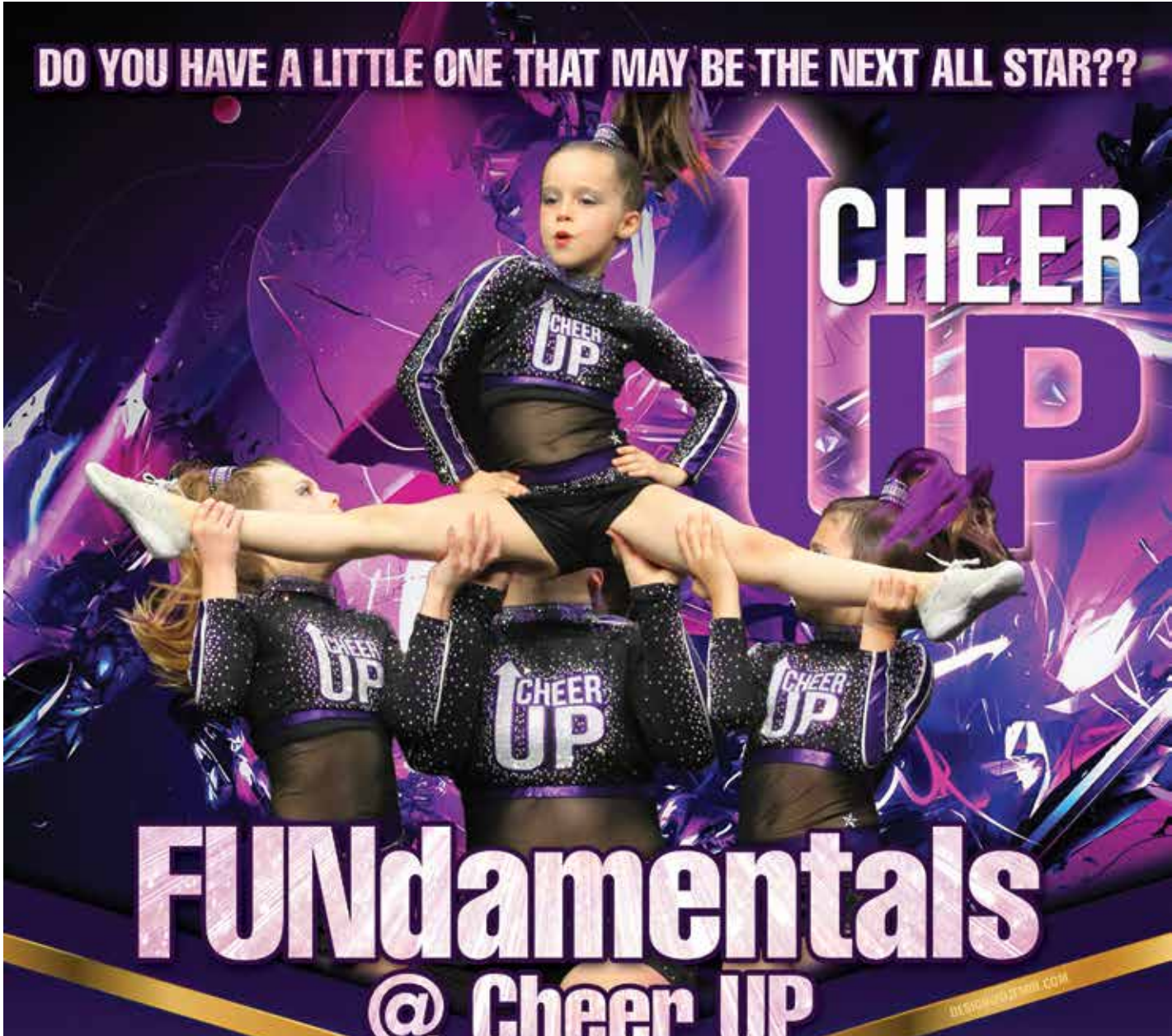
During the annual election period you can make as many changes as you need to your Medicare coverage. The final change that you make will go into effect on January 1st. To prepare you should begin to think about three major things:

1. If you have Original Medicare, review the 2021 Medicare & You handbook. This will outline your benefits for the upcoming year. If you aren't satisfied with Original Medicare, this is a good time to make changes.
2. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan or a stand-alone Part D drug plan, you should receive an Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) and an Evidence of Coverage (EOC) from your plan. These documents outline which providers, pharmacies, drugs, and services your plan covers, and what costs you will be responsible for. They'll also tell you what will change in 2021. If you aren't satisfied (for example, if a drug you need is no longer on your Part D plan's formulary, or a provider you see is no longer in your Medicare Advantage Plan's network), this is a good time to make changes.
3. Medicare Supplement also known as Medi-gap plans have rate changes annually. You have the option to shop rates just as you do with other types of insurance like auto or home. You may be able to get the same or similar coverage for a lot less.

