

COMPLIMENTARY

MARCH 2020

The Smithfield *Times* Inc.

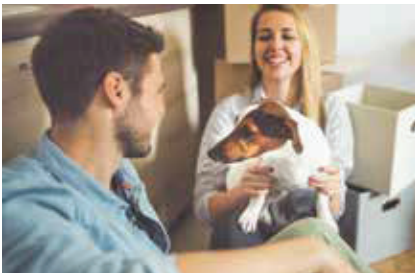


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It is part of my regular practice to prepare living Trusts to both avoid probate of a client's estate and protect their assets from nursing home costs during their lifetime. I also review and update those Trusts, and similar Trusts prepared by other 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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Every Day Is A Beautiful Day In The Egg Lady's Neighborhood

By Harry Anderson

"I was in the store talking about baking with a customer when all of a sudden my neighbor's pit bull charged into my yard with its owner following and attacked Cinnamon, my goat. I ran outside and grabbed a snow shovel – the plastic one, not the metal one. I didn't want to hurt the dog."

Embedded in her story is a clue to Patty Stamp's beneficence: she did not want to hurt the pit bull whose teeth were bloodily at Cinnamon's flesh!

When, 28 years ago, she married Bob Stamp, who had inherited Stamp Farms – founded by his grandparents in 1937 – she began the routine that to this day remains fixed. Up before the sun, with basket in hand she walks among their 7000 Rhode Island Reds sheltered in a three-story coop not far from the farm house to collect eggs. Three times a day she does the harvesting. Toting filled baskets to the adjacent building, she sorts the eggs according to size, carefully placing them into cardboard containers. Dozens and dozens a day, every day. Hens have no holidays.

"Back in the 1970's," Patty says, "there were about sixty poultry farms in Rhode Island, but now there's only us left and Buffoni's and Little Rhody. It's hard work, I guess, and besides it's an ongoing struggle to make ends meet. But Bob and I can't think of anything else we'd rather do."

She is proud of their product, noting the number of high-end restaurants around the state that Bob delivers to. Not hiding her amazement, she exclaims, "Honest, we even have

a customer in Aruba!" Because they know that what a chicken eats determines the quality of her eggs, they feed her the best food available from a supplier who has been in the business for more than a century.

Moreover, their chickens are not caged. When not roosting, the birds freely and happily cluck and caper about the coop.

"We haven't changed a thing over the years," Patty smiles. "The coop, the shop, the tricky driveway are just as they always were as is the way we treat the chickens and package their eggs. I think people like that."

There's a touch of Old World charm about Stamp Farms. After all, Bob's grandparents had come to Johnston from Germany in 1937. And Patty's parents, immigrants from Belgium, had taught her Flemish ways. Their only child, a daughter who now is on her own and teaches second grade at a charter school in Providence, is named Brijette.

"From my mother," Patty says, "I learned love and knowledge . . . they're everything. So, I love my family, I love the chickens and my little garden, I love the people who come into the store. In return, God has blessed us."



Photo credit, including cover: Albert Tavakalov

The store is not spacious, measuring roughly 20'x40'. One room, a couple of windows, a tall cooler displaying items for sale (milk, butter, and eggs), a shelf with bric-a-brac atop it and beneath it empty egg cartons awaiting to be filled, a work table where eggs are sorted and packaged, and a counter behind which Patty waits on customers. Absent are the clever and glitzy marketing panoplies that often retailers use to sell their wares. Yet, if a customer takes the time to have a word with Patty, they will take from the store more than a dozen of eggs.

"Sometime ago when I wasn't feeling right, I saw a doctor who ordered tests for me and learned I had leukemia. Once before my mother had cancer and I did a lot of praying, and the cancer went away. So, again I did a lot of praying, and it worked! And that's why I smile so much and love so much and want to give everyone hope.

"I have a knack of picking up on people. So, when I ask a customer, 'How are you today?', and I sense in their answer that not everything is OK, I try to get them talking. Because I like to bake, I sometimes tell them about a new recipe I found that calls for honey and then go on to tell them about a man who comes in here often. He's a retired nuclear physicist who keeps bees. See these jars of honey? They're his, and I help him sell them. I've given to a customer whose son has ALS a recipe for a bone broth that works wonders. On and on it goes."

Just before the photographer came to take her picture for this article, Patty had returned from a dash down the road to deliver a

dozen eggs to an up-there-in-years woman who was feeling too feeble that day to come to the store. Before posing for the picture, she had first brushed her hair and rouged her lips, looking ready for a night out – something that seldom happens. As soon as the photographer had capped the lens of his Nikon, she began sorting eggs.

"I don't know what I can tell you," she said to the interviewer. "But let's begin."

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Forgotten Miracles of Saint Patrick

By Jim Ignasher

It's been said that everyone's Irish on Saint Patrick's Day, celebrated with green beer, green clothing, and corned beef and cabbage. Everybody knows the day is named for Saint Patrick, a Christian missionary who lived centuries ago and is known for expelling all the snakes from Ireland, but how many know that he had the ability to heal the sick and raise the dead? Or why he used the Shamrock as a tool to spread Christianity across Ireland?

There are numerous miraculous legends attributed to Saint Patrick that were once widely known, but in modern times have fallen into obscurity. For example, one story relates how a great freshet caused a well in Emptor to overflow with such ferocity that the quickly rising water threatened the lives of those living in the area around it. Patrick took a piece of bread, and after dipping his finger in the water, made the sign of the cross on it. Then he uttered a prayer after which the water suddenly stopped gushing forth.

Saint Patrick was born in Scotland to Roman parents somewhere around 379 A.D. (Sources vary.) However, Patrick wasn't his given name, but one he adopted later. His birth name was Maewyn Succat.



1909 Postcard depicting St. Patrick

One of the earliest miracles attributed to Patrick occurred at his baptism when a blind man named Gormus arrived after having a dream that Patrick could cure him.

While holding Patrick's hand, he made the sign of the cross on the ground, and suddenly a spring of fresh water erupted from the earth. Gormus washed his eyes with the water and his sight was immediately restored.

Patrick had been baptized on a large flat rock which came to be used in local disputes as a lie detector. Anyone who gave false testimony while touching the rock would cause water to trickle forth from it.

As a young boy Patrick was charged with watching the family's flock of sheep. One day a baby lamb was carried off by a wolf and he was blamed for the loss. That night he prayed that the lamb be returned, and the following day the wolf brought the lamb back and laid it at Patrick's feet, unharmed.

There was a time when honey was widely used for medicinal purposes, and one instance records that Patrick was able to turn a bowl of water into honey to treat a sick woman.



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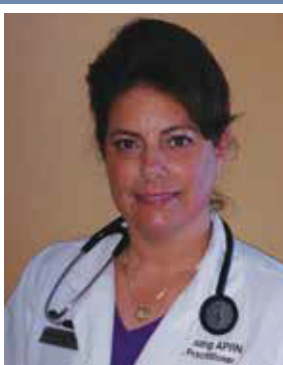
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While in his teens Patrick was kidnapped, taken to Ireland, and sold into slavery to a pagan chieftain. After six years in captivity, an angel came to him in a dream and showed him a place where gold was buried. He retrieved the gold, and some sources say he bought his freedom, others say he escaped, and fled back to Scotland. In either case, he became a priest and later a bishop, and eventually made his way back to Ireland and began his ministry.

While ministering to the pagans, he used the three-leaf Shamrock to illustrate the Christian belief that the Holy Trinity, (The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), are one God in three Devine persons. Over time he established hundreds of churches and converted thousands to Christianity, and is today one of the three patron saints of Ireland.

An ancient relic attributed to Saint Patrick is an iron bell that can be found on display at the National Museum in Dublin, Ireland. The story behind it relates how Saint Patrick climbed to the top of a mountain now known as Crough Patrick. There, in imitation of Jesus, he fasted for forty days. During that time demons came and tormented him, but he stayed true to his faith. As the evil entities grew more aggressive he prayed to God, and finally drove them off using the bell.

