

COMPLIMENTARY

MAY 2020

# The Smithfield Times



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# Smithfield Businesses Coping

By Joe Siegel

Local businesses are doing the best they can to provide service to their customers under very difficult circumstances in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic.

With stay at home orders and the closing of all non-essential businesses to stop the spread of COVID-19, restaurants have been providing delivery and take-out orders to patrons.

Stephanie Mosca, owner of A & W on Route 44, said it's hard to tell what impact the pandemic will have on the business, which recently reopened for the season.

"Our sales are determined by weather and it's been cold so we've maintained our March sales," Mosca noted. "I don't know what it will do from here."

In addition to laying off some staff, the restaurant has removed the picnic tables outside.

Mosca said the protocols are in place to guarantee the safety of the employees and the customers.

"We've closed off our bathrooms, we wear gloves with our customers, we're keeping our distance from them," Mosca explained. "We're going extra on our cleaning with the hot soapy water, then bleaching throughout the day."

It's definitely changed the way of doing business."

Josh Smith, owner of Depetrillo's Pizza, estimates his business has dropped off by about 30 percent.

"I think it's good that we're in a strong local environment and I believe with the help of our employees and customers, we can all hopefully weather the storm as best as we can," Smith said.

Kountry Kitchen owner Lionel Delos estimates he has lost 99 percent of his customers due to the statewide stay at home order.

All of the restaurant's staff has been laid off. Take-out orders for breakfast are being accepted.

Does Delos believe his customers will return once the epidemic has subsided?

"Absolutely," he said.

Funeral home operators have been facing their own challenges in providing comfort to people mourning their family members in a time of social distancing.

"The CDC and the Rhode Island Health Department have provided some pretty strong guidelines," said Thomas Winfield, the President of Anderson-Winfield Funeral Home.

Due to the prohibition of gatherings of more than 10 people, Anderson-Winfield has been live-streaming funeral services so families and friends of the deceased can watch from their safety of their own homes.

Winfield notes that currently only the immediate family can be allowed to attend services, but regular visitations and memorial services for their loved ones will be held at a future date.

The health and well-being of the mourners and employees is something Anderson-Winfield has always made a top priority. "We use a term called universal precautions," Winfield explained.

"We try to treat everybody (as if) they may have died from a contagious disease so we develop good habits in how we take people in and how we treat them and how we clean our facility. Sometimes we're just educating ourselves a little bit more to make sure that we don't miss something. We look at our best practices, how we do everything, and if we can do it better, we certainly try."

**ESSENTIAL  
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# Smithfield High School's Joe Bennett Named *Coach of the Year*

By Paul Lonardo

As a long-time head coach of the both the boys' cross country and basketball teams at Smithfield High School, many people around the community know Joe Bennett for his selfless devotion to his players over the years and the tradition of winning that he has established. While he is approaching his fortieth year coaching the cross country team, his coaching goes back even further, to the age of 14, when he helped coach at the elementary school level. At that time, Bennett himself was a multi-sport athlete with tremendous ability. He was voted Outstanding Athlete in his class at Smithfield High School in 1980. He received All-League honors in cross country, track and basketball. Upon graduation, he went off to Nichols College, where he made the basketball team. The season had just gotten underway, playing in his first two games on the college level, when a tragic car accident left him temporarily paralyzed with a broken bone in his neck. It was four months before he began to regain movement in his limbs, eventually recovering enough to resume his life. However, the accident forced Bennett to reassess the plans he had for himself as an athlete, and soon after he dedicated himself to helping young student-athletes develop their own talent and abilities on the basketball court and track fields in his hometown.

"I found out relatively quickly that while coaching isn't the same as playing," Bennett says, "coaching has certainly helped fill a void in my life."

When he was injured, his middle school cross country coach, Bruce Ewart, visited him often at the hospital and encouraged him to continue coaching, offering him an assistant coaching position with him. When the head cross country coaching position opened at the high school, Bennett was only nineteen when he applied for it and got the job. He has been there ever since.

In 1988, Bennett became a two-sport coach when he signed on as assistant coach for the boys' basketball team at Smithfield High School, taking the responsibility as head coach of the team in 1999.

"It's been wonderful for me," Bennett says. "All these years, I really enjoy it. Especially helping kids prepare for some of the challenges that lie ahead in life."

Last month, when Bennett was named Division I Basketball Coach of the Year for Rhode Island, it was not the first time he received the award. It was, in fact, the seventh time he had been given the honor, but it is not something he takes for granted.



"Being named Coach of the Year for such a small school has additional meaning," Bennett says. "It's not the *Providence Journal* making the pick, but the guys I coach against every night, including the bigger schools and the private schools all around the state. So, it means a lot."

It is obvious that coaching is something that he loves, and as much as he has received over these many decades coaching at Smithfield High School, he has given much more back.

Certainly the number of his students under his tutelage who have excelled at their chosen sport, some going on to achieve great recognition on the collegiate level, are too numerous to mention, the athletes and the parents of the

*Coach Bennett continued on page 7*





## Review Your Trust Annually To Protect Your Assets



Medicaid is a state administered program that is funded to a great extent by the Social Security trust fund. It provides for payment of medical services and long term nursing home care for those who qualify.

Because of the ever increasing cost of long term nursing home

care, both the federal and state governments periodically amend the Medicaid statutes and regulations in order to further limit eligibility for the program.

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 ATTORNEY AT LAW

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# Love In The Time of COVID-19

*Written by Gabriel Garcia Marquez in 1985, Love in the Time of Cholera told the story of love, passion, and heartbreak in a time when cholera was yet to be eradicated. As this illness wrecked havoc throughout Colombia, the story followed three main characters as they lived their lives in an era surrounded by the disease.*

This story is a little bit different. Written instead by a virus that now dictates our every move, this story shares the upsetting reality of love in the time of COVID-19. Just a few months prior to the virus' debut, two couples were joyously planning their respective wedding days, agonizing over details, and creating the most perfect setting for their first day as husband and wife. Now, the harsh reality is that they will either have to postpone or cancel their big days.

Mim Winter and Joe Leather met over eight years ago on a dating website. Urged by friends on either side, the two happened to come across each other's profiles and set up their first date. The pair spent years enjoying their courtship and finally became engaged on July 11, 2019.

Mim and Joe took did not rush into planning anything wedding related, because as they both will joke, it took them about eight years to get there, so why hurry? By the fall of 2019, the two started to etch out what they considered to be



Joe and Mim

their dream wedding day. A spring day in May, surrounded by loved ones in a low-key ceremony in Providence, where they now reside.

"We wanted more of a party than a traditional wedding, and really wanted to stay true to that," Mim shares. "Living in the city and being passionate about it, we wanted to have a very Providence wedding. We only considered a couple options for the venue."

Mim and Joe settled on The Dorrance, a beautiful and historic location downtown, on May 16, 2020. The duo would be married by a friend, who would officiate in front of about 175 of their family and friends. No wedding parties, no assigned seating, and no speeches. Dancing is of utmost priority to the pair, so dear friend DJ Red Dawn would be present throughout the entire evening.

In another love story, Danielle Beauchene and Patrick Fogarty met each other out in Providence one night and spent four years dating before getting engaged on October 28, 2018. As Danielle tells it, she thought she was heading out for a Sunday Funday with girlfriends one day. They spent the day hiking and she thought they would be enjoying brunch together afterwards. As she reached the top of the summit, she saw a white puppy tied to an oak tree. Patrick appeared from behind the tree and got down on one knee.

"That day I got a fiancé, and the cutest puppy ever!" she says.

*Love continued on page 8*



Patrick and Danielle



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*Coach Bennett from on page 5*

"I can say that it has been mutually beneficial," Bennett says. "To me, it began at a time in my life when things were not great. It's a blow when you're just eighteen years old and have to face the harsh realization that you're never going to be able to run or play basketball again. It didn't set in all at once, so to be able to be involved in sports as a coach, and to help bring a lot of success to the sports programs at Smithfield High School over the years has meant a lot to me."

As if that weren't enough, Bennett also runs the Sentinel Striders Track Club.

"We'll get up to 120 kids from Smithfield and neighboring communities around the state, and

sometimes from towns in nearby Massachusetts, who run with us and compete in the USA Track & Field Junior Olympics."