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AGES 4-8

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A View From the Cheap Seats

A fond appreciation for my writing mentor

by Dan Pieroni

Did you know that Mitch Albom of Tuesday's With Morrie fame is a sportswriter for the Detroit Free Press?

There'll be plenty of time to write about games, athletic egos, and social justice crusades in sports down the road.

This month I'd like to channel my inner Mitch Albom and pay tribute to a man who was to me what Morrie Schwartz was to Mitch Albom.

Quite simply. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be writing this column. Dr. Sanford "Sandy" Kaye was my Writing Workshop professor at Curry College in Milton Massachusetts in the fall of 2003.

He also served as my academic advisor for the duration of my time there. Prior to our first class, I noticed his credentials in the back of the program of studies manual, they were quite impressive.

Sandy, (he insisted I call him that) was Harvard educated, chairman of the humanities department, and had written several books on writing technique. I couldn't help but be intimidated. When I entered the classroom on that first fall Monday afternoon, a tall, soft-spoken man dressed in a rumpled sports coat stood before me. I was carrying a cup of coffee, when our eyes met, he playfully chided for not having the kindness in my heart to buy one for the entire class.

During that first class, I learned Sandy was a modest man with a zest for life. He encouraged to write about our passions and told us that he believed in feedback over grades since feedback explicitly

stated what you needed to improve on. In short, he was unlike any teacher I had ever had.

For my first assignment, I decided to write a narrative story on game 6 of the 1986 World Series. I described in vivid detail the events that lead to Bill Buckner's monumental gaffe from the perspective of a Red Sox fan. To drive home what was at stake for the Sox. I kept using the refrain, "the dream was coming true, or so we thought", throughout the piece. I handed it in and braced myself for his reaction, for it would assess if I was worthy enough to be in his course.

Before the next class Sandy asked to speak with me privately outside. My stomach was in knots. Was I in trouble? Was the piece so bad he was going to ask me to drop the course? Why else was he talking to me privately? We stepped outside and as he draped his arm around my shoulder, he uttered a quote I will never forget.

"Kid, I'm not much of a sports fan, but I would pay to read your stuff in the {Boston} Globe every day." He went on to say that I had such an eye for detail I made him feel like I was there.

From then on, I wrote about nothing but sports. I had a captive audience. His enthusiasm for the material made me unafraid to tackle such topics as racism, drugs, and academic eligibility in my work. I so impressed him that he invited me to a private dinner before a public symposium with Boston Globe writer Jackie MacMullan as his guest. Imagine,

me, a college freshman talking to a professional scribe among an audience of academics and dignitaries.

It made for one memorable night. Sandy challenged his students to search their souls for content. He believed writing technique could be taught, but content came from within. He was gregarious, kind, and always willing to lend advice to make a piece better.

He was always brutally honest and never afraid to speak his mind if something bothered him, a quality that endeared him to his students.

Sandy treated his students as peers, no one was bigger than the classroom, and we all leaned on each other to make our work better.

In my final conversation with him after commencement, he told me in front of my parents that I had the drive and determination to succeed and those qualities would serve me well.

I had every reason to believe him. Belief is a powerful motivator, sometimes all it takes his someone to believe in you.

Now, Sandy can ride off into the sunset in retirement with a legacy of countless classes taught, countless papers read, and countless lives touched. Curry was a better place with people like him in it, but I have no doubt others will continue to instill his virtues for generations to come.

God speed O captain my captain!

The Curse of Micah Rood's Apples

By Thomas D'Agostino
www.tomdagostino.com

Many do not believe in curses. They seem to sway toward the implication that such hexes were born in bedtime tales designed to keep children fearfully in their cradles long after the lights are drawn. In Franklin, Connecticut, many of the old timers not only believe in curses, some of them have actually ingested the remnants of a peculiar act of evil wrought upon a man centuries ago. There is a place where an apple tree once bore the fruit of vengeance. Do not look for the tree now, it is long gone but the legend and accounts that follow will live as an eternal reminder of the price for greed and murder.

Micah Rood was an apple farmer in what was once called Nine Mile Square or Norwich-West-Farms, presently Franklin. Rood was an unfriendly recluse, keeping mostly to himself and his orchard.

One December evening, a peddler named Horgan appeared at Rood's door. Horgan was no stranger to the region. In the 18th, and 19th centuries, peddlers wandered the countryside selling everything from pots and pans to trinkets and jewelry. Horgan had sold much of his wares that day and now possessed a hefty pouch of coins for his sales. He sought a night's rest at Rood's home and Rood reluctantly granted him a place to sleep in the barn. The next morning, the peddler was discovered under one of Rood's apple trees, victim of foul play. His sack lay empty beside him and his money pouch gone.