It's recorded that Patrick resurrected the dead at least 33 times. In one case two daughters of the King of Dublin had died, and the King, who'd heard of

Patrick's miraculous abilities, sent for him. The King promised Patrick that if he could bring the girls back to life he would convert to Christianity. Patrick took the hands of the girls and appealed to God. Suddenly the burial chamber was filled with light and the girls rose from death. The King kept his word and was baptized.

Another account speaks of a dying Irish King named Echu who wanted to convert to Christianity. He sent for Patrick, but died before his arrival. Patrick brought the king back to life long enough to be baptized and receive Holy Communion, after which the king passed away a second time.

There was an incident involving of a powerful magician who interrupted Patrick's teachings in front of a large crowd of people and blasphemed the Lord. In the next instant the magician was killed by a bolt of lightning, and all in attendance converted.

One day a thief stole a goat that belonged to Patrick and ate it. When accused, the man denied it, until the sound of a bleating goat was heard coming from the man's stomach. Then the beard of a goat suddenly grew upon his face,

which some say is where the term "goatee" originated.

Of course the best known miracle attributed to Saint Patrick involves the banishment of snakes from Ireland. The legend goes that he climbed to the top of a mountain overlooking the sea and ordered all the serpents in Ireland to assemble at his feet before he drove them into the water by beating a drum.

Patrick died on March 17, circa 493, and it's said that there was no darkness in Ireland for twelve days after his death. He's reportedly buried in the graveyard next to Down Cathedral located in Downpatrick, Northern Ireland.

There are those who claim some of the miracles surrounding Saint Patrick are mythical, yet they can't deny the immense influence he had on the Christian world, the Catholic Faith, and the Country of Ireland. Today there are thousands of cemeteries and churches worldwide named after him, as well as a special day on the calendar – March 17th.

Happy Saint Patrick's Day to one and all, for everyone can celebrate – Irish or not.



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The Nature of Things

The Sky Dancer Faces a Cloudy Future in Rhode Island

By James Gass

Beloved by birders and hunters alike, the American woodcock (also known as a timberdoodle) is a species of sandpiper that has abandoned its ancestral shoreline habitat for river bottoms, damp alder runs, and early successional woodlands. In the spring they return to our area to breed, but every year there are fewer and fewer of them.

Aldo Leopold, in his landmark book *A Sand County Almanac* (1949), quipped that woodcock are “the living refutation of the theory that the utility of a gamebird is to serve as a target, or pose gracefully on a piece of toast.” He also detailed the male woodcock’s dramatic aerial courtship display, calling it the “sky dance.”

Like other sandpipers, woodcock have long bills, but their upper mandible has a prehensile tip which enables them to grasp earthworms while probing the soil. Woodcock generally resemble their shorebird kin but are chunkier and more cryptically colored. They have large eyes on the top of their head which gives them an almost 180 degree field of vision, allowing them literally to see behind themselves, making it difficult for a predator to surprise it while it is feeding or on a nest. Mottled brown, grey and black in color, these birds completely blend in with the forest



Photo courtesy of Cornell Lab of Ornithology

floor. When a woodcock senses danger it remains motionless, using camouflage as its primary defense. I have walked within a few feet of one and didn’t realize it was there until it flushed.

In late March and early April, woodcock return to Rhode Island from their wintering grounds in the southeastern United States to breed. Males arrive before females and stake out singing grounds, which are usually old farm fields, abandoned pastures or brushy fields adjacent to damp second-growth woods. There are still areas like this in Smithfield, and I have heard woodcock at several of them. The sky dance begins on the singing grounds at dusk. The male struts about and utters a series of nasal vocalizations known as “peents.” After doing this for a while he takes flight in wide,

ascending spirals which become smaller and smaller as he gains altitude. A loud twittering sound occurs while he is ascending, caused by air moving through the bird’s outer primaries, or flight feathers. The twittering stops when the bird is about 200-500 feet up and once there he hovers while chirping a fluid, melodious warble. He then silently descends to essentially the same spot he took off from and repeats the performance. There can be several males on a singing ground, but they are territorial and often chase one another away, chattering angrily.

Females are attracted to the males’ display and fly over to a peenting male. The male then courts her by bowing and bobbing with wings stretched vertically, walking with stiff legs. A male may mate with several females. The display from

first to last peent lasts from 30 to 60 minutes and ends when the sky becomes too dark. Some males display at dawn. The female then makes a shallow nest lined with leaves on the ground, usually in second-growth forest within 300 feet of the singing ground. She lays one to three large, mottled brown eggs. Incubation takes 20 to 22 days. The down-covered young leave the nest within a few hours after hatching.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service monitors all migratory gamebirds. They keep track of woodcock populations by conducting singing ground surveys each spring. Unfortunately, since the inception of the surveys in 1969, woodcock have been found to be declining significantly nationally and especially in the eastern region, at a rate of 1.08% annually. The reason is habitat loss due to increasing development of rural and suburban areas (hunting does not significantly impact their overall populations). More needs to be done to create young forest habitat which is attractive to woodcock and other wildlife, especially songbirds.

Rhode Island has precious little land that the Department of Environmental Management can manage for woodcock, and too many abandoned farms or fields end up as shopping centers or “luxury estates.” Individuals can help by joining the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, which sets aside land for wildlife, or by joining The Ruffed Grouse Society at ruffedgrousesociety.org, which spends a good portion of its revenue on projects that assist state agencies and private landowners in their efforts to create habitat for these unique birds.

You can also help closer to home. Erin Harrington is a graduate student at the University of Rhode Island researching woodcock populations throughout the state. You can be a “citizen scientist” and conduct singing ground surveys this spring. My daughter and I did it last year, we had a route in Georgiaville (we heard one singing male). The northern part of the state needs better coverage, so I urge you to volunteer. Check Erin’s Project Timberdoodle website for upcoming details at <https://www.uri.edu/features/timberdoodle/>. Erin’s email is e_harrington@uri.edu. Hopefully we can all work together to save this very special bird.





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Streetlight Program Seeks to Lighten the Load on Smithfield Taxpayers

Plans are currently in motion that could save Smithfield between \$280,000 and \$300,000 annually while decreasing the town's carbon footprint and reducing light pollution. The Town Engineer's Office is reviewing bids on a program to replace Smithfield's aging street lights with more efficient LED (light emitting diode) units, and to do so in a manner that will completely change the way the town's street lights are managed.

Town Engineer Kevin Cleary and his staff have been working on the program for more than two years, receiving input from other town departments, as well as other municipalities and private businesses that have taken on similar projects. Many communities in Rhode Island have already made a similar switch to LED lights, including Providence, Cranston, Pawtucket and North Providence.

"There are a lot of factors that come into play with doing this program, obviously," Cleary said. One of the factors is the number of lights involved. "We have close to 3,000 in inventory," he said, "and that's both on town roads and state roads."

This existing inventory of lights is currently maintained by National Grid. The conversion plan will change this arrangement in a number of ways. First, the lights that are on state roads will be taken over by the Rhode Island Department

of Transportation (DOT) after conversion. There are about about 550 of these lights. "They [DOT] have agreed to take those over for future ownership, maintenance, and electrification costs," Cleary said. "That will leave us with a balance of about 2,400 lights that are town-owned."

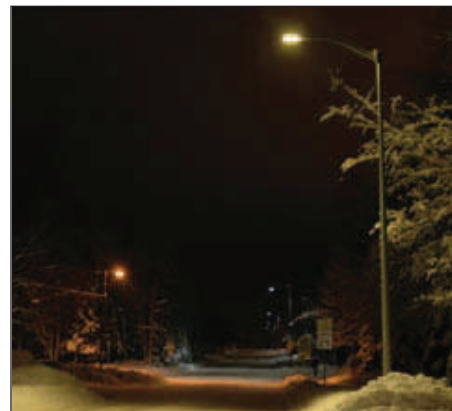
This number reflects the current inventory of lights. During the conversion process, however, Cleary said that he expects 400-500 units will be eliminated due to redundancy, or their location in areas that are over-lit or areas that simply do not need to be lit. The remaining lights will be owned by the town, and maintained by a yet-to-be-determined contractor instead of National Grid.