Understandably, all of this can be a lot of work, but for Bennett it is a lot of fun. Because he loves what he does, it doesn't feel like work.

"I'm proud of all the kids," he says. "They built a legacy at Smithfield High School over the years and I'm proud to be a part of it."

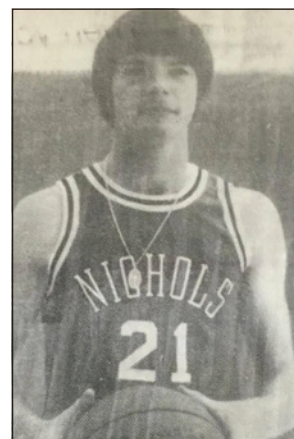
Next year, Bennett should get his 300<sup>th</sup> win as coach of the cross country team, which is a very difficult feat to achieve because there are only a handful of meets each year.

300<sup>th</sup> win aside, he has no plans to stop coaching, even as his success

has drawn the attention of other schools, as well as job offers.

"I'm a Smithfield guy," Bennett says. "I've had a good life and I enjoy doing what I'm doing. I really don't see an end."

That's fortunate for the town of Smithfield and its young student-athletes, who will no doubt benefit from Joe's Bennett's experience and wisdom.



Joe Bennett at  
Nichols College

*Love continued from page 6*

The two started planning their wedding about a month after their engagement. The Eisenhower House in Newport, RI became their wedding day destination and the date they decided upon would be June 20, 2020. They were also planning for a rather large wedding, with about 250 guests. June would be the perfect month for Danielle and Patrick because as a kindergarten teacher, Danielle would be able to have the time off from school, as well as ample time to spend on their honeymoon.

The doubts began to set in for both couples as information about the spread and severity of COVID-19 became prevalent. Danielle started virtual teaching in March, and her bachelorette party, which was originally scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup> was canceled not only once, but twice – the second date being May 9<sup>th</sup>.

“At the beginning of this process, we were upset,” Danielle says. “I cried for an entire day when it all started to sink in.”

Mim and Joe shared similar sentiments, as they began to feel anxious about their decision to

postpone or keep their wedding as is once they learned more about the virus. In March, the original statement by the CDC was to follow social distancing guidelines for eight weeks, which (at that time) took them up to the exact date of their wedding.

“Even if the bans were lifted, we didn’t think we’d have any chance of having a large gathering, never mind have our friends fly in from all over the country and world,” Mim says.

The feelings of anger, defeat, and sadness enveloped both couples. Both agree that they know there are those worse off than them, especially amidst a pandemic, but the heartbreaking reality of canceling or postponing their weddings was a legitimate feeling for everyone involved.

Danielle and Patrick were able to secure a date in June 2021 to celebrate their marriage. The couple decided to still get legally married this June. Luckily, all of the vendors that they worked with were helpful in accommodating the postponement and no fees were incurred.

“Some advice I have for couples

who might be going through this is to do what you think is best,” Danielle says. “Know that you can still get legally married on your day and have a celebration with everyone when the time is right. I tell myself I get two weddings! One a bit more intimate and then the real deal in a year.”

The rescheduling process for Mim and Joe did not go as smoothly, but there is a silver lining to the situation – they will become aunt and uncle instead! The two secured their new wedding date, but within days discovered Mim’s sister was expecting and her due date is in November, making her unable to travel from California.

“I could never celebrate without my sister there, so we have canceled those plans,” she says.

At this time, Mim and Joe have no set plans for their wedding, but that doesn’t stop them from feeling gratitude for their health, happiness, and being otherwise unaffected by the virus.

Both couples are safely working from home and are thankful for those who are on the frontlines working to keep all of us safe.

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# A New Lease on Life For The Former Smithfield Exchange Bank

By Jim Ignasher

The former Smithfield Exchange Bank in Greenville Center has recently undergone extensive renovations under the new ownership of local businessman Jerry Haggarty. Although the well-known landmark hasn't been used as a bank for decades, it's still referred to as "the old bank building" by many longtime residents.

Mr. Haggarty owns Alliance Business Products located at 7 Industrial Drive South in Smithfield. He's an avid history buff, and the old building has always caught his interest when he would pass through Greenville. Then one day last year

he noted a sign in front indicating that it was for sale and decided to buy it.

The Smithfield Exchange Bank was chartered in 1822, and its offices were originally located in the back ell of the Waterman Tavern. (The ell still stands today and is currently undergoing restoration by the Smithfield Preservation Society.)

In 1856, the bank administrators built the brick structure that we think of today as "the old bank building", and relocated their offices there. The new building signified the success and security of the institution, and put forth an image



of prosperity for Greenville.

In 1865 the bank became The National Exchange Bank of Greenville, and in 1928, the name

*Exchange Bank continued on page 17*

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# Ask an Expert

My name is Tom Lopatosky. I'm the President of LOPCO Contracting ([www.LopcoContracting.com](http://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](mailto:tom@LopcoContracting.com) or call 401-270-2664. Thanks in advance for taking the time to read this column!



## What is the difference between a carpenter ant and a termite?

While working on people's homes and businesses, it is not unusual for us to encounter insect damage, either actively occurring or from some time in the past.

Most often this damage is done typically from carpenter ants or termites.

It is not unusual for people to unintentionally use the terms 'carpenter ant' and 'termite' interchangeably when describing or referring to the type of damage they have incurred.

While I totally appreciate this, especially in the heat of the moment when a massive amount of insect damage has surprisingly been uncovered on someone's property, it is obviously incorrect as they really are two different types of insects that are definitely distinct from each other.

There are at least a few similarities in that both carpenter ants and termites swarm while mating (swarming is the only time that both carpenter ants and termites have wings), are attracted to moisture about your property, and cause damage to wood as we have mentioned.

There are absolute differences between the two however.

Carpenter ants **DO NOT** eat wood, instead they make their homes in the wood by burrowing, creating tunnels, and the like; one may often recognize carpenter ant damage by the wood shavings they leave behind.

Termites on the other hand, actually eat the wood (they need the cellulose contained in the wood to survive), they certainly would not leave any shavings behind.

Carpenter ants will wander about looking for food (their diet consists of sugars and proteins), you may very well see them galivanting around your property as they are hunting for food.

Termites may not ever be spotted (unless you happen to encounter a swarm), you are more likely to see signs of termite damage than actual termites.

Finally, their body types are both very different.

Carpenter ants have a narrow

waist, segmented elbow antennae, and, when winged, have large forewings and small hind wings.

*Ask an Expert continued on page 12*

### About Tom Lopatosky

Tom Lopatosky has run his own carpentry and painting business in Providence 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 the PDCA and RIBA (Rhode Island Builders Association). Tom has often had weekly 'Home Improvement Tips' that have aired on the radio on 630 WPRO AM (during the weekday morning news) and on television on WPRI 12 (during the Saturday & Sunday morning news).



# Songs of Joy: A Memory of an Easter Past



By Harry Anderson

“Stay home!” the Governor has exhorted. In obedience I have, keeping tabs on the increasing numbers of people world-wide afflicted with the coronavirus plague. As the days of home isolation protracted into weeks, I found myself doing a lot of reminiscing. A particularly vivid memory came to me this recent Easter morning. I was feeling quite out of sync with the usual joy that accompanies this day of celebration. This year there would be no church service, no backyard egg hunt with the grandchildren, no ham and lemon meringue pie dinner. In the eerie silence of the neighborhood, I remembered the events of Easter, 1958, as they unfolded forty miles north of Seoul and but three miles shy of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel.

Still tired and edgy from a red alert that had all units of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, including mine (the 23<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Battalion), poised for combat with North Korea, my buddy Jim and I plodded through the muck and rain to the USO building to hear a performance by the touring University of Colorado’s chorus. It was the evening after Good Friday, the day we had hunkered down with our loaded M1’s.

“Ain’t going to be much of an

Easter, Andy. Know something? I’m missing home real bad.”

“Me too, Jimmy. Let’s hope this show gets our mind off things.”