All fingers pointed towards Rood but he vehemently denied any wrong doing, bringing attention to the authorities that two men had attempted to waylay the traveling salesman at the Blue Horse Tavern the day previous. Horgan was buried in the Potter's Field and although

the villagers knew that Rood had something to do with his demise, they soon let it go, for the time being.

That spring, Rood's farm prospered. It appeared that he somehow came into a windfall of newfound wealth. No one could prove that Rood may have killed the peddler and sold his belongings elsewhere, but nature was about to throw a strange light upon their suspicion.

When the apple flowers bloomed, all the trees bore their usual white pedals except for one. The tree where the peddler was found sprouted an unusual crimson flower. Though odd, no one gave it much of a second thought until August brought the fruits of labor forth. The townsfolk were quite astonished when they found that the apples from that particular tree, when broken open, revealed a red globule in the center that resembled a drop of blood while all the other trees bore normal fruit. The apples, though tainted were unusually toothsome and became known as "Mikes."

As for Rood, he began a slow and mysterious deterioration in both physical and mental health. The once vivacious soul had become a frail, fearful and melancholy. Neighbors reported hearing his screams in the night and when they crept to his window, could see him pacing to and fro in the darkest hours in front of a solitary candle. Within a short time, his trees began to wither save for



one. Year after year, it bore the silent damnation in the form of the apples with the crimson heart. Many came to believe that the peddler's spirit took residence in the tree, tainting the fruit it bore. One season, a daring youth stole into Rood's orchard and began to loot the infamous tree of its harvest. Rood offered him all of the trees fruit screeching, "Take the whole lot boy, I don't want the accursed things!"

Micah Rood finally passed away in December of 1728. It is written that he died in a chair overlooking the cursed tree that bore the bloody fruit of vengeance. The tree, however, lasted as a living monument to the unsolved crime for two more centuries, still bearing forth its peculiar harvest until the hurricane of 1938 finally blew the old relic down.

Legend states that before the tree met its demise, a few branches were grafted successfully by a local farmer, thus perpetuating the strange crop. Take a ride into Franklin and visit some of the orchards around harvest time. Maybe, just maybe, you might find an apple with a red center. If so, then it is clear that the curse of Micah Rood is still alive in those delicious apples that gave so many taste buds pleasure and one man eternal pain.



IMHO | by Ron Scopelliti

The pandemic made me do it

During the endless hours of web-surfing that I justify as research for my columns, I've seen a lot of speculation about the long-term psychological effects the pandemic may have on people. Though none of the articles have gotten very specific, I don't think I've seen any that are particularly positive. I'm not surprised because I can already see how spending so much time away from our old standards of normalcy is exacerbating my bad habits.

Most obviously, the new norm of the pandemic has made my already lax grooming habits even worse. In addition to not having had a haircut since March, I've only been shaving the hairless portion of my face about once a week, since I'm going to put a mask over it anyway. I've taken a similar approach to nose hair, though I try to trim it when I've got a Zoom meeting coming up. Or I at least position my laptop so the camera isn't looking up my nose, since I've gotten way too familiar with the interior nasal topography of several acquaintances over the past few months.

I have, however, tried to be fastidious about keeping my various face-coverings clean. And, unlike some very stable geniuses, I have no objection to wearing them. Having grown up watching *The Lone Ranger*, *Zorro*, and *Batman*, wearing a mask seems utterly natural to me. Then again, I think I'd feel the same way about wearing a utility belt equipped with a can of shark-repellant bat spray.

Spending so much time in the house has caused me to talk to my cat more than usual. I know that talking to pets isn't a bad thing, but I've been taking it to extremes. Hunter (also known as "Hunter

of Shadows" or "Hunter S. Tomcat") usually sits next to me when I'm working, so I'll often ask him questions about grammar or Associated Press style. I generally consider this as a way of thinking out loud while also keeping him engaged, but every now and then he gives me a look or makes a sound that seems to suggest an answer. If nothing else, he offers a good incentive to stay at my computer, because every time I get up to make coffee, he steals my office chair, and I end up working from my camping stool.

I've also gotten worse about letting dishes pile up in the sink. I'm particularly bad about putting off dishwashing when there's a colander involved because I'm intimidated by all those little holes where pieces of food might be hiding. I end up doing an inordinate amount of scrubbing to make sure they're all clear. And then I worry that there may be dish soap trapped in the holes, so I end up rinsing with enough water to flood the 4,000 holes in Blackburn, Lancashire. I wonder how many colanders it would take to fill the Albert Hall, and how long it would take to hand-wash them.

The biggest effect I've seen is in my increased indecisiveness. For instance, I've had the guts of a new computer hanging around for months, but I haven't started building it because I can't decide on a case. I've been equally indecisive about replacing the seat on my old Raleigh bike, creating a new web site, and adding

an extra camera to my security system.