Cleary said the program will be "cash-positive" after one year. He's contemplating an up-front cost of \$300,000 that will be requested through the town's Capital Reserve Fund. Combined with the town's current \$430,000 annual lighting budget, the first year's budget comes to a total of \$730,000. This amount will be lowered by an incentive from National Grid that Cleary estimates will be around \$160,000, depending on the technology the town chooses. The result is an estimated \$600,000 to \$650,000 to complete the conversion.

He noted that the lion's share of the current \$430,000 annual budget

goes to operation and maintenance. After the first year of the new plan, the town will be paying \$80,000 to \$90,000 to a contractor for operation and maintenance, offering substantial savings. The town will still, however, have to pay National Grid for electricity, and pay them a customer-owned utility fee. This fee will be determined based on the number of lights in the town's inventory when the project is completed, and Cleary estimates that it will be between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year. Adding this fee to the lowered operating budget results in the projected annual savings of of \$280,000 to \$300,000.

One unusual aspect of the program is a collaboration among Smithfield, Lincoln, and Woonsocket. The three municipalities are exploring the possibility of working together to save money through bulk purchasing.



Test street in Anchorage, Alaska, compares quality of light from warm, low CCT LEDs (right foreground), high pressure sodium vapor (left middle) and cool, high CCT LEDs (right background). The residents of this street preferred the warm LEDs in the foreground.

"We're jointly bidding it," Cleary said of the LED conversion project "and we're looking for incentives from a contractor to give us a better offering, should we choose to do joint purchasing. But nothing marries us to that."

As this issue of The Smithfield Times went to press, Cleary was waiting for bids to come back from contractors. He said that around a dozen firms had shown interest, so there should be a healthy number to choose from. After reviewing the bids, he plans to present his recommendations to the Town Council during their first, or possibly second April meeting.

Though Cleary couldn't delve too deeply into the schedule and logistics of implementing the project until the town starts reviewing bids and looking into contractors, he expects the majority of the work to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Both Cleary and Town Manager Randy Rossi seemed satisfied with the thoroughness of the two years of research that went into the plan for street light conversion.

"You read about other cities throughout the country," Cleary said, "and you read about a lot of mistakes that they make, and a year-and-a-half or two years later, they're having to go back in and change things because customers are not happy with the result."

"First generation LED lights often drew a lot of criticism," he continued. "They were too bright; the glare was too harsh. In subsequent years they developed different lighting, different shading, different distribution patterns, different shielding that can be directionally pointed where you need it. That's only developed over the last two years."

"I'm glad we're in the seat we're in rather than doing it years prior," Rossi said. "We didn't want to pull the trigger too early."

More information on the LED lighting project, including background information on light pollution, health aspects, and wildlife impact, is available on Smithfield's Town Engineer and Sewer Authority web page.

➡ Visit <https://www.smithfieldri.com/engineer>, and scroll down to the "Documents" section on the left sidebar.



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The Other Holiday in March – St. Joseph's Day



By Jane Fusco

Two days after the Irish - and Irish-at-heart - end their St. Patrick's Day celebrations, the Italians take over, with a feast day on March 19 that commemorates the life of St. Joseph (*San Giuseppe*, in Italian), the earthly father of Jesus Christ and husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In Italy and other Catholic countries, it is also when Father's Day is celebrated.

The tradition was brought over to the United States with the first immigrants and is still celebrated in the old Italian American neighborhoods in the big cities and

households nationwide.

In cities with large Italian-American communities, especially Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey and Louisiana, which saw a flood of immigrants in the 19th century, the Feast of St. Joseph is celebrated with parades, processions, and family gatherings, and wearing red-colored clothing, much like the Irish wear green on St. Patrick's Day.

It is believed that during the Middle Ages, when Sicily was experiencing a severe drought and famine, the desperate citizens prayed to St. Joseph to intercede with God

for rain. Only one crop endured to sustain them – the fava bean. Fava beans are considered “lucky” because they thrived during the drought while other crops failed.

When the rains poured down and ended the drought, the grateful people of Sicily vowed to honor St. Joseph each year on March 19. Though the celebratory meal varies among families and regions of heritage, it is always meatless, since the feast day falls during Lent. The most traditional fare includes fava beans, fennel, cauliflower, chickpeas, and homemade pasta, seafood and bread. Breadcrumbs were used

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instead of cheese to symbolize the sawdust of St. Joseph, who was a carpenter.

Alters (la tavola di San Giuse” or “St. Joseph’s Table”) were also assembled in the home as a way to honor St. Joseph. The alter can take on many different shapes depending on the amount of room in the family’s home. Some form a cross while others occupy a small table or even an entire wall. Candles, religious medals, prayer cards, rosaries, fava beans, loaves of bread, cakes, flowers, lemons and oranges adorn the alters.

Many alters include photos of deceased family members as a way to trace the family’s journey to America, while honoring St. Joseph, who is also the patron saint of dying a “happy death.” The alters are generally broken down before or shortly after dinner and the fruits and breads are given away to guests.

Most notable among the desserts of the feast are the **Zeppole di San Giuseppe**, which can be found everywhere in Italy and in any Italian bakery in the United States. A zeppole is a pastry that resembles a cream puff, that is fried and filled with various flavored creams, and

topped with powdered sugar and a cherry.

Over the years, extravagant St. Joseph’s Day celebrations have dwindled as families have scattered and lives have become busier, but one tradition that remains intact is enjoying those delicious, sweet, creamy zeppole, even if it means standing in a long line at the bakery to get them.

For Italians, St. Joseph’s Day is one of deep devotion and homage to St. Joseph, the patron saint of fathers, travelers, immigrants, craftsmen and working people, that is rooted in rich traditions and joyful moments.



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by Tim Jones



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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!

When Should You Replace Your Front Door??

Whether it is your front door, or any other exterior-facing entry door of your home, there is typically a "useful" life component attached to any type of question as to how long one of these should last, before needing to be replaced.

There are a variety of factors that play into when it makes the most sense to look at replacing an entry door.

One area of focus could be whether it seems like you are losing energy through the door.

Whether it is heat in the winter time or cool air in the summer time, most folks would prefer the energy to stay within their household and not release it into the neighborhood if at all possible.

Do you notice any major warpedness or disconfiguration with the door? Although it is not necessarily unusual

for doors to change their original form over a period of time, there certainly is such a thing as "too much" of a shape change.

Rotted beyond repair door rot is also one of the easiest ways to recognize that your door needs to be replaced.

I am not referring to the trim around the door, as usually the trim can fairly easily be changed out if ever necessary.

I am instead referring to either the door itself, or, what most commonly happens, the exterior-facing portion of the door jamb (which is the side of the door frame that the door runs into perpendicularly).

The rotted door jamb conversation often gets me into, what I consider, a losing-battle discussion with highly capable Master Carpenters, who plead with me that the rot in the jamb can be surgically removed and a new piece of wood installed in place of the rot.

Technically, they are correct.

My mentality however is that when the jamb starts to go, the door is "toast".

With the door products that are available on the market today, fortunately or unfortunately (depending on how you look at it), it is more cost-efficient to pay for a new door and change it out than it would be to buy some time by repairing the old jamb which, in my

mind, is only temporarily delaying the inevitable.

The exception to this would be a really "solid", older door where you simply would not be able to replace it with what is on the market today.

The age old saying, "They don't make them like they used to" is highly applicable in having a dialogue about door replacement.

As an example, a solid wood door made 50 years ago, will be light years ahead in terms of durability in comparison to anything that most consider reasonably priced on today's market.