We jostled through a throng of GI’s in search for a couple of empty folding chairs. Luckily, we spotted two in the last row. Just as we plopped down, the lights went out and bedlam broke out – whistles, hoots, stomping of boots. Coming on stage in single file paraded the Coloradians in concert attire. For most of us, we had not seen civvies or American girls since disembarking troop ships in Inchon months ago. Without intermission, those 38 college kids (I counted them) wowed us. They sang songs from *South Pacific*, from the new Broadway hit *My Fair Lady* ... songs made famous by Ella Fitzgerald, Elvis Presley, Nat King Cole. Even a Schubert lieder piece enthralled the audience.

With the singing of “Now is the Hour” for its second encore, the chorus exited the stage amid a storm of applause, and I shouted to Jimmy, “Wait for me outside. I’ve got an idea.”

“What the heck are you talking about?”

“I’ll tell you later. Just wait for me.”

I elbowed my way down the aisle

against

the tide

of guys

heading for the doors. Nearing the stage, an MP stopped me.

“You’re off limits, buddy.”

Just beyond him stood the man I wanted to see, the man who directed the singers. Over the MP’s shoulder I shouted, “Yo, Mr. Director! A word, please?”

He heard me and came over, and I blurted non-stop what was on my mind.

“I’m PFC Anderson, Sir, and I’m Chaplain Creamer’s assistant. Tomorrow’s Easter, and I’m wondering if your chorus could sing something at the ten hundred hour service in the chapel?”

His smile and head-shake stunned me! In a jiffy we ironed out the logistics.

Korea’s rainy season was in full swing. Notwithstanding the foul weather, the pews were filling up. As Chaplain Creamer donned a surplice over his uniform, I broke the news to him about the chorus’s coming to the service and that it would sing an anthem. He was delighted. I went to the electric organ, excited yet worried, for the

*Songs of Joy continued on page 13*

Ask an Expert continued from page 10

Termites have a broad waist, straight, bead-like antennae, and, when winged, have two sets of wings that are uniform in size.

Whether you come across Carpenter ants or termites when working in or on the outside of the home, it is NEVER a fun situation.

Knowing a little bit about their similarities and differences though, could be quite helpful in navigating through the process of how to correct things.

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# Thirty Years

By Bob Houghtaling

## *Now That You're Old*

Thirty years down the line  
Children will ask how  
You endured those things  
That are happening now  
And after reflection  
Out comes a book  
It's filled with history  
And you both take a look

It was back in the year  
Twenty-twenty it says  
During tumultuous times  
When Trump was the Prez  
A virulent monster  
Came to this land  
Shaking the foundations  
On which we all stand

You then in school  
Simply had no idea  
Until all those around  
Became consumed by fear  
Restaurants were vacant  
All business shut down

Then the closing of schools  
And silence's sound  
  
It happened so quickly  
Only few understood  
Soon everything changed  
On the ground you once stood  
Each day harsh detail  
Came on the TV  
Impacting forever  
This land of the free

Yes, many were challenged  
By harsh times ahead  
Still your mind can recall  
Kind things that were said  
By parents and friends  
Along with neighbors galore  
Back thirty years ago  
It's all become lore

Recollections bring smiles  
Since we have survived  
The past is next measured

By some not arrived  
But you'll share with them  
This story be told  
Now that you're wiser  
And events seem less cold

You'll tell them of love  
No book will include  
You'll tell them of inspiration  
That belief would exude  
Far beyond past's chronicles  
This knowledge to impart  
We lived with those times  
Because of our heart

Upon closing the chapter  
Next enters a smile  
That comes from wisdom  
Accrued over awhile  
We're all in those pages  
For times to be told  
Sharing this story  
Now that you're old

*Songs of Joy continued from page 11*

pews I had cordoned off for the singers remained unoccupied. But as I played the prelude, I heard the clicking of high heels and looked up to see a splay of color. Jimmy, whom I had asked to usher the chorus to their reserved pews, was in the head of a line of co-eds clad in dresses of many colors and guys in ties and jackets.

Heads turned, GI's gawked, and whispers bounced off the drab olive-green walls of the Quonset

hut that served for a chapel. At the altar, Chaplain Creamer intoned the invocation and asked the congregation to stand and sing the opening hymn: *Christ The Lord Is Risen Today*. To hear sopranos belt out the "Alleluia's" had my fingers crushing the organ's keys!

When the time came for the singing of the anthem, the chaplain introduced the chorus. They stood, and I relinquished my bench to their accompanist. Their arrangement of *Amazing Grace*

sixty-two years later still resonates in my memory.

With it tucked back in that piece of my brain that warehouses memories, I realized that its visitation had dispersed the darkness of the moment, and this Easter, albeit one that I had spent in isolation, was still a day of miracles, a day to celebrate. But without the songs of joy. Then again, the chirping of two robins hopping across my yard was an acceptable substitute.

# This Isn't How the Story Is Supposed To End



By Tim Ferron, SHS Class of 2020 President

Just a few months ago, I sat in Smithfield High School listening to a lesson during my senior English class.



The lesson for that day was the "Hero's Journey" literary template. Simply put, almost every adventure story has a hero that follows the same plot: the hero is called to adventure, enters into the threshold of danger, gains allies and mentors, is challenged, learns from their setbacks, faces and conquers a final challenge, then returns home to be rewarded for their adventure. It seemed structured and very logical, as if all stories really did follow this "Hero's Journey". Yet I now find there's one story that doesn't fit this mold: ours.

We were just little kids when we graduated from Gallagher Middle School in the Spring of 2016. Thinking we eighth graders were the coolest ones in town, we went to the movies and we rode our bikes around as if we owned the whole world. After living our lives to the fullest, we soon became eager to go off to Smithfield High School. We prepared ourselves to don the green and gold. *Called to adventure.*

And so, with the sun shining on an unusually warm autumn day, we walked in on our first day as frail, frightened freshmen. What if we don't fit in? What if we can't find the

bathrooms? What if there really is a pool on the third floor? It's laughable now, but then, it was horrifying. Despite the big, scary, grown up seniors, we had officially been given the title "Sentinels". *Enters into the threshold of danger.*

Yet it was only a matter of days before we felt right at home. We did indeed find the bathrooms (but held our suspicions about the pool ...) and our class grew closer together every day. Joining sports teams and clubs, those scary seniors soon became our role models. In classes, lunch, and in the hallways, we found friends that turned into family. Truly, we had joined the Sentinel family. *Gains allies and mentors.*

Coming back year after year, we began to get into the swing of things. Yes, we were now positive that the pool didn't exist. We began to take more difficult classes, receive greater amounts of work to complete, and suddenly found ourselves struggling to keep up with it all. Night after night we would persevere through, trying not to drown in everything we had committed to. Classes, sports, the musical, work, clubs, friends, family, ourselves: it was almost getting too much to handle. It was in those difficult times that we relied on our classmates. The tried and true forged on, becoming closer because of it. That once lost group of freshmen was now the Class of 2020. *Is challenged.*

Of course, it was never a bed

of roses. Life is full of wonderful mountains, yet deep valleys are present too. We saw death, family issues, financial strains, and medical problems. There were days we didn't put our best foot forward and days we regretted the actions we took. Still, through it all, we persisted. In the best of times and the worst of times we trudged forward. We were a family and we weren't about to leave one of our own behind. When one of us fell, the community surrounded them, picked them right up, getting them on their feet to continue on. No, life was never easy, but not all our learning occurred inside the classroom. *Learns from their setbacks.*

Soon, too soon, it came upon us: Senior Year. We were now those scary seniors. After 3 years of working our way up the ladder, we were the ones the underclassmen looked up to. We were the captains, the presidents, the officers, the members of distinguished organizations. It felt surreal. With aspirations of future greatness, we ran to search for our next step. Through it all, though, we never forgot about the present: our hometown. In a way never seen before, the Class of 2020 came together as Sentinel brothers and sisters. We had really done it. We had written the papers, nailed the tests, and passed the classes. We were on the road to graduate from Smithfield High School. We had accomplished what we set out to do. *Faces and conquers the final challenge.*





2020 Smithfield High School Seniors

This is where the Hero's Journey ceases. The invisible monster we have come to know as COVID-19 came and took our rewards away. An in-person graduation ceremony, Honors Night, spring sports, World Language Night, Senior Dinner, prom: the culminating activities we all looked forward to are now in critical risk of not occurring. We were stunned at the course of events over just a meager two weeks. How could

this happen? Why is it us? ***This isn't how the story is supposed to end!***

There may never be answers to these questions; but I'd propose a possible response, an optimistic one. Yes, we embarked on this experience called high school and made it through all of its ups and downs. That is fantastic and should be recognized. However, maybe it isn't our time to be rewarded

because our journey is not done. Rather, our adventure is just beginning.