And I've gotten to the point where I'll spend 45 minutes scrolling through Netflix menus instead of just picking a show and watching it. This usually happens as I'm trying to choose something to watch just before going to bed, and more often than not, it ends with me being too tired to watch anything and falling asleep with the menu still up on the screen. I could change over to reading before bed, but I'm afraid I'd go through the same process trying to decide on a book, and end up falling asleep in front of one of a bookcase.

I was hoping that typing out these thoughts would offer some insight into kicking my bad habits, but I'm starting to think they're simply a function of our times, and I should just ride the situation out. Maybe the more time we spend by ourselves, the more we become ourselves. I'll just try to preserve my sanity with another cup of coffee, and resign myself to the fact that I'll be revising my column from a camping stool.



Photo credit: Sandra Achille

New Horror Anthology by Local Authors Released in Time for Halloween

By Paul Lonardo

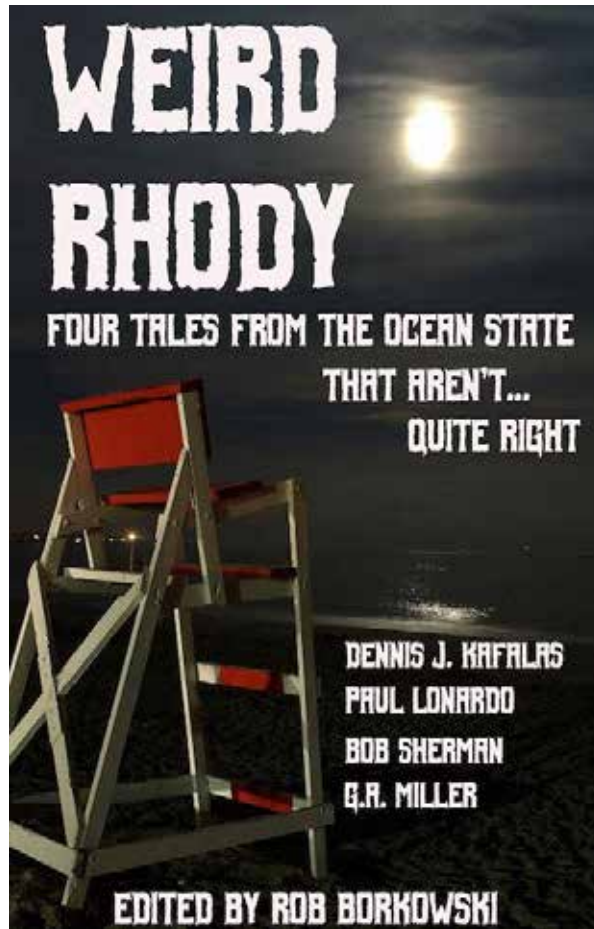
Last year, Rob Borkowski, publisher and editor of the Warwick Post, asked members of the Association of Rhode Island Authors (ARIA) to submit short stories for an anthology to be given away to new subscribers of his daily news website. He selected four stories from four local authors, and this past month he released the anthology to the public for the first time, adding one of his own stories to this collection, which is titled WEIRD RHODY.

While the original collection was well-received by his subscribers, Borkowski sought a wider audience for the work, believing that the stories should be made available to everyone. “I’ve been itching to see how it fares among fiction lovers, as a standalone piece,” Borkowski says.

Although he had initially intended to offer his readers a general selection of stories with a Rhode Island focus, he found a compelling theme in many of the narratives sent his way.

“I received some great submissions, but a theme of haunting tales began to make itself apparent as I pored over the stories,” Borkowski says. “At the time, H.P. Lovecraft’s birthday was approaching, and this was not lost on me. I decided to follow serendipity’s lead and create a weird collection of chilling tales. That’s how Weird Rhody was born.”

The title itself is an homage to the famed Providence author, H.P. Lovecraft,



known for his early 20th century fantastic and macabre stories, many of which appeared in the popular pulp fiction magazine of the era, *Weird Tales*.

WEIRD RHODY not only features entirely Rhode Island authors, but stories that are all set in the Ocean State. Without giving too much away, the anthology begins with “Spending a Day,” Dennis J. Kafalas’ offering of a tale about a father who meets a mysterious little girl at the beach and raises haunting thoughts. Bob Sherman’s “The Greater Good,” presents a killer boasting super-human abilities with no arch-enemy standing

in his way. You will visit G.A. Miller’s small town of Carson’s Mill in “Blind Demo,” where the populace is swayed by a haunting tune. My own contribution is a story about baseball and superstition taken to a horrifying extreme. “The Winning Streak” tells the tale of an elderly former Major League baseball player trying to hold on to his former glory at all costs. It’s often Christmas at a shared Cranston apartment in Rob Borkowski’s “Wight Christmas,” where one roommate learns that lacking respect for holiday spirits can draw very unwelcome attention.

An introduction honoring Lovecraft’s contributions and influence on the horror genre has also been added by Borkowski in the public release of WEIRD RHODY.