The reasons for this are a combination of the raw door-making materials not being as readily available in the modern world, along with the fact that it is nearly impossible for manufacturers to produce these doors in a manner that would allow them to sufficiently sell them to consumers, at a volume which would make it worth it for them to do so.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the exact moment of when it is best to change an exterior entry door out, there are absolutely various signs that one can rely on which help determine when it might be time to do so, subsequent to any LARGER issues developing that extend outside of the door in question itself.

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).



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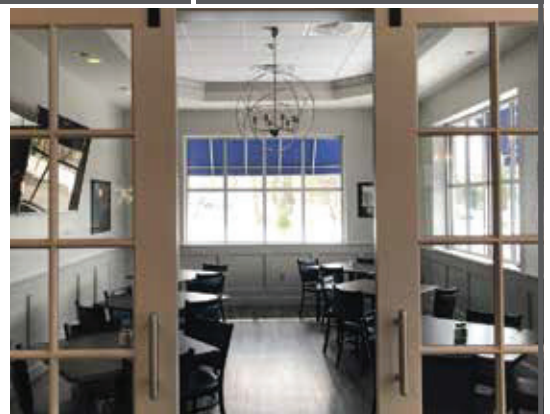


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Senior Scene | by Paul V. Palange

My dad passed away in 2014, at the age of 94, missing his goal of celebrating his 100th birthday this month by six years. I talk to him daily, and he frequently checks in to let me know he's still around, loving his family and friends. I miss him a ton, but I know it was time for him to go to the other side. He had congestive heart failure, and the symptoms became debilitating.

Emiddio Vincent Palange was the first in his immediate family born here. His parents and older brother – Raffaele (Ralph) – were Italian immigrants, and they settled in Somerville, Mass. When Raffaele registered Emiddio for school there, it was with an Americanized first name – Emil. While that might have been a smart move, it always bothered my dad, who instructed us to have Emiddio engraved on his headstone, which we did. He was so proud of his heritage and, yes, was one of those Italians that put family before everything.

Despite losing a son to polio and a daughter to complications from breast cancer, I never knew him to waiver. If anything, his love and appreciation of his family deepened. At the end of my sister's wake, he stood in the middle of the reception room and said through some tears, "Thank God for my family."

My sentimentality might appear maudlin, but it's not. It just goes to the depth of my father's love of family and how it brought so much happiness to my life. He and my mom made sure they and their

children ate dinner together for as many years as possible; that we visited our grandparents on a regular basis and helped them as they aged; and that we attended celebrations with relatives and friends. It meant we had a life of delicious food, an abundance of laughs and many, many, many hugs and kisses.

I learned how to play the Italian finger throwing game called morra and the lawn bowling game of bocce. I enjoyed spending time making wine in my paternal grandparents' basement and the mouthwatering food we had during breaks – provolone, salami, prosciutto, homemade roasted peppers and fresh Italian bread. I know; I'm Italian so "it's all about the food." You're right, but it's about the wine, too.

That was Emiddio's beverage of choice at dinner, a time for him to relax between his full-time job and his side gig of doing clothing alterations at his self-made tailoring station in the cellar. It included an approximate six-foot bench, thread rack, shelves for scissors and the like, an AM radio, an ashtray for his cigars and an industrial grade sewing machine. It was fun watching him buzz through jobs, measuring, chalking, cutting, pinning and threading clothing. It was also a life lesson about working hard and doing what is necessary to put food on the table and keep a roof over the heads of your dependents.

My dad worked for the Massachusetts Department of

Corrections for many years. He started out running a tailor shop at Norfolk State Prison, teaching the inmates a trade. He left the department as head of industries, and what I remember most about his retirement party are all the people who took the time to tell me and my siblings how wonderful it was to work for and with my dad. I could tell the words about his dedication, concern, fairness and friendship came from their hearts. It made me proud and reinforced my opinion that success is not about how much money you make or the amount of merchandise you purchase. It's about putting your ego and problems aside and providing tender loving care when someone reaches out to you. It's about listening and giving someone a shoulder to cry on. It's about giving advice when it's asked for.

My dad helped me solidify that opinion when I was a sophomore in college. As part of my financial aid package, I had to work on campus. I was assigned to a dining hall, and management had me putting in close to 40 hours per week. That schedule exhausted me, causing my grades to plummet. I was placed on academic probation, and when I called home to break the news to my dad, he didn't become irritated or angry. He told me to get my hours reduced or to see if I could be placed in another job and to keep studying. He assured me I could turn things around, and when I hung up that telephone in the dormitory hall, I was full of confidence that propelled me to the dean's list.

Emiddio gave all his children and so many other relatives and friends unconditional love. He understood human nature. I never knew him to hold a grudge. I knew him to be supportive through thick and thin. I knew him to be the person who took the initiative to do the little things that made a big difference.

I wish he had reached his goal of living to 100.
Ti amo, papa (I love you, dad). Salute.

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Bryant University Fitness Center Upgrades

By Joe Siegel

Bryant University has opened the doors to its new and improved fitness center in the Chace Wellness and Athletic Center.

On February 5, the Campus Recreation Department hosted a festival to celebrate the grand opening. The event, called RecFest, was intended to show students the offering of Bryant's recreational services and to partner with other organizations to help students prioritize their wellness. RecFest featured a dodgeball 3v3 tournament, Glow in the Dark Yoga, and other activities.

"We did a pretty big renovation in terms of new machines and new flooring," said Nick Schleicher, the assistant athletic director for Campus Recreation.

The renovation began before the Christmas break and was completed at the end of January. A lot of the carpeting was ripped up to make room for the installation of rubber flooring. Signage for the Bryant Bulldogs will be put up in the near future.

The company which had manufactured the old fitness equipment had gone out of business, which made maintenance a problem.

"When something broke, it was very hard to find parts to get a technician who knows how to work on those machines because they're so old and hard to replace," Schleicher explained.



Students and faculty have praised the new equipment, noting they're easier to use.

There is also a new front desk area which is "more functional for our students and people who work at Bryant," Schleicher said.

The cost of the renovations was \$300,000. \$100,000 came from a "student involvement fee", a fee required of all undergraduates.

The facility, which is open from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m., is also getting plenty of visitors. For now, it is also for use by Bryant students, faculty, and staff members.

"We've had upwards of 700 check-ins per day," Schleicher said.

The fitness center is often the final stop for tours of the campus, which made it a priority to bring the facility

as up to date as possible, according to Schleicher. The goal was to have a facility comparable to a Planet Fitness or Gold's Gym.

"It was kind of a big selling point for getting the project done," Schleicher added.

In addition to the fitness center, Bryant Campus Recreation also offers students and staff: group exercise classes, intramural sports, aquatics, and club sports. The club sports consist of cheerleading, dance, men's ice hockey, lacrosse, rugby, and volleyball, racquetball, tennis, squash, ultimate frisbee, women's rowing, and women's rugby.

► **More information about Bryant's athletic and recreational services can be found by visiting the Athletic and recreation website: www.bryantbulldogs.com.**

Tir Na Nog is The Heart and Soul of Irish Dance in Rhode Island



By: **Brittni Henderson**

Nestled inside the Blackstone River Theatre in Cumberland is a non-competitive, supportive, and pressure-free place for people of all ages to learn traditional and modern styles of Irish Dance. As the only one of its kind in the Ocean State, Tir Na Nog Irish School of Dance provides a space for children, teens, and young adults to explore, express themselves, and be around others sharing in their passion for this unique style of dance.

Founded by Erika Damiani in 2012, Tir Na Nog has blossomed from just two classes a week to over 24. Damiani found Irish dance to be an outlet for her



Photo credit: Albert Tavakalov

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in high school, and as she grew older, discovered that it meant more to her than just a way for her to move her body. “Once you get the Irish dance bug,” she says, “you never let it go.”

After graduating from Rhode Island College with a degree in Social Work, Damiani opened Tir Na Nog Irish School of Dance. At only 22 years old, Damiani was determined to bring this dance style to others in a way that would be less about competing, and more about heart and soul.