It seems cliché and even a little bit tacky, but perhaps all these missed ceremonies and lost opportunities should inspire us to do more. If we could make it through high school, what else can we achieve? We were pushed to our limits and our

*SHS Senior continued on page 17*

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*SHS Senior continued from page 15*

comfort zone expanded, why not challenge ourselves to be greater, stronger, and kinder people? Indeed, when I look into the faces of the Class of 2020, I know there are future graduations, inductions, commissions, elections, ordinations, and promotions ahead of us. Instead of letting these great losses push our spirits down, let them motivate us to rise up. Let us continue to change the world.

To the Smithfield community, we appreciate all your heartfelt support for us during these dark times. Know that we can make it through this just like the past situations we've faced together as a town.

To Smithfield High School teachers and staff, we cannot thank you enough for the work you put into us over these past 4 years. Your dedication to our learning has been inspiring, teaching us both lessons inside and outside the classroom. The fruits of your labor have undoubtedly already begun to bloom and will surely continue for many years to come.

And to the Senior Class of 2020, it's time to take the next step and enter into the vast unknown. Your foundation has been laid here at Smithfield High School and it has prepared you to do great things. Trust me, we will get our reward. Stretch yourselves, challenge yourselves, push yourselves to be the best you can be each and every day. You have done incredible things here, take that spirit with you wherever you go. And never forget: once a Sentinel, always a Sentinel.

You're right, this isn't how the story is supposed to end: this is how our story begins.

*Exchange Bank continued from page 9*

changed to The Greenville Trust Company, which was later acquired by Citizen's Bank in 1954. When Citizen's Bank relocated to another part of Greenville, the building was occupied by various businesses over the ensuing years.

The bank's money was protected by a cement-lined walk-in vault entered through two solid steel doors. In the ensuing years after the building was no longer a bank, it served as storage space. Today the former vault is bathroom, and with the antique steel doors no longer needed, they were removed and given to the Smithfield Preservation Society to be re-purposed.

From the street the former bank building appears to have two floors, but it actually has three, as well as an unusually deep basement.

The first floor, which is accessible through the back of the building, once housed the Greenville Volunteer Fire Company.

In 1870 Greenville obtained its first fire engine dubbed "the Water Witch". It was a horse-drawn apparatus known as a "hand-tub" and required a team of able bodied men to operate. It was kept in a nearby barn until 1885, when the lower level of the bank was converted to a fire house. The fire company remained there until the Greenville Fire Station was built in 1939.

The second floor is where the bank offices were located. Old interior photos show dark raised-panel wood adorning the walls, and an ornate teller's counter with caged windows. Unfortunately this has all been lost

over time as the building changed hands. However, the ornate wood work surrounding the interior clock and main entrance has survived.

The third floor once had apartments, of which there were at least two – possibly more. It seems odd today to think that there would be living space above a bank, thereby opening the possibility to someone breaking in through the ceiling, but there was a time when such things were fairly common.

The apartments were still in use in the 1950s as evidenced by a newspaper article about a Georgiaville woman named Marion E. Lakey, who was the first woman assistant treasurer of the Greenville Trust Company. Not only did she work for the bank, but she lived in one the third floor apartments.

Mr. Haggarty's decision to purchase the former bank was a big one because the building needed extensive work. For starters, it had sat vacant for some time during which the water pipes had burst ruining vast areas of the first and second floors requiring the removal of walls back to the studs. Floors needed refinishing and replacing. The electrical and plumbing systems needed to be completely replaced, as did the ancient furnace in the basement. There was also some work to be done on the outside bricks and mortar, as well as certain cosmetic work such as replacing ugly florescent light fixtures with decorative chandeliers.

And then there were the two clocks; the one on the outside-front of the building facing Putnam Pike that has read ten minutes after four for

*Exchange Bank continued on page 33*



# Helping Those With Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders

by Diane L. Marolla, LICSW

*“We have seen that two heads are better than one when dealing with a mental health problem.”* – **Kate Middleton**

As I sat and organized my thoughts for this article it is during the time of a health care crisis that has never occurred in our lifetime – COVID 19. I never thought in my lifetime that I would experience anything like this. I wake up every day questioning if it is real. Daily social distancing is currently a way of life. Thankfully, I have been working from home and see and talk with my work team daily through video conferences. For the clients that I see for mental health and couples counseling, telehealth is allowing me to support them through this crisis. My face to face contact with humans is limited to going to the grocery store once per week, with gloves and a face mask on. Each day, after working from home, it is just me and my two dogs, Marox and Winnie. Whereas I feel prepared to know how to deal with the scariness of this situation, and the isolation, as a mental health professional I can't help but be concerned for those who already have mental health and substance abuse issues and how they are managing this crisis. As I update myself daily to be informed at a local and national

level about the course of the virus, I am hearing that alcohol consumption is up. According to a March 30<sup>th</sup> article in the Business Insider, “the trauma of the coronavirus pandemic could cause a nationwide spike in substance abuse.” When we are all able to function in whatever our new normal will be, the trauma and stress of COVID 19 will create long lasting mental illness and substance abuse issues. As a society, we will need to know how to be prepared for the aftermath of this crisis and have resources readily available to help those who will need mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Before the COVID 19 pandemic our national statistics on mental health according to the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) were as follows:

- 19% of adults with mental illness also have a substance use disorder
- 8.4 million Americans provide care to an adult with an emotional illness
- 20% of people experiencing

homelessness also have a serious mental illness

- 37% of people incarcerated in state and federal prisons have a mental health condition
- 70% of our youth in the juvenile system have at least one mental health condition
- 1 in 8 of all emergency department visits are related to a mental health and substance use disorders
- Depression is the leading cause of disability in the world
- Depression and anxiety cost our global economy \$1 trillion each year in lost productivity

As a mental health professional, I am comforted to know that in the town of Smithfield Rhode Island there is a new partnership between the local police and fire departments and Gateway Healthcare (which is part of Lifespan) to assist and engage residents of the community with their mental health and substance abuse needs. The program, funded by a grant from the federal government, was in response to the opioid epidemic.

*Disorders continued on page 22*



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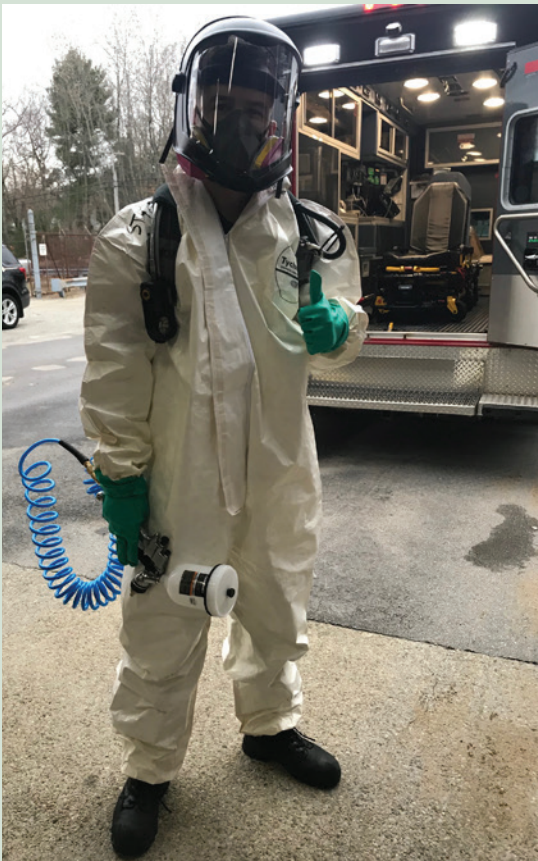
Village at Waterman Lake healthcare workers (before social distancing) and residents practicing social distancing while enjoying a beautiful day outdoors.



Community Police Officers Jon Ricciarelli and Ryan Perry help set up the police departments Variable Messaging Boards to remind everyone of the importance of social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic. The police department uses their three messaging boards throughout Smithfield to bring attention and awareness to important information.



# *workers and first responders!*



Smithfield Fire Department first responders prepare for Covid-19 pandemic.