The iconic and subtly eerie book cover image of a beach lifeguard’s post, Salty’s Chair, overlooking a moonlit South County shore, was provided by photographer Mary Carlos.

With the days getting shorter and the sun setting early with the arrival of Fall, you may want to read these stories with the lights on.

This collection is available on Amazon as an ebook as well as in print.





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Inside The Brown Bag

By Peg Brown

The Missing Chips

Perhaps you can't find your favorite breakfast cereal, gluten-free organic granola, or reduced-fat Jif peanut butter. It's not just the paper product shelves that have witnessed disappearing items – the pandemic has reduced many varieties you'd come to expect to see during your shopping trips. Grocery stores, restaurants, and car manufacturers, among others, are experiencing what some might call an "up-side" to the current crisis – the end of the need and desire to produce endless choices for the consumer. According to one CEO, "retailers and consumer-goods manufacturers (that) were 'addicted' to endless varieties" have realized that perhaps consumers don't need to choose from 40 varieties of toilet paper. (Pre-pandemic, IGA stores typically carried about 40 varieties of toilet paper – now just four.)

What has occurred in "grocery store" history is nothing short of astounding. According to a recent Wall Street Journal article (June 27-28, 2020), the average food store carried about 33,000 items in 2018; in 1975 that number was closer to just 9,000. (Reports suggest that superstores like Walmart, BJ's, Costco and Sam's Club carry as many as 120,000.)

If "grocery stores are a barometer of our country's collective state of mind" (J. Ruhlman), we can document much of the history of the 20th century by just reviewing what has evolved in the market place.

The first ever "self-service" grocery store, Piggly Wiggly, was founded in 1916 in Memphis, TN. It was highly successful, "partly because of novelty, partly because of neat packaging, and largely because shopping became an actual activity." (Time, 1929) It wasn't long before other chains emerged, including Krogers and Safeway.

The depression years gave rise to additional small stores, occasionally located in

purveyors' own homes, allowing families to live off unsold inventory. However, the decade also gave rise to the supermarket chain so beloved by snow birds today – PUBLIX. Founded by an ex-employee of Piggly Wiggly, PUBLIX sought to raise the bar of the shopping experience by creating a "food palace, complete with glass cases, marble counters, air conditioning, florescent lighting and tile floors." Despite its modest beginnings in Winter Haven, FL, last year PUBLIX's revenue topped \$34 billion.

The grocery stores in my memory existed in what some call the "golden age" of supermarkets – the 1950s and 1960s, Urban renewal led to the demise of many "down-town" retailers, and under the threat of nuclear war and the building of bomb shelters, canned goods and other non-perishables were stockpiled in basements across America. My grandparents and parents always had a large inventory of canned goods stacked in tall metal shelving units in the cellar – a habit my mother never abandoned, often evidenced by rusted or exploding cans of tomatoes.

This "golden age" gave me the opportunity for my first job – a check out clerk at our local market, complete with six check out stations, a moving conveyor belt at each, and a large cash register. The price of each item (stamped on every can and package) had to be manually entered, the handle pulled to complete the entry, with the tape invariably running out half-way through the impatient client's order. There were no plastic bags, the transaction almost always included some silly reward system that required you to punch a card, and then you dispensed the coveted green stamps. Oh, and the transaction often required the customers to fish through their wallets or purses for cash, or the dreaded check book, while others in line rolled their eyes. I think I lasted one summer!

I do remember however, that grocery shopping night was an event in our house.

My Mother, who always held a full-time job, allocated Friday night for grocery shopping – and wisely, she always went alone. At the time we had a round top Kelvinator refrigerator with wire shelves, and a "freezer" about one-foot square inside the main compartment. My sister and I would hover until we were assured that the proper cookies had been purchased (packaging had no nutritional values or calories listed – thank God!) and the requisite half-gallon (really, a half-gallon) of vanilla ice cream could be securely jammed in place.

The last two decades of the 20th century saw the emergence of "healthier" alternative markets, such as Whole Foods, which began with just 19 employees in the 1980s and was sold in the summer of 2017 to Amazon for over \$13 billion.

While we have come to expect a continued expansion of choices, manufacturers are taking this moment to reassess. Over the past 45 years, for example, Lay's has gone from 4 varieties of chips to over 60; Campbell Soup Co. has now ramped up to produce over 400 varieties of soup. Those days, for the foreseeable future, are clearly over. While we will never return to individually priced items, largely cash-based transactions, and occasional new products, we may indeed be on our way to the 1950's toilet paper aisle where there are only four choices!

Author's notes:

- America is the global leader in food waste; the USDA reports that over 31 percent of our food supply is lost at retail or at the consumer level, and accounts for 22 percent of municipal solid waste. Even the most frugal households waste almost 9 percent on average. Part of the reasoning? Labels that tell consumers "Best Used By" dates.
- Unexpected shortage on grocery shelves during the pandemic: hair dye!