Tir Na Nog, which according to Damiani translates to “The Land of Eternal Youth and Happiness,” fits the school in more ways than one. As the only non-competitive Irish dance school in Rhode Island, its playful, creative, and community-oriented culture bursts at the seams. The reason for attending becomes deeper than trophies, over-done stage makeup, and expensive costumes. Damiani urges that Tir Na Nog is a place that is open and accessible for all – no matter the background, dance experience, gender, and beyond.

Students, who on average range from 7 to 22 years old, participate in all sorts of performances during their time at Tir Na Nog. Classes run six days a week, after school and on weekends. In the month of March alone there are an average of thirty performances, from touring elementary schools to large-scale stages. Tir Na Nog dancers will also be present at Providence’s annual St. Patrick’s Day parade on March 21, 2020. Students also give back to the community by performing at adult living facilities and other community locations.

While Damiani admits that the non-competitive dance school is not for everyone, she urges that is it welcoming of everyone, even if you’ve never danced a day in your life. She is passionate about the community and family like atmosphere, saying that these ideals are what keep parents and children invested in the program for so long.

“Tir Na Nog is a family,” Damiani says. “It teaches fundamental elements of Irish dance, while also speaking to the heart and soul of the dancers. It’s grounding and allows students to get lost in the music.”

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Pluto at Ninety Discovered, Demoted, Visited

A little more than ninety years ago, in a barred spiral galaxy named the Milky Way, a stellar system named Sol had a retinue of eight known planets revolving around it. The last one to be discovered was Neptune in September 1846. However, as time passed small perturbations in Neptune's orbit were noted, which suggested another "trans-Neptunian object" existed whose presence altered his path around our Sun. It wasn't until 1905 that a wealthy Boston astronomer, Percival Lowell, started a search for "Planet X" using his Flagstaff, Arizona, observatory. Lowell, with his mathematics background, and with the help of colleagues, tried to derive a possible orbit for a potential unknown planet. They even took photographic plates in 1906 of an area of sky where they thought planet "X" might be located, but with no results.

Unfortunately, Percival Lowell died at age 61 on November 12, 1916 and the search for the elusive "Planet X" ended. However, in 1929, the search for Pluto was resumed at the Lowell Observatory using calculations that Lowell had computed earlier. A 23 year-old Clyde W. Tombaugh was hired to meticulously image specific areas of the sky using photographic glass plates. The same star field would be exposed several days apart. Once the plates were developed, they were placed in a viewing machine called a blink comparator that held two plates. The operator could switch

back and forth from one plate to the other. This process was called "blinking."

Stars do not appreciably change position because of their vast distances from the Earth. However, an object within our solar system would show a slight shift in position given enough time had elapsed between the images. Many asteroids and comets had been discovered using the blinking process. An object in question would appear to jump from one position to another between the two images being compared. Making assumptions as to the possible distance to "Planet X," and given the length of time between exposures, one could deduce from the movement of an object where it may reside in the solar system. Clyde was responsible for the entire tedious task of exposing, developing, and blinking the glass photographic plates.

Finally, on February 18, 1930, Clyde Tombaugh discovered Lowell's distant world while comparing plates he had exposed on January 23 and January 29, 1930. As Clyde told Skyscrapers' members when he visited Seagrave Observatory in 1987, until he informed his colleague Dr. C. O. Lampland across the hall from his office and then his boss Director V.M. Slipher, for 45 minutes he was the only person in the world who knew of the new planet's existence. After careful re-examination of the

data and confirmation by other astronomers, it was determined this newly discovered body was way out beyond the orbit of Neptune. The monumental discovery was announced to the world on March 13, 1930, the anniversary of Lowell's birth.

"Planet X" was also given the more proper name Pluto, the Roman god of the underworld. (Naming astronomical bodies at that time adhered to Roman and Greek mythology.) And it is merely coincidence that the first two letters are Percival Lowell's initials.

It is interesting to note that there was a link to Rhode Island in regards to Lowell's search for what would become Pluto. My research as historian for Skyscrapers revealed that the former owner of our eight-inch Clark refractor and Seagrave Memorial Observatory, Frank Evans Seagrave, was a friend of Percival Lowell.

I do not know when Lowell and Seagrave first met, but from 1915 – 1917, when Seagrave was "working" as an assistant at Harvard College Observatory, it is apparent they had become fast friends. See this link for extensive details on the Percival Lowell/Frank Seagrave connection: <http://www.theskyscrapers.org/the-conjunction-of-frank-seagrave-and-percival-lowell>. In fact, one postcard from Seagrave to Lowell said in part, "Hope you will find X."

After Lowell's passing in 1916, Seagrave continued his correspondence with Dr. Slipher, the new Director of Lowell Observatory. In a postcard dated May 21, 1917, Seagrave wrote to Slipher stating, "If you should at any time find any conspicuous object that you think is "X" please send me some positions. Dr. Lowell many times promised me that I should be the first one to work on its orbit when discovered."

Seagrave only found out about Pluto's discovery through newspapers. Now 70 years-old, Seagrave hadn't been asked to compute Pluto's orbit as had been promised by his friend Lowell. Seagrave sent off several letters to Slipher in March and April 1930 reminding him of this arrangement, saying in one of them, "The last time I was with Dr. Percival Lowell was late in September 1916... He showed me his computations in relation to the outer Neptunian planet, and said to me, 'Seagrave, if the Lowell Observatory is the Observatory that will first find this planet, you will be the first one to compute its orbit.' No writing to this effect. Only a verbal statement..."

Eventually Slipher responded to Frank Seagrave (very diplomatically of course). Briefly stated, Slipher wrote, "it seemed to me that we here should determine for it a preliminary orbit. This because it seemed best for Lowell Observatory to find it out and make it known if the object were thus shown to be less important than it had appeared. Dr. Lowell and the Observatory had put so much into the problem as to appear to justify this policy." He

went on to say, "I hope you will feel that we have tried to be fair. We of course realized at the outset that you who compute orbits were better equipped to do such work, but the reasons given above decided our course."

Over the ensuing decades there was a limit to what information could be learned about so distant a world. On January 19, 2006, the New Horizons spacecraft was launched on its almost 10-year journey to explore icy planet out in the depths of our solar system.

In the meantime, other bodies beyond Pluto had also been more recently discovered, and astronomers wanted to classify these objects. During a meeting of The International Astronomical Union (IAU), an association that governs such things, decided to modify the definition for a planet. Under the new parameters Pluto no longer qualified as one. A new term, dwarf planet, was introduced. This reclassification became official on August 24, 2006 and Pluto was kicked out of the planet club.

Pluto's status may have changed, but the New Horizons spacecraft mission to explore Pluto and its moons didn't. After a 9.5-year journey New Horizons had a brief encounter with Lowell's "Planet X," cruising by this dwarf ice-ball of a world at 30,800 miles per hour, coming within

7,750 miles of its surface. Astronomers learned more from this close encounter than they had since Clyde Tombaugh discovered Pluto in 1930. If you'd like to read about New Horizons' discoveries, please check out this link: https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/newhorizons/main/index.html Although Clyde Tombaugh died on January 17, 1997, at 90 years-old, before New Horizons' launch and before Pluto had been demoted to dwarf status, a part of Clyde made the epic journey to explore this distant world. Upon Tombaugh's death he was cremated. An ounce of his ashes was put in an aluminum container and placed onboard the spacecraft. The container's inscription reads in part, "Interred herein are remains of American Clyde W. Tombaugh, discoverer of Pluto..."

While Pluto is merely a tiny speck as seen through the largest of the telescopes in Rhode Island, there are many other more prominent celestial objects to view that will impress you with their beauty. Let the volunteers at all the Rhode Island observatories help you explore the heavens during free public open nights.