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Curious to know more about the program, I first outreached John Tassoni, our former State Senator. Mr. Tassoni has always been and continues to be a fierce advocate for helping those with mental health and substance abuse issues. Currently Mr. Tassoni is the host of Recovery Radio and Common Ground. He is also the Director of Operations, Community and Government Relations for The Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Council of Rhode Island. Mr. Tassoni was instrumental in bringing this program to the town of Smithfield. After speaking with Mr. Tassoni, I then spoke with Smithfield's Town Manager, Randy Rossi. According to Mr. Rossi, the program "gives something to help people". "Mental health is a real need in the world, in the state, and in our community that needs to be addressed. The substance abuse issues are real." The program, which started approximately one month ago embeds a trained mental health professional with the Smithfield police and fire departments. The mental health professional attends role calls and travels with police officers as they respond to calls. When the police and fire department respond to a call, the mental health professional can do mental health and substance abuse evaluations, complete emergency certifications if necessary, and ensure the individual is transferred to a hospital if the situation warrants hospital level of care. Additionally, the mental health professional can identify

community-based resources that can assist individuals in getting the tools that they need to manage their mental health after the crisis is de-escalated. This program allows for a different approach when the Smithfield police and fire department respond to a call. The program relieves some level of stress to the first responders of Smithfield as they have a trained partner to assist them in de-escalating situations where the root cause is mental health related. The program offers more than a punitive solution and is a win win for the individual in crisis, our first responders, and the residents of the Town of Smithfield. Mr. Rossi, used, in my opinion, the perfect words to describe what this program offers by saying "We need to keep people safe and alive. These are not bad people. Mental health is a sickness."

Mr. Tassoni, in his ongoing efforts to bring programs to the

Town of Smithfield and the state of Rhode Island is currently working towards creating safe stations to the local fire department. This will be another way to support the residents of Smithfield 24/7 when help is needed for mental health and substance abuse.

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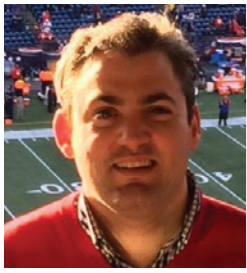
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# Corona Virus and Local Sports:

## You Don't Know What You Got 'Till It's Gone

by Dan Pieroni

Rudy Gobert was a trendsetter in the worst kind of way.

Gobert thought nothing of the Corona Virus. He treated as a joke, callously rubbing his hands over a microphone at a press conference. This was just a blip on the radar, nothing to worry about.

Then, his callousness got the best of him.

When the Utah Jazz' star center tested positive for COVID-19, a domino fell. The contagious nature of the virus meant no large gatherings and the pleas from the CDC to wash your hands could no longer be ignored. This was serious.

The NBA promptly decided to postpone the season, and the other major sports leagues followed suit. No sports until further notice, an unprecedented turn of events.

In local sports things were looking up. The Bruins were the beasts of the NHL's Eastern Conference. The Celtics were in a spirited battle with the Sixers and Raptors for division supremacy. Even Smithfield High's boy's basketball team was making a deep playoff run.

In the blink of an eye everything vanished. No more sports as a

diversion from the realities of life. No more work conversation with your buddies about Jason Tatum's hot streak, and David Pasternak being the most exciting Bruin since probably Cam Neely. Perhaps most discouraging is that a bunch of hard-working high school hoopsters might never again get a shot at championship glory.

As if that wasn't enough, amid this pandemic, came another crippling blow to the local sports psyche. While we were all getting used to social distancing and house arrest, word came down from Foxboro. The golden boy quarterback left for sunnier skies.

When Tom Brady became the Patriots QB in 2001, It ushered in an era of success unprecedented in American sports. Over the next twenty years our local pro sports teams won 12 championships and became the envy of all sports-loving cities.

The poster child for all this success was an unheralded quarterback out of the University of Michigan. Someone who was viewed as rainy day insurance in case firmly entrenched quarterback Drew Bledsoe got hurt.

You know the story, as though it were serendipity, Bledsoe did get hurt. Brady seized the opportunity

and never let go. In the process, he helped transform the Patriots from NFL afterthought to power player, winning six Super Bowl titles and 9 AFC championships during his reign as quarterback.

Now he's off to Tampa to create memories with a new Brady Bunch. His departure has left the Patriots with uncertainty at their most prized position, and a fanbase to wonder. If serendipity gave us Tom Brady and an unparalleled run of athletic success, could his departure in the wake of a crisis that renders sports as a merely just a game represent a finite end to the celebrations?

Maybe this time out is a time for all of us to reflect upon why we love sports in the first place. We've been spoiled with success so much we expect to win.

Sports isn't all about winning and arrogance. It's about competitive community pride and the empathetic bond we share as fans. It's about hope springing eternal for everyone, and the joy you feel when your team wins it all. It's a ritualized passion passed down through generations, The Father imparting the history and importance of supporting the to the son and so on.

*Local Sports continued on page 24*

Local Sports continued from page 23

Perhaps this pandemic has proven how much we take sports for granted, and how we miss the camaraderie of our fellow fans.

It will return, but when it does, will we embrace it with open arms or unfairly turn our backs to it because it isn't worth watching unless you win.

If you are of the latter train of thought, you have misunderstood the most important reason why sports matter. Sports are unpredictable. You never know if you're going to see a 100-point basketball game or the debut of a time great. If sports were predictable, why would we care? Why would we agonize over our team's misfortunes? Why would we be bemoaning its absence?

Covid-19 has paved sports paradise temporarily. It will put up a parking lot if we take for granted the element of surprise sports provides.

Jared Stidham could really show us something!

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# The Nature of Things | by James Gass

## Smithfield's Backyard Bobcats

If you see a tawny-colored animal with a stubby tail about the size of a small dog sauntering through your yard one day, you are not seeing things, especially if you live off West Greenville Road in Smithfield, RI. It's probably a bobcat.

Bobcats are the most widely distributed wild cat in North America. They are found in almost every state in the US including all of New England. They live throughout most of mainland Rhode Island, but not on any of the bay islands or Block Island. They are most numerous in Washington County. In Smithfield, bobcats have been frequently spotted off West Greenville Road at the eastern and southeastern ends of Waterman Reservoir, and occasionally off Route 44 at the reservoir's northern end. It's usually a quick glimpse of an animal as it passes through someone's property or an image of one captured on a trail camera. This past March, a female with two small kittens was spotted there.

Bobcats are solitary and secretive creatures except during mating season, when several may congregate together. These medium-sized cats are crepuscular, which means they are most active at dusk and dawn, though they are often spotted during daylight hours

visiting bird feeders looking for squirrels or birds. They average between 13 and 30 pounds, males being larger than females, sometimes exceeding 30 pounds. They are around 33 inches long and 22 inches tall with conspicuous white spots behind their tufted ears.

Our local bobcats have less spotting on their backs than others found in North America, which sometimes causes people to mistake them for mountain lions, or cougars. Mountain lions are much larger, between 80 and 180 pounds, and unlike bobcats, have long tails. There have been several alleged sightings of mountain lions in RI including one in Cumberland in 2019, but RIDEM discounted the sighting stating that "there is no credible, verifiable evidence" that these big cats exist in the state.

Bobcats are highly adaptable, and various observations and road kill suggests that their populations are increasing "not just in RI but also in CT, MA, and other parts of New England," according to Charles (Charlie) Brown, Principal Wildlife Biologist at DEM Division of Fish and Wildlife. Their presence in Smithfield near the northern and eastern ends of the reservoir might be explained by



Bobcat in a backyard in Smithfield, August, 2014.

Photo courtesy of WPRI 12.



the fact that there are several large orchards and farm fields there, which likely contain an abundance of small mammals such as mice, squirrels, voles, woodchucks and rabbits, favored prey items of these reclusive felines. They are also known to take deer. Bobcats can travel up to 12 miles an evening in search of food.

Jeff Booker runs a small farm off West Greenville Road. He and his neighbors have had frequent bobcat encounters over the years. "My brother was brush hogging

*Backyard Bobcats continued on page 27*





# Senior Scene | by Paul V. Palange

When I sat down to write this column, I was going to start off with a touch of sarcasm about the stay-at-home orders governors around the country have issued because of the coronavirus pandemic. I changed my mind, however, when I read on Facebook that one of my high school classmates was in an intensive care unit battling the disease.