Payne's Picks

By Sarah Payne

October 2020



Movie Release

Honest Thief – October 9

The late bloomer action star and always fun Liam Neeson is out to get revenge again in *Honest Thief*, a thriller about a bank robber who decides to come clean about his past after he falls in love. When he realizes he's been double-crossed by FBI agents, he grumbles in the most Liam Neeson way possible: "I'm coming for you." And thus begins his typical revenge-fueled rampage. The film is set in Boston, but according to the Worcester Magazine, several scenes were shot in and around Worcester for two weeks in the fall of 2018. The trailer alone includes shots from Worcester City Hall, Worcester Common, Worcester Auditorium, the AC Hotel by Marriott, and other iconic Worcester landmarks.

Rebecca – October 21 (Netflix)

Starring Lily James and Armie Hammer, *Rebecca* is a romantic thriller, and the second film to be adapted from the 1938 novel by Daphne du Maurier. The 1940 film, also titled *Rebecca*, was Alfred Hitchcock's first American project and won two Academy Awards. In this month's newest adaptation, also set in the 30s, Hammer and James play a newly married couple settling into their wealthy estate, when James' character becomes haunted by the ghost of her husband's first wife. Director Ben Wheatley told *Variety* that the film is a love story above all else: "The idea of du Maurier smuggling a ghost story and a thriller and a betrayal inside a romance story, like a Russian doll, was really good."

Movie Reviews

Tenet

Last month I went to the movie theater for the first time since February to see *Tenet*. I knew the experience wouldn't be the same as before, but I wasn't quite prepared for such an eerie scene. Usually I'd welcome the chance to have an entire row to myself. But we had an entire theater to ourselves. There were only two people working at the ticket counter and we only saw two other moviegoers on the first Friday *Tenet* was released. Hopefully people's apprehension and fear will subside in the coming months. Before I tell you how amazing *Tenet* is, I must make a plea to please go to the movies. There is a real risk that going to a theater could quickly become a pastime of a bygone era. Not only that, but *Tenet* is the perfect movie to see on the big screen. Director Christopher Nolan is notorious for larger than life sound and action scenes. After all, he crashed a real 747 aircraft for the film. Denzel Washington's son John David Washington stars alongside Robert Pattinson as they travel back and forth through time to prevent World War III. I won't get into the details and reveal any spoilers, but I will reiterate that this is pure moviegoing magic. Go see it in IMAX if you can. The central theme about time will leave you in awe, and most definitely confused. Nolan apparently deliberated about the story for more than a decade and took more than five years to write the screenplay.

I'm Thinking of Ending Things

Netflix's latest film, directed by Charlie Kaufman, left me just as irritated as when I watched *The Lighthouse* a few months back. Though both films are categorized as "psychological thrillers," there's hardly anything thrilling about them. They're the kind of films that want so badly to be studied in university film classes. It's unfortunate because the premise of *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* is intriguing. Jessie Buckley plays a girlfriend who is apprehensive about a trip she's taking to meet her boyfriend Jake's (Jesse Plemons) parents at their farmhouse. There are plenty of red flags and hints in the first half of the film – dead animals in the barn and uncomfortable conversations with Jake's parents. But the suspense these details could effectively build is stopped in its tracks by unnecessarily long scenes like a five-minute reading of a poem, a lengthy dance sequence, and – the cherry on top – Jesse Plemons singing in a musical at the film's close. What's worse is there is no explanation for all the painstaking detail. The film uses the easy out: "It was all a dream." I suggest a hard pass on this one and I wish I could take those 134 minutes of my life back.

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The Nature of Things

by James Gass

Tall Tales and Outright Lies about Trees

Now that October is here, our attention naturally turns to trees. Their autumnal splendor makes New England, especially Vermont and New Hampshire, one of top leaf-peeping destinations in the country. However, there are many misconceptions about trees. Perhaps you too are unwittingly spreading some of these rumors and falsehoods. Don't worry, I'm here to help. Let us examine and dispel four of the more common myths being perpetuated about New England's hardwoods.

1. Practically all the American elms in New England have died from Dutch elm disease. This is patently false. Sure, many were killed, but the fact of the matter is there are healthy American elms everywhere. My USDA field crew comes across a dozen or more elms every day while surveying trees in Worcester County. We find many mature specimens in the woods, but also in the city. The trees are probably naturally disease resistant or haven't been infected yet. True, there was a mass mortality of elms in this country caused by Dutch elm disease (DED) in the 1930's. DED is a sac fungus that originated in Asia and was brought to this country in diseased logs from Europe. Thousands upon thousands of elms subsequently died, especially most of the large, stately trees lining city streets and parks. It was spread from tree to tree by elm bark beetles, and continues to kill elms to this day. But despite the fact that an estimated 75 percent of elms in this country had been lost by 1989, there are still thousands of healthy trees still around. The good news is selective breeding is being conducted in the United States and elsewhere to produce highly resistant cultivars.