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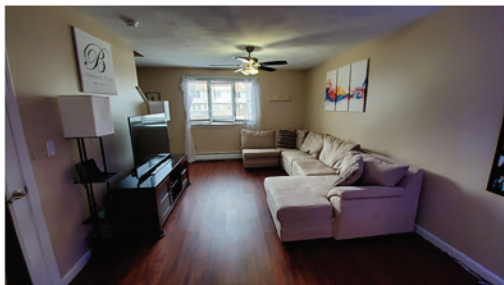
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Illuminate The Gala Event to Generate Funds For SHS Auditorium Improvements



By: **Brittni Henderson**

On the evening of April 4, 2020 the Smithfield High School Music Booster Club is hosting a community event at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln in support of improvements to the Smithfield High School auditorium. Tickets for the *Illuminate the Gala* event are \$40 and will include silent and live auctions, dinner, dancing, and a raffle. The entirety of proceeds from this event will go directly to auditorium renovations, which includes structural improvements, as well as a total sound and lighting overhaul. Doors to the gala will open at 6pm.

The auditorium at SHS has been the stage for community gatherings, town events, and high school shows for the last 52 years. As the second largest in the state, the auditorium itself has the potential to benefit even more members of the Smithfield community with the improvements that are in the works. The current lighting and sound systems are as old as the auditorium itself, says Music Booster Club President Michelle Pereira. The need to update the technology is long overdue, and the club is ecstatic to be able to help in this process.

When approached with the idea to host this gala event in support of the improvement project, Pereira said it was a no brainer. Having four children who are either SHS graduates or current students who have been involved in music or arts, she is also personally invested in this project.

“While I am not musical at all,” Pereira says, “my children have been part of these programs at the high school and all of them have had a successful start to their futures due to being involved. Now it only feels



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right to help give back to the high school that has given so much to my family.”

Pereira hopes that not only members of the arts and music communities attend, but also those invested in the Smithfield community. The auditorium is utilized for so many things, including Senior Fashion Show, Senior Oratorical, Evening of the Arts, athletic awards, dance recitals, plays, music ensembles, and so much more. With an update to the sound and lighting technologies, as well as a sprucing up of the already strong bones of the facility, the potential for more is endless.

The strong community already existent in the town of Smithfield is what inspires Pereira and others involved in this fundraiser to strive to provide better facilities for current and future students.

Those interested in attending, donating, or sponsoring this event should contact Michelle Pereira at mmpereira1@outlook.com.



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Celebrating the Lunar New Year with Bryant University

By Sophia DeJesus

In Chinese culture, there are twelve zodiac animals that correspond with the Lunar New Year. The Chinese zodiac is based off of the cycles of the moon, where each cycle is twelve years long and each year is represented by one of twelve animals. Based on the Chinese calendar, it decides when the new year will be celebrated. For 2020, the year of the rat began on January 25th.

Each year, Bryant University puts together a grand Lunar New Year celebration for the community. This year's celebration took place



on Friday, February 7th. Anyone is welcome to come and experience the culture! To celebrate, there's food, games, raffles, and amazing performances done by students and other groups. Not only do students from Bryant University participate in the performances, but students from

Smithfield High School participate as well.

From the high school, four students had the opportunity to perform in the new year show. Zitong Qi (senior), Maddy Ith, Sophia DeJesus (juniors), and Norin Ith (sophomore),

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formed a group with three other girls from Bryant, Ada Lee, Jiaqi Liang, and Baochun Wu, to perform a classical Chinese dance. The dance, called the “Cai Wei,” was performed by seven girls. Each had different experience levels in dance, some having none at all, but that didn’t stop them from delivering a beautiful performance! Involving light blue dresses with flower embroidery and floor length sleeves, the dance was elegant and one of the closing acts.

Along with the classical dance, there were many other lively performances ranging from dragand lion dances, singing, instruments, and energetic hip-hop dances! The celebration truly had something for everyone. Outside of the performances, the event also had activities such as crafts, games, paper cutting, calligraphy, and virtual reality!

Bryant’s Lunar New Year celebration is a great way to share Chinese culture with others. It offers a sense of unity and togetherness, especially for the Asian Americans within the community.

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Community Events

The Little Sisters of the Poor Jeanne Jugan Residence of Pawtucket will hold its 12th annual Saint Patrick's Day Dinner at The Old Grist Mill Tavern on **Tuesday, March 17**, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. This annual event supports the Little Sisters' mission of serving the elderly poor and will include a traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner along with raffle prizes, a "Pot of Gold" drawing and homemade scones for sale. Tickets are \$17 per adult and \$7.50 for children under 12 and must be purchased in advance at Jeanne Jugan Residence or at www.littlesistersofthepoorpawtucket.org. For more information, please call 401-723-4314. The Old Grist Mill Tavern is located at 390 Fall River Avenue in Seekonk, Mass.

Smithfield Little League today announced that it is accepting registrations for the 2020 spring season and invites all Smithfield children aged 5 to 16 to register for an exciting season of baseball. Registration will close on **March 10**. Those who register prior to the deadline are invited to participate in Thursday night Winter Baseball Clinics at no charge.

Every child who registers plays regardless of playing ability. For nearly 70 years Smithfield Little League has provided Smithfield youth with the opportunity to build character, develop courage and discover the value of loyalty through the game of baseball. Whether a child has played on All-star teams or never picked up a baseball, SLL coaches work with players to ensure a fun and memorable baseball experience. The league sponsors a number of programs for all ages and skill levels, including 'Blast Ball', A, AA, AAA, Majors, and the Teenage Division. Fee waivers are available for eligible families as SLL believes that every child, regardless of their family's financial means, should have an opportunity to play baseball.

SLL is proud to again offer the **Challenger Division**, which, according to Little League Baseball, was established in 1989 as a separate division to enable boys and girls with physical and mental challenges, ages 4-18, or up to age 22, to enjoy the game of baseball. Individuals who do not live in Smithfield are welcome to register for the Smithfield team if their town Little League does not offer a Challenger Division. There is no registration fee for the Challenger Division; registrations are covered by generous donations. Smithfield Little League is among more than 900 Challenger Divisions worldwide with more than 30,000 participants.

Players can be registered on the league's website at www.smithfieldlittleleague.com.

The League also seeks volunteers and coaches for the 2019 season. To volunteer or coach, interested individuals should register online and send an email to smithfieldlittleleaguePR@gmail.com. To ensure the safety of all players, all volunteers must successfully pass a criminal background check.

Elizabeth Ferreira a resident of Smithfield RI and a member of the class of 2023, has been named to the Dean's List at Providence College for the Fall 2019 semester. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must achieve at least a 3.55 grade point average with a minimum of 12 credits.

Greenville Public Library

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Contact: Cassie Patterson

greenvilleasstdirector@gmail.com



The **Mystery Book Club** will be reading *Girl Waits with Gun* by Amy Stewart. The group will meet on Tuesday, March 3rd at 1:30 pm.

A **Novel Bunch Book Club** will be reading *Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore* by Elizabeth Rush. The group will meet on Thursday, March 12th at 6:30 pm.

The **Picnic Table Reads Book Club** will be reading *An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones. The group will meet on Thursday, March 19th at 1:00 pm.

Coffee & Books – Monday, March 16th at 10:00 am

Dish & Dine Cookbook Club – Monday, March 9th at 1:00 pm

Bone Builders will meet on the following Mondays at 6:00 pm: 3/2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Bone Builders, an innovative exercise program with moderate free-weight training, can improve strength, balance, and energy levels while significantly increasing bone density. No registration is required. Please be sure to bring water and wear comfortable clothes and sneakers.

Monday Matinee – Monday, March 2nd at 1:00 pm

Dewey Dare Challenge – March Suggested Titles: 100 - 199

The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg

Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell

Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone by Brené Brown

Greenville Public Library Poetry Contest

From April 1-15, poets of all ages can submit their work to the library's third annual poetry contest. Each poet may submit one poem for consideration. Poets may use any poetic form. There is no minimum length, but poems may not be longer than one typed page. One winner in each age category (children, young adults, adults) will be selected by the Woodland Whispers Committee. All poets will be invited to a poetry reading and reception on Sunday, April 26 at 2:00 pm.