My mindset immediately changed. The idea of making an attempt at humor didn't feel right. But praying did. I prayed for my friend and his family and again for all the other victims of COVID-19 and their loved ones, including the mother of one my co-workers.

In addition to hoping that coronavirus takes no more lives, I'm wishing that all the kindness and togetherness being expressed during the crisis continues when the pandemic ends. Perhaps the "new normal" can include people being humane and charitable most of the time. A friend commented that once we win the COVID-19 war, it won't take long for people to go back to their old inconsiderate and selfish ways.

"Just like 9/11," he said. "Everyone was all patriotic and nice after it happened, but people eventually went back to being mean and treating each other like crap." I hope he is wrong.

We need to overcome our prejudices and conquer our fears. Why are we as a society so reluctant to be consistently compassionate? It shouldn't take a disaster or crisis to make our humanity shine. That should be the norm. It isn't easy. We have to remember that when we fall or take the wrong fork in the road, we can get up and try again or get back on the right path.

I look forward to seeing you on the lane of hope.

If you're unable to get groceries, the Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging can help.

In an email I received, John A. Pernorio, president of the Rhode Island Association of Retired Americans, said that during a conference call sponsored by the Rhode Island AFL-CIO, he told Gov. Gina M. Raimondo that senior citizens, especially those that cannot leave their homes, are having problems getting groceries during the pandemic.

A few days later, he was contacted by Rose Jones, Healthy Aging director, who told him that if an individual needs assistance and is age 55 or older, an adult living with a disability or a caregiver, that person should call The POINT statewide resource network at (401) 462-4444. The staff can connect

people to resources near where they live, including home-delivery services and drug-cost assistance programs.

During the current crisis, according to Pernorio, there are many programs available to assist older Rhode Islanders with grocery and essential supply deliveries, including Meals on Wheels, Shopping Angels and AHOPE. The website [www.RIdelivers.com](http://www.RIdelivers.com) is also a good resource. It lists all markets, restaurants, food assistance programs and related delivery services available across the state.

Because of the high demand, some grocery delivery services have wait times, and Pernorio said Jones encourages seniors to reach out to The POINT if they have an emergency need for supplies. She also encourages people to register on [www.NextDoor.com](http://www.NextDoor.com) to stay up to date on Rhode Island's response to COVID-19 and the growing number of programs available. The site has a help map people can use to locate a neighbor in their community to assist with grocery shopping and other needs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Alzheimer's Association Rhode Island Chapter's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Caregiver's Journey Conference has been rescheduled

*Senior Scene continued on page 27*

my north field when he saw movement in the tall grass,” Jeff said. “The bobcat strolled out across the mowed section and sat on the stone wall and watched him. A lot of animals, hawks included, love when we brush hog, all the little mice and voles running around, it’s like a buffet.”

Jeff’s neighbor across the street, Josh Smith, has an infrared motion-detection security camera. “Josh has footage of a bobcat lying on the wall shortly after dark, soaking up the warmth from the granite stone wall across the street from my farmhouse,” said Jeff.

When I asked Charlie if there have been any problems with bobcats and people here in RI, he told me that “bobcats are generally shy and I have not heard of any aggressive behavior towards people or pets (dogs and cats) or have had any reports of livestock kills. They will eat chickens, and I have had a few reports of them taking chickens that are allowed to free range. There are no confirmed cases of rabies in a bobcat in RI, but I believe CT had an incident several years ago.” Charlie also noted that it is illegal to trap or shoot a bobcat in this state, as they are considered a protected furbearer under RI general law.

Jeff and his neighbors have never had any trouble with the bobcats they have come in contact with. “I hope folks just leave them alone,” Jeff remarked. “It seems like many people think ‘cougar’ and potential danger to humans when they hear ‘bobcat.’ They are beautiful and private creatures... about the size of my old coon cat, small dogs pose more of a threat.”

For more information on bobcats and other native wildlife check out these fact sheets: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/fishwildlife/wildlifehuntered/wildlifemanagement/>

*Senior Scene continued from page 26*

to Nov. 6 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick. According to a notice the association emailed, the conference brochure and registration materials are being revised, and new links to both will be posted online at [alz.org/ri](http://alz.org/ri) as soon as they are completed.

The forum is open to caregivers and health care professionals, and attendees will receive tips and tools they can use at home or in a long-term care facility, according to Donna M. McGowan, executive director of the Rhode Island chapter. In the conference brochure, she states there are more than 23,000 Rhode Islanders living with Alzheimer’s and some 53,000 family caregivers. Also, there are hundreds of professional caregivers who are on the front line facing the challenges brought

on by the disease. There is no charge for caregivers, but health care professionals must pay \$150.

All registered professional participant fees will automatically be transferred to the new date; and if someone has already registered and is unable to attend on the rescheduled date, the fee will be refunded, according to the association.

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# Stargazing | by David A. Huestis, Historian, Skyscrapers, Inc.



## May's Mooned-out Meteor Shower and A Solar Activity Update

I always look forward to observing a good display of shooting stars. I've watched countless "burning rocks" plummet through the Earth's atmosphere in the 45 years I've been an amateur astronomer. The experience doesn't get old, except perhaps when the expected peak of activity falls far short of forecasts.

I hope the weather gods cooperated with April's Lyrid meteor shower back on the night of April 22-23. Unfortunately, the May Eta Aquarids on the night of May 5 to the early morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> will be severely hampered by an almost Full Supermoon, the last of 2020's supermoons. The meteors, remnants of Halley's Comet, enter the Earth's upper atmosphere head-on at 41 miles per second. We can expect to see no more than 10-15 swift and yellow shooting stars per hour under a bright moonlit sky.

(Note: In researching the shower characteristics for this May's Eta Aquarids among several sources, I did find discrepancies regarding the peak morning of activity. Some sources had the peak occurring on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup>, while others stated the 7<sup>th</sup>. The Eta Aquarids do present a spread out peak, so depending upon the weather I

would recommend observing on either of the three mornings if you have the time. Regardless, the bright Moon will affect your meteor counts. At least Aquarius will be above the southeastern horizon with the Moon in the southwest. I'm trying to be optimistic here!)

The meteors appear to radiate from the constellation of Aquarius, not a very prominent star pattern. Around 4:00 a.m. Aquarius will be located about 12 degrees above the east-southeast horizon. The shower's radiant point is in the Water Urn asterism (looks like a Y-shaped group of stars). While the meteors emanate from this region of the sky, scan around the entire sky to maximize your chances of observing one.

It's even possible you may see a few bright "earthgrazers," shooting stars that blaze long and slow along the horizon. And because the Eta Aquarids are very fast meteors, forty percent of them leave long persisting dust trains when they disintegrate. So, despite the bright moonlight, all is not lost for the Eta Aquarids this year.

The Full Moon on the 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:45a.m. goes by several names, many of which are derived

from Native American cultures. May's full moon is known as the Full Flower Moon because spring flowers were heralding a new season. Other names less frequently used are Full Corn Planting Moon and the Milk Moon.

### Solar Minimum Endures

Since my last update on the Sun's Deep Minimum persistence, sunspot activity on the solar disk continues to be low. Here is the data for the last five years:

Year	Spotless Days	Percentage (Spotless days/ 365 days)
2019	281	77%
2018	221	61%
2017	104	28%
2016	32	9%
2015	0	0%

Beginning on January 1, 2020, one group of sunspots was of the new Cycle 25 and was present on the solar disk for nine days. It was a new cycle region because it formed at a high latitude on the solar surface and its magnetic polarity was reversed from Cycle 24. The most individual spots that appeared on any given day during the nine-day run was three.

Spot activity then ceased for 14 days with the Sun being spotless once again.

Then for another nine-day period beginning on January 24, an old Cycle 24 spot group formed.

This activity was followed by 34 spotless days, after which a new Cycle 25 group formed and lived for just three short days.

This back and forth of the appearance of new and old solar cycle spots is typical of cycle transition. It is important to note that near the end of one cycle and the beginning of the next, spot groups of both polarities may and do coincide.

Beginning on March 10 there

were eight spotless days. Then a single spot group formed and only survived for one day. It was a new Cycle 25 spot. Eleven spotless days followed. The last two days of March ended with another new Cycle 25 spot group.