2. The leaf from the maple tree in

my yard has five main lobes, so it's a sugar maple, right? Not necessarily. It might be a sugar maple, but more than likely it's a Norway maple. Norways are a hardy, fast-growing species that are often planted as shade trees in parks, cemeteries or playgrounds. They are prolific and very common, but not native to this country. The difference between the two is fairly easy to discern. Norway leaves are generally a deep green on top with a shiny, lighter underside. They are wider than they are tall, whereas a sugar's leaf is generally taller than it is wide. Norway maples have bark that looks somewhat like a cantaloupe's skin, a mature sugar maple's bark is raised and platy. Also, when you pick a Norway leaf from the tree, if you squeeze the bottom of the petiole (stem), the sap will be white. A sugar maple's sap is clear. The most important difference between the two trees? In the fall, Norway maples are nowhere nearly as colorful as our beautiful native sugars.

3. All the American chestnuts in New England were killed by blight. O.K., this one is largely true, but not entirely. Historically speaking, American chestnuts used to be more abundant than oaks in southern New England. They were one of the most commercially important hardwoods. They grew more quickly and taller than oaks, and due to their straight grain and resistance to rot were used for variety of purposes including furniture, fences, shingles, plywood, and home construction. The nuts were an important food source for both wildlife and Native Americans. But a fungus (chestnut blight) was introduced to the United States in 1904 on imported Asiatic chestnut trees, which were blight resistant. The result was billions of dead American chestnuts.



American elm leaf. Photo by James Gass

Nowadays, rootstocks of surviving trees put up new growth, but it eventually becomes infected and dies back. The shoots might get 15-20 feet tall, but they rarely if ever reach maturity. Because of this, American chestnuts are considered functionally extinct by the USDA. I have only seen about five mature American chestnut trees in my entire life, all in Massachusetts. They are out there, but there are precious few of them. Since 1983, The American Chestnut Foundation has been cross-breeding American chestnuts with Chinese chestnuts to develop a blight-resistant tree.

4. Allow yourself to bend like a willow in the wind, so that you will not break. If you allow yourself to bend like a willow in the wind, especially a weeping willow, you will probably lose most of your fingers, either hand, or maybe even an entire arm. The wood of a weeping willow is notoriously weak and brittle and prone to breakage, especially during a wind event. The tree also constantly sheds leaves, twigs and branches. Native to China, it is a common ornamental tree in southern New England. Our native willow trees include black willow (also brittle), and the shrubbier species such as pussy willow, which are more supple. For some great leaf-peeping hikes in RI, check out: <https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/rhode-island/leaf-peeping-hikes-ri/>



Stargazing

by David A. Huestis,
Historian, Skyscrapers, Inc.

October Astronomical Potpourri

As the title of this column suggests, the month of October will have something for the naked-eye and telescope user alike. Hopefully the heat and humidity of this past summer will be behind us, leaving cooler temperatures and transparent skies so we may comfortably and efficiently scan the skies for interesting astronomical phenomena.

Draconid and Orionid Meteor Showers

This month the sky gods reward stargazers with two meteor showers. The first one is a minor one, the Draconids, on the evening of October 7. Currently producing ten or less yellowish slow-moving (hitting the Earth's atmosphere at only 14 miles per second) meteors per hour, it is best observed once darkness has fallen through the midnight hour when the constellation Draco is highest in the northern sky. This scenario allows you to get that much needed beauty sleep!

Look towards the north and locate Ursa Major (the Big Bear/Dipper). Draco is a sinuous pattern of stars that stretches between Ursa Major and Polaris, the pole star, which is the end star in Ursa Minor (the Little Bear/Dipper), tail/handle. While the meteors will emanate from this region of the sky, scan east and west up to zenith (directly overhead). As the night progresses, watch the northern sky rotate around Polaris. By morning twilight, Draco's head will be sitting due north about 20 degrees above the horizon. A bright waning gibbous Moon will rise locally around 9:30 p.m., so it will wash out some of the fainter meteors.

The second meteor shower of the month, the Orionids, is a major one, occurring on the night of October 20-21. The best viewing opportunity will be between midnight and dawn's early light. A waxing crescent Moon will set soon after sunset and will not interfere with observing as many meteors as possible. Just position yourself away from any light sources to maximize your shooting star count. At their peak of activity, you can perhaps observe up to about 20 or so yellow and green meteors per hour.

These meteors appear to radiate out of the sky just above Orion's head (hence the name of the shower) and not far from the bright red super giant star Betelgeuse, which marks his right shoulder. The Orionid meteors disintegrate in our atmosphere around 41.6 miles per second, and they are also noted for producing fireballs that create persistent dust trains as they blaze across the sky. While Orion is an easy star pattern to identify, at 3:00 a.m. this giant constellation will be found high in the southeast sky.