What Piques Your Interest?:

Scrapbooking – Saturday, March 28th at 2:00 pm

Smithfield Resident Inspired to Help Students Discover Local Ecology



by **Paul Lonardo**

Cynthia Mulvey and her husband Thomas moved to Smithfield from Lincoln three years ago, attracted largely by the natural bounty and beauty of the town's great outdoors and recreational sites, in particular the Leo Bouchard Conservation Area and unique features of Wolf Hill Forest Preserve. As an active outdoors couple who enjoy hiking, bicycling and kayaking, Smithfield was ideally suited for them as recent retirees.

Last September, Cynthia's passion for nature and ecology compelled her to contact the Smithfield Land Trust to volunteer her time. The organization was established in 1999 by the Rhode Island Legislature and the Smithfield Town Council to help preserve the town's natural beauty. It was provided with the authority to acquire, hold and manage land for the purpose of protecting wetlands, scenic views, historical and cultural places of interest and natural habitats. All properties acquired are held in the name of the Smithfield Land Trust, preserving the land in perpetuity. They also strive to educate and inform landowners and the general public about the benefits of land use preservation and land conservation by providing opportunities for research and education on our natural resources.

Last fall, when the search for a public event idea for this year was raised within the organization, a

geocaching scavenger hunt, with prizes being awarded to local middle schooler participants and their families with the most sightings, was chosen.

"Continuing the momentum started by the Smithfield Times' series last year featuring articles about Smithfield's Seven Scenic Walks, which involved a rock hunt and prizes," Cynthia says, "and also with Greta Thunberg recently being named Time Magazine Person of the Year, a youth-centered geocaching scavenger hunt is a perfect way for everyone to become better informed about unique birds, such as our bald eagles and heron at Stump Pond and early vernal pools on Wolf Hill and at Deerfield Park."

This past January 28, photographer Sandra Achilles' winter bird photos and the Smithfield Times' January "Snowy Owl" article were presented at Gallagher Middle School for the rollout of the GeoScav2020, whose aim is to foster interest in Smithfield's unique ecosystems and wildlife preservation as well as tout the benefits of land use preservation with smart development guidelines.

"In a time when youth are involved and informed in climate change, this timely topic has local outcomes to explore, study and address," Cynthia says. "From Spring's vernal pools spawning new life, unique plant and insect types."

Vernal pools are seasonal body of standing water that typically form in the spring from melting snow and other runoff, dries out completely in the hotter months of summer, and often refills in the autumn. They provide habitat for distinctive plants and animals, and vernal pools are prominent feature in three places at Wolf Hill Preserve and one at Deerfield Park.

Scavenger hunt participants are sure to be astounded by the vast variety of life in our local ecosystem. To learn more visit www.youtube.com/onebiotanetwork by the Vernal Pool Guy, Jonathan Twining, a former Smithfield Land Trust member.

Students will become familiar with inaturalist.org, an identifier app for plants and animals. Coordinates for Olivia's Forest, Deerfield Park and Wolf Hill Preserve, the sites for GeoScav2020, will be listed at www.geocaching.com in March, where discoverers will locate where to find waterproof containers of printed hint cards.

Any 6th through 8th grade students in Smithfield are welcome to participate. Pre-Registration by email or to the Town Hall Clerk's office is required by March 30. The contest will run through April to allow for a wide variety of seasonal identifications. Student notes for each sighting are due by May 10 at

Smithfield Town Hall. The first-place winner with the most verified sightings will be awarded a cash prize of \$150 and the 2nd place winner will receive a Dell Chromebook courtesy of Cox Communications.

Because nature is as unpredictable as it is beautiful, caution is urged at all times and scavenging on calm days to avoid falling limbs and other hazards is encouraged. Please dress appropriately for weather conditions and bring plenty of water, writing material, area map and cell phone. The buddy system is the way to go.

"This can become a way for Smithfield's future generation of taxpayers to appreciate what the Land Trust has to offer and what makes Smithfield such a perfectly wonderful place to live," Cynthia says.

For more information and to pre-register, email 20landtrust20@gmail.com

Visit www.exploreri.org to view trail maps. Registrants will receive illustrated photos of local wildlife and other resources in March.

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Inside The Brown Bag | By Peg Brown

The Fabulous Fur

Come on – admit it. Those of us of a certain age have grandma’s, mother’s or Aunt Rosie’s fur coat, stole, or jacket somewhere in the back of some closet. We’ve moved it countless times, always questioning why we keep it, yet can’t quite bring ourselves to toss it or ... Heaven forbid, wear it in this politically correct, sustainability-concerned climate.

Let me admit right up front that I LOVE fur – and fringe, and anything that resembles the fashion trends of the 1920s and ‘30s. I watch *Miss Fisher’s Murder Mysteries* on PBS just to reinforce my belief that I was born in the wrong decade. (The closest I ever came to realizing my dream of a flapper reincarnated was in sixth grade when Sack dresses were all the rage.)

Let me clarify, I don’t love ALL fur garments – especially those stoles that featured the heads, tails and feet of mink draped over a proper wool suit. However, let us remember that fur or leather has been used for hundreds of years for the warmth and protection it provided, its durability – and, of course, its role as a status symbol or a sign of wealth. Once limited to the royals, elite and the aristocracy, fur began to appear more frequently as merchant classes grew. Often the difference was the type of pelt that was used – for the very wealthy, these included ermine, mink, and sable – for others, weasel, squirrel, beaver and fox. In fact, in 13th century

Europe, countries passed laws that restricted the use of ermine and sable for noble ladies only.

The growth of the middle class in 19th and 20th century America, and the fur trade of the early colonial period, credited with being one of the driving forces that propelled exploration into North America, moved fur clothing and accessories within reach of a larger segment of society. Still, fur continued to be a sign of wealth and status.

Perhaps there was no more important influence on our grandmother’s and mother’s desire for fur coats and accessories than celebrities, especially the Hollywood stars of the Golden Age of films. In the 1920’s, fur trimmed one- button coats, with elaborate collars and cuffs, appeared not only in films, but in many of the stars’ private wardrobes. For my grandmother, a woman of very modest means, that meant a black seal coat, to which I added a white fox collar and wore for over a decade, despite its deteriorating condition. For mother, again from a family of very modest means, it meant a white rabbit short jacket for her junior prom, and a full-length racoon coat for her working years in Washington during World War II (a garment that was too far gone for me to wear, but was lovingly preserved for decades). For my mother-in- law (first marriage), who was a dyed in the wool upper

middle-class Yankee, that meant the ubiquitous mink stole that she wore to my wedding in 1971.

Just how expensive were these furs at the time. A glimpse at the Sears Catalogues of the 1950s offers the following: a mink dyed marmot cape sold for \$153.30, a sable dyed squirrel scarf could be purchased for \$17.30. In 1951, a red fox jacket was priced at \$71.40, and a genuine silver fox jacket listed for \$167. In 1958 a natural mink stole sold for \$599. In 2000, Harper’s Bazaar featured a \$95,000 Fendi mink coat. What happened to relegate that heirloom fur to the back of the closet. The 1980s and 1990s spurred anti-fur campaigns, boycotts, rallies, paint-throwing attacks on those who dared to wear fur, and any number of op-ed and editorial pieces. Celebrities, animal rights organizations and environmental groups (fur processing was said to pollute the water) joined in a campaign against the use of fur. The power of the growth of social media fueled the backlash. When the use of the fur of cats and dogs, especially in Europe, came into question, fur’s fate as an unacceptable fashion accessory was sealed.

However, a recent *Wall Street Journal* article (Jan. 28, 2020) entitled, “When No One Wants Grandma’s Mink Coat” confirmed a feeling that despite our reluctance to wear fur, “as long as it has sentimental value

and you really don't know what to do with it, let it hang in the closet" – because after all, "you're not actively purchasing fur."

And, let me add a few more thoughts to consider. "Vintage" is a hot trend. Resale sites such as ThredUp and Rebag are thriving – to the point that these options appeal to a continued growing commitment to consume less and recycle more. Consignment stores are bursting at the seams (no pun intended) and prominent among their racks – vintage furs.