While the appearance of reversed magnetic polarity spots seems to be increasing, who knows what our life-giving star has in store for us in the near future.

As I mentioned a few months ago, it is important to monitor our Sun's activity. Whether solar activity is high or low, extreme ranges in either direction can pose serious risks to life on our precious Earth. A recent report on SpaceWeather.com reported that cosmic rays are intensifying

because during high solar activity coronal mass ejections (CMEs) protect the Earth from this hard radiation, and during solar activity decline the cosmic rays reach Earth and penetrate deep into our atmosphere. In addition, Earth's weakening magnetic field lines are also contributing to increased cosmic ray incursion. The article stated, "Commercial flight crews traveling over Earth's poles experience as much as 12% more radiation than they did just a few years ago."

Corona virus or cosmic rays. We humans can't seem to catch a break.

Keep your eyes to the skies and be well.

*Dave Huestis*

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# Relics of Smithfield's Police History Are Rescued Just In Time

By Jim Ignasher

May 10 – 16 is National Police Week. Thank you to all law enforcement officers, especially in these trying times.

Police patrol cars have fairly short careers due to the type of driving they endure and the amount of miles they accumulate, and when a car is “retired” it’s usually stripped of markings and equipment before being sent to one of two places; a car dealership for resale where it enters “civilian life”, or a salvage yard where it’s cannibalized for parts before eventually being hauled off to the crusher. This is why the recent find of a 1971 Smithfield police cruiser sitting on a rural property in West Greenwich is so unusual.

There are those who enjoy restoring and owning vintage automobiles, and within the last thirty years some antique car enthusiasts have established

specialized clubs dedicated to restoring and preserving antique police cars. It was a member of one of these clubs who contacted Bob VanNieuwenhuyze, (pronounced Van-new-enheiz), a retired Deputy Chief of the Smithfield Police Department, about a rumor concerning an old Smithfield police cruiser that might hold certain possibilities.

Bob enjoys antique vehicles, and owns a fully restored 1972 Dodge, Polara, so when he heard that an original antique patrol car from his department might be for sale he had to investigate.

On a day in early March of this year, he and a friend traveled to West Greenwich and spoke to an elderly man about the possibility of an old police car being on his property. Sure enough, the rumor was true. Sitting in an area thick with brush, was a 1971 Ford,

Custom 500, with a large emblem on the door which in bold letters read “Smithfield Police”.

The car had a black and white color scheme, which hasn’t been used by the department since the early 1970s. It was, by all indications, the oldest surviving Smithfield police car in existence, and perhaps one of the oldest surviving police cars in the state. If it could talk, imagine the stories it could tell about the calls it had responded to. It had patrolled in a time when the town’s population was half of what it is today; when Richard Nixon was president; the Vietnam War was raging; and before Route 295 was completed and turned Smithfield into a bedroom community.

The car had a numeral 6 on the front fender, indicating that the police department had at least six cruisers at the time.

Bob had hoped it could once again cruise the streets of Smithfield, but unfortunately it was well beyond restoration, for it appeared the car had been sitting on the same spot for forty-plus years, and the bottom had completely rusted away due to sitting on the ground for so long.

And over the years the car had become a dumpster for rusted auto parts. Furthermore the windows, windshield, and driver's side door were gone, thus allowing the weather and wildlife to take a toll on the interior.

The back of the car was pushed inward indicating that at some point it had been hit from behind, which could be the reason it was retired from service. In any case,

at some point it had been sold for scrap and wound up in West Greenwich.

Bob was told it was fortunate that he'd come when he did, for the car had been scheduled to be removed and sent to a crusher a week earlier, but there'd been an unexpected delay. After some discussion with the property owner, Bob managed to acquire the passenger side door with its vintage Smithfield police emblem, and the trunk lid, with the word "police" across the back. Shortly after their removal, the once proud cruiser was sent to be scrapped and recycled to one day come back in another incarnation, perhaps, if Fate allows it, as another police car, and hopefully not as a kitchen appliance.

Bob has been able to do some research on the car and has discovered that the department had three 1971 Fords in its fleet, and based on a metal emblem on the trunk, this particular one came from the former Notarantonio Ford dealership in North Providence.

Bob has since cleaned and polished the door and trunk lid, and plans to use them as wall art in his "man-cave". Perhaps one has to be interested in police history to understand the significance of these relics, for they are two of the most interesting and unusual pieces of Smithfield Police memorabilia to be found anywhere, and Bob is glad to have rescued them.





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IMHO | by Ron Scopelliti

## Unsuitable For Business

I'm hoping that by the time this month's magazine comes out we'll be winding down all the self-quarantining or sheltering-in-place, or whatever it is that we've been doing, and we'll be interacting with one another in a somewhat more normal manner, though I suspect it will be a long time until we return to what passes for true normalcy. While it's obviously a tragic and uncertain situation, I've been trying to keep up my morale by picking out some of the positive aspects.

I guess, for instance, paparazzi have it a lot easier now that people are wearing masks in public. Since it's become hard to recognize who's a celebrity and who isn't, they can take a picture of pretty much anyone, and claim that it's Emma Stone at the Burger King drive-thru, or Hugh Jackman in line to get into Whole Foods. I'm waiting for an "Enquirer" cover of an alleged Taylor Swift coming out of the Westerly WalMart with a cart full of generic cereal, and a caption commenting on the fact that she was wearing sweatpants and Crocs, and seemed to be getting into a Hyundai Accent with Rascal scooter rack on the back.

One positive aspect that I can particularly relate to is all the people working from home who are enjoying the idea of "working

in their pajamas." Personally, I think we should continue working in our pajamas even when we get back to in-person office work. Okay, maybe not literal pajamas, but something more comfortable than what's been forced upon us as "professional attire" for so many years. I prefer almost anything to wearing a suit, and that includes the occasional days as a technician when I'd have to dress in a head-to-toe Tyvek hazard suit with a face shield and three layers of gloves – an outfit we used to refer to as "the full-body condom."

I just don't get the logic of the business suit. A typical suit is too warm to wear comfortably in the summer, and you can't wear it outdoors in the winter without additional outerwear. And don't even get me going on the symbolism being asked to wear a noose around your neck as part of a dress code. The fact that people look

forward to not wearing all this stuff on "casual Friday" should be a clear indication that we're doing things wrong the rest of the week. And, as further proof, when people get down to doing actual, real work, the first thing they do is start dismantling the suit – taking off the jacket, rolling up the sleeves and even, \*gasp\*, loosening the tie.

One of the perks of being a journalist is that you can get away with slightly more casual dress, which is something I saw several critics comment on when



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reviewing the movie “Spotlight.” Having a camera and a notebook seems to make up for the lack of a tie and a pocket square. I remember the first time I met Don Carcieri, just after he was elected governor. He made a surprise appearance at a Town Council meeting, and I showed up to get pictures immediately after shooting photos of a National Guard helicopter landing in a muddy field. I was wearing cargo pants, combat boots, and a field jacket that were all caked with dried mud. When I got there the only seat available was right next to Governor Carcieri, and when I sat down, the dried mud puffed up and formed a cloud around me like Pigpen in a Peanuts comic. But when I introduced myself as a newspaper reporter, it all seemed to be okay. I have a feeling

I wouldn’t get the same reaction from our current president.

Even though I started this column hoping for a return to normalcy, the more I think about it, the more I think this would be a good chance to hit the reset button, and reboot with a fresh attitude; a chance to look at everything we’re doing wrong, and change it. Maybe it’s too ambitious to hope that people will start thinking about the shortcomings of just-in-time inventory, or the inadequacies of our medical system. But at least we can start thinking about trading in our suits for something more practical, and cutting up our ties to repurpose them into more current and useful attire. I’m waiting to see a “People” magazine photo with the caption asking, “Is that Justin Timberlake behind the striped-silk facemask?”

*Exchange Bank continued from page 17*

the last umpteen years, and an interior one, set in the wall above the front doors. Both are now working again.

“From the day I saw it,” Haggarty related, “I said I’d make those clocks work.”

All throughout the process care was taken to preserve the historical integrity of the building.

The renovations began in September of last year, and were completed by Ocean State Properties in March of 2020. Mr. Haggarty says he plans to rent the building as office space. And thus the story of one of Smithfield’s iconic historical structures continues.