Close Encounter with Mars

Every 26 months the "Red Planet" Mars and Earth are closest to one another. On October 6 our planetary neighbor will be only 38.6 million miles away. That distance is just a little farther away than Mars was at its last close approach on July 31, 2018. You may remember there was much anticipation of that event, but a global Martian dust storm enshrouded the planet, preventing any telescopic observations of its surface features. This upcoming close encounter promises much better viewing opportunities.

Why? Mars experiences seasons like those on Earth. At this time of close approach there will not be a high probability of large Martian dust storms. Also, for 2020 Mars will rise much higher into our less hazy October sky than it did back in 2018. A telescope should reveal much detail on the Martian surface.

If you would like some background on the history of Mars exploration please visit this link on the Skyscrapers web site: <http://www.theskyscrapers.org/mars-past-present-and-future>.

Since I expect the local observatories to still be closed due to Covid-19 (with the possible exception of Frosty Drew in Charlestown - <https://frostdrew.org/2020-contagion.php>), I strongly encourage everyone to drag out those telescopes from the basement, attic or garage and treat yourself and your children to the best views of Mars we'll experience until 2035. One day they or your grandchildren may set foot upon this exciting landscape. Take a knowledgeable glimpse of an alien world that inspired generations of astronomers and science fiction writers alike to ponder the existence of Martian life-forms.

This brief Mars observing guide will help you to discern and appreciate the planetary detail a telescope may show you of this neighboring world. Considering how close our two worlds will be, even a small 2.4-inch refractor should show some surface features. And if seeing conditions are perfect, one should be able to "crank up" the magnification to coax additional detail out of the image. Larger aperture telescopes will reveal increasing detail.

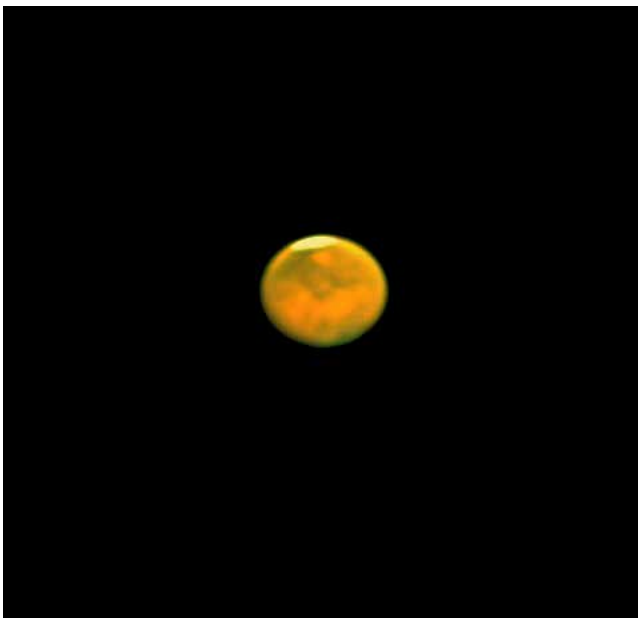
Mars will not be difficult to locate in the sky. On the night of close approach Mars will be seen just above the eastern horizon during late evening twilight. You won't be able to mistake its distinct bright pumpkin-orange color. You should wait for the planet to climb higher into the sky and out of any horizon haze and turbulence before you begin telescopic observation of this world. By 9:00 p.m. Mars will be about 25 degrees above the horizon and awaiting your scrutiny among the stars of the constellation Pisces and will remain in this constellation through the end of 2020.

Once you focus in on Mars with a telescope, closer inspection will reveal the surface color to be more peach-like. The second detail that should catch your eye will be the South Polar Cap (SPC). It's a fairly bright white feature that can be easily seen because Mars' south pole is currently tilted towards the Earth.

As you more carefully scan the planet you should begin to notice several dark surface features. These markings are the underlying rock exposed by the shifting sands during intense planetary dust storms. The amount of detail seen will depend upon the size of your telescope and its magnification. However, atmospheric conditions above your observing location will be the definitive limiting factor.

Keep in mind you don't have to identify the features you glimpse. Just simply enjoy the view.

Good observing.
David A. Huestis



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- 1/4 cup butter
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- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp ground coriander
- 1/8 tsp crushed red pepper
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 16 oz can packed pumpkin
- 1 cup half and half



In large saucepan melt butter, sauté onion and garlic until soft. Add curry powder, salt, coriander and red pepper. Cook 1 minute. Add broth, boil gently uncovered for 15-20 minutes. Stir in pumpkin and half and half. Cook 5 minutes. Pour into blender container. Cover and blend until creamy. Serve warm or reheat to desired temp.

Serves 8-10

Recipe submitted by Sue Whetstone of
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Answers to Crossword Puzzle from page 26.

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A	S	E	A		O	P	E	R	A		R	A	R	E	
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by Tim Jones





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Donald J. Carberry

August 15, 2020

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