Buy one – you don't have to wear it. The internet craft sites have hundreds of suggestions for repurposing fur – trim, pillows, handbags, upholstery ... and if questioned, just tell everyone it is fake – no one will ever know the difference!

Author's Notes:

- As of 2003, 85 percent of the fur used came from farmed animals. (Lee, *Our Love-Hate Relationship with dressing, shopping and the cost of style.*)
- In spite of the ongoing debate, the fur market in 2016 was \$30 billion, largely driven by houses of fashion such as Chanel, Hermes and Dior, who still use natural fur in their garments.
- I took a vintage mink stole in good condition, sent it to a woman in Connecticut, and had it made into three jointed and adorable teddy bears. The maker used the satin lining with the initials to make a bow – a great way to preserve, remember, and pass on a fond memory to the next generation.

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Movie Releases

A Quiet Place Part II – March 20

My husband and I are back on another kick of *The Office* (as are many other married couples, I assume). After watching episode after episode of John Krasinski play the goofy prankster who only has eyes for the receptionist, it's fairly remarkable to witness how his career has evolved since that big break. Not only is he now an action hero (he stars in *Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan*), he wrote, directed, and starred in 2018's highly successful *A Quiet Place* (alongside his wife Emily Blunt), about a family struggling to survive in a post-apocalyptic world where their best defense is complete silence. This month the sequel to that film releases, also written and directed by Krasinski. He recently told *Total Film* magazine: "I set up a couple of tiny little Easter eggs in II that not only explain more about I, but would allow for more mythology ... But, being a Boston Catholic, I can't be like, 'Yeah, of course, there'll be a third!'"

Vivarium – March 27

There's a reason horror films set in suburbia strike such a chord. The homes are a little too similar, the neighbors a little too friendly. It's enough to make anyone go insane. At least, that's what seems to be in the case in *Vivarium*, a film by Irish director Lorcan Finnegan, starring Jesse Eisenberg and Imogen Poots.

The trailer shows a young couple touring an eerie development of identical houses. Deciding the neighborhood isn't a fit, they hop in the car to leave, only to realize all roads lead back to the same house in the same cookie-cutter neighborhood. Reviewing the film after its Cannes premiere last year, Stephen Dalton of *The Hollywood Reporter* writes: "even if it misses a few beats, *Vivarium* remains a nerve-jangling, finely crafted thriller. More dark fairy tale than straight sci-fi puzzle, it never reveals all its secrets but still concludes on a satisfying note of symmetry."

Movie Reviews

1917

One of this year's Best Picture nominees (note: this column was written before the awards show), *1917* does not disappoint – even for someone who is not typically into war films. Director Sam Mendes (who also directed *Revolutionary Road* and *American Beauty*) calls it "a movie with no cuts in it." Running just under two hours, it was made to appear as one long shot. The story about two Lance Corporals, played by Dean-Charles Chapman and George MacKay, was inspired by Mendes' grandfather Alfred, who was a messenger in World War I. Dialogue is sparse and the focus of the film is sheer survival in the bleak no-man's-land between the British front line and recently abandoned German front line. The chemistry

between Chapman and MacKay's characters, who don't know each other well but are on a joint mission to deliver an urgent message, is my favorite aspect of the film.

Honey Boy

As someone who grew up watching The Disney Channel, I've seen Shia LaBeouf's career evolve from *Even Stevens*, to blockbuster films like *Disturbia* and *Transformers*, to some of his more recent troubles with addiction and run-ins with the law. He even co-starred in a music video for Sia's song "Elastic Heart," where he performs an interpretive dance alongside Maddie Ziegler. I always assumed he belonged in the same category as other spoiled child actors who can't handle themselves in adulthood. *Honey Boy*, an autobiographical film written by LaBeouf, where he plays his father, tells a more complex story. Noah Jupe (also in *A Quiet Place* and *Ford v Ferrari*) plays a young LaBeouf, around the time he was filming *Even Stevens*. His father struggles with addiction and is verbally and physically abusive. It's a heart-wrenching story of a child who at once deeply admires his father (a former rodeo clown), but also clashes with him for not being the father he needs him to be. I thoroughly enjoyed the film and gained a new appreciation for LaBeouf and his struggles to make peace with his past.

Ding, Dong, The “Stretch” IRA is Dead.

By: **Kate Zimmerman, President of RockPoint Wealth Management**

Sweeping legislative tax or retirement reforms really only happen once every decade or so, but in the final weeks of 2019 brought the second major piece of Congressional action in the past 24 months, as the SECURE Act was signed into law by the President. What does this mean for you? Well, there are quite a few changes included in the SECURE Act, but here are the top two changes most likely to affect you and your family. These changes essentially amount to Good News & Bad New.

Starting in 2020, No more “stretching out” Required Minimum Distributions for beneficiaries when you inherit a loved ones IRA. If you inherit mom or dad’s IRA, you now have 10 years to take all of it out and pay the taxes. So if John Doe inherits \$1,000,000 (sounds great right?) from mom & dad, it must be emptied by the end of the 10th year following the year of inheritance. This could very likely push him into a higher tax bracket, especially if he is already successful on his own.

There are ways to be creative, however, if John was approaching his own retirement, he

might consider waiting until he isn’t earning a salary anymore to start taking the money out. If he is 60 and planned to retire at 65, then he could wait until 65 and then take \$200,000 for the remaining 5 years to satisfy the new 10-year rule.

It used to be that once you reached the golden age of 70 ½, Uncle Sam came a knocking and started to force you to take a certain amount out of your IRA each year to force you to start paying the tax on it. The new RMD age has now been extended to 72. Which means that if you are turning 70 ½ this year and do not want or need money from

your IRA, you now can hold out until December 31st of the year you turn 72. It just may be time to take another look at your Financial Plan and make sure you know how these changes could affect you or your loved ones.

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Check out the chart below for other changes that can be found in the new SECURE Act.

KEY 2019 SECURE ACT AND TAX EXTENDERS			
NEW IRA RULES	401(K) PROVISIONS	OTHER PROVISIONS	TAX EXTENDERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elimination of the lifetime “stretch” provision for non-spouse beneficiaries of inherited IRA and other retirement accounts, replaced by a 10-year distribution cap• RMDs for IRAs required to start beginning at age 72 (instead of 70 ½)• Removal of 70 ½ contribution age limit• \$5,000 Qualified Birth or Adoption Distribution• Taxable non-tuition fellowship and stipend payments treated as compensation for IRA purposes• Non-deductible IRA contributions can be made with certain foster care payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of ERISA fiduciary Safe Harbor for selecting an annuity provider for retirement plans• Creation of a “distributable event” for annuities no longer allowed as plan investment options• Tax credit for small businesses that establish a 401(k) (or a 403(b), SEP IRA, or SIMPLE IRA)• Tax credit for adoption of auto-enrollment of participants in 401(k) plans• Maximum contribution for 401(k) automatic enrollment increased to 15%• Long-term, part-time employees who work at least 500 hours in at least three consecutive years will be eligible to participate in their employer’s 401K plan• Provides for MEPs to maintain qualified status overall, if only one employer’s portion is disqualified• Elimination of 401(k) loans made via credit cards or similar arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers may adopt employer-funded retirement plans up to the due date of the employer’s tax return• Increased penalties for employers failing to file taxpayer and employee benefit plan returns• Qualified education expenses for 529 plan funds expanded for student loans and apprenticeships• Kiddie tax reverts applicable children’s income to be subject to child’s parents’ marginal tax rate• Allowance of qualified Disaster Distributions up to \$100,000 per disaster, from retirement accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discharge of certain qualified principal residence indebtedness is excluded from gross income• Allowance of mortgage insurance premium deduction• Deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses• AGI “hurdle rate” for deducting qualified medical expenses to remain at 7.5%• Miscellaneous incentives for economic growth, energy production, and green initiatives

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**TOWN OF SMITHFIELD