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# Payne's Picks

By Sarah Payne

May 2020



## TV Release

### *Workin' Moms – Season 4 – May 6*

With the state of the world right now, we all need a little something to look forward to, don't we? My glimmer of hope is the fact that the latest season of *Workin' Moms* is coming to Netflix this month. The show follows four Canadian women navigating the sometimes (always) challenging work-life balance of working mothers. Catherine Reitman, the show's creator and star, told CBC: "I think there was a real hunger out there for authentic mother stories." Reitman's authenticity – and humor – is what drew me to the show. As an example, she recently posted a video on social media about being a working mother during the COVID-19 pandemic. There's all this pressure to be productive and creative with the time we have at home, but I love that Reitman acknowledged in the video that she hasn't done anything productive except get through one day to the next. Amen!

### *Space Force – Season 1 – May 29*

Here's another little treat for those of you who – like me – still aren't quite over *The Office*. Greg Daniels – executive producer for *The Office* – and Steve Carrell have teamed up with Netflix for a workplace comedy about the newest branch of the US Armed Forces: Space Force.

Likely a nod to President Trump's initiative, Carrell plays general Mark R. Naird, who is appointed to lead Space Force. Lisa Kudrow plays Naird's wife and John Malkovich stars in the show as well. There's not much in the way of early reviews or information about the show, but Netflix does describe the show as "deadpan," which seems appropriate. With all the other movies and TV shows being put on hold lately, it's reassuring to learn all the filming for Space Force had wrapped before COVID-19 became a pandemic. I'll certainly give the show a try, even though Steve Carrell has been in some major duds these past few years (see: *The Big Short* and *Welcome to Marwen*).

## Movie Review

### *All the Bright Places*

Released on Netflix in February, *All the Bright Places* is a teenage love story based on Jennifer Niven's novel published in 2015. I should have known this movie wasn't for me, just based on the fact that it's an adaptation of young adult fiction. But in a moment of boredom, I thought, "Maybe Elle Fanning's acting will make it worthwhile." Spoiler alert: It does not. The opening scene is somewhat interesting – we see Fanning's character standing on a bridge at dawn, contemplating jumping off the edge. Rather than pay off

the opening with some depth and nuance, the film drudges along in teenage angst while Fanning pouts for forty-five minutes. It is agonizing sitting through this film and downright depressing. The love interests have no chemistry and the writing is abysmal. This is just another example of how no matter how much Netflix invests in original content – specifically original movies – most of it flops.

## TV Review

### *Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem, and Madness – Season 1*

I can't be the only one who saw the memes of Joe Exotic's mugshot before I even knew there was a documentary on Netflix about him. It seems like *Tiger King* is the show everyone is talking about these days – especially while we're all stuck at home. Exploring the oddball characters in the world of big cat breeding, Netflix is likely trying to re-create the magic it produced with its first major true crime hit, *Making a Murderer*, released in 2015. I have to admit, I don't quite understand the popularity of *Tiger King*. I'm mildly interested in big cats, but certainly not enough to sit through hours of footage explaining why there's fighting between big cat enthusiasts in America. There's just not enough intrigue or mystery set up in the first episode. I found myself wondering, "That's it?"



# Inside The Brown Bag

By Peg Brown

## The Socks!

*Author's note: The rather frivolous topic of this month's column in no way reflects a lack of concern for the current crisis sweeping the world. It simply is intended to offer a momentary diversion, some interesting facts, and a hint of nostalgia for something I turn to when I'm in need of a little comfort – my socks – that is if I can find the mate that mysteriously disappears between the hamper and the dryer.*

As I sit here in my purple, fuzzy, cozy “house” socks, with the slip resistant soles, I will admit I had no idea how much has been written about socks, how many web sites offer advice on what socks best suit certain personalities, or that there is an entire shopping site of eBay devoted to the sale of vintage socks. I had intended to begin with the memory of my mother knitting endless pairs of argyle socks in the 1950s, and my complete astonishment at how she could turn those bobbins of colored wool dangling from four two-pointed knitting needles into a finished product, proudly worn by my father. I then intended to nostalgically relate my mother's recollections of her days as a Bobby Soxer (complete with Saddle shoes), dancing to the tunes of Glen Miller or Frank Sinatra, or my own days of decorating white poodle socks in preparation for another Sock Hop in the high school gym.

Dubbed by some as the oldest type of clothing still in use today, I quickly realized that what I considered a very unassuming part of my everyday wardrobe did not have an uninteresting history. Early civilizations, perhaps dating back to the cave man era, recognized that animal skins or pieces of matted fur could provide insulation and protection against the elements. The earliest known surviving pair of socks, dating from 300-500 AD, shows that creative Egyptians

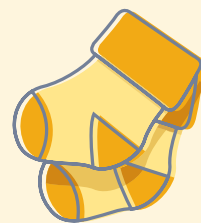
made socks with split toes to accommodate sandals. (Now, why didn't I think of this – I've never been able to tolerate wearing flip-flops).

In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, pieces of fabric sewn together for a better fit, called “puttees” were worn by those in holy orders to symbolize purity. (Hmmm. Now there's an interesting stretch of the imagination.) But, no surprise, it was really those

*Brown Bag continued on page 36*

### Fun Facts

1. Datang, a small town in China, is known as “Sock City.” In 2009, Datang produced roughly two pair of socks for every person on earth.
2. Boomer Esiason, Hall of Fame quarterback, now appears in commercials for the company Kane 11 that offers socks in shoe sizes. Forget those ill-fitting small, medium and large designations. (kane11.com)
3. A lost art – darning socks. Get rid of your grandmother's darning egg – no one knows how to sew any more.
4. 1970s tube socks for sale on eBay – three pair – \$64.
5. Fun quarantine activity – google Bureau of the Missing Sock – a history of a mythological government agency that has been perpetuated since the Civil War.
6. Doctors recommend sleeping with your socks on – it increases something called thermoregulation (maintenance of ideal body temperature) and contributes to better quality sleep – something we could all use these days
7. Can't get enough socks – visit the SocksAddict web site.
8. Need something else to do during your down time? Clean out that sock drawer!





early fashion leaders in Italy and France who recognized that by using material such as silk, one could show off a shapely leg beneath those fancy embroidered bloomers.

It wasn't long before those great fashion copy-cats, the British, jumped into the sock scene and truly revolutionized the look and created the sock industry. As styles changed, trousers became longer, socks shorter, and for a time were produced as one garment called stockings (later tights). However, ever practical, and recognizing that the soles of these tights became dirtier faster than the pants, separates emerged and the "modern" version of the sock was created.

The British, ever fussy about class, for a time in the 16<sup>th</sup> century actually had sock police stationed at the gates of London to make sure that the footwear you worn on your visit to the capital city reflected your station in life. Socks were a sign of privilege and wealth, taken seriously enough that violation of the dress code could result in arrest. (For those educated in Catholic girls' schools, you'll remember that knee socks not pulled to their full extent were also considered violations of a dress code.)

Leave it to the British to lead the sock industrial revolution. In the late 1500s William Lee of Nottingham invented a knitting loom, but was not granted a patent (even though he presented

Elizabeth I with the first pair of stockings – black) because it was assumed that the introduction of this machine on even a limited level would destroy the cottage knitting industry. Undeterred and supported by good old Henry VI, Lee eventually succeeded in accomplishing just what Elizabeth had feared – mass production! Red socks, blue socks, wool socks, cotton socks, nylon socks (after 1938), knee socks (preferred by British military for centuries and private schools), bobby socks, running socks ... and, tongue in cheek – the rest is history.

And, remember that appropriate line for getting through the next few months: "just pull up your socks" for a new way of life is about to begin. *Keep safe.*

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[www.robbsfuneralhome.com](http://www.robbsfuneralhome.com)



**Stephen W. Anderson**

March 23, 2020

[www.andersonwinfield.net](http://www.andersonwinfield.net)



**Craig Morgan Wilcox**

March 28, 2020

[www.andersonwinfield.net](http://www.andersonwinfield.net)



**Anthony P. Thompson**

March 28, 2020

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**Michael E. Nicholson**

April 11, 2020

[www.thequinnfuneralhome](http://www.thequinnfuneralhome)



# The Smithfield Times



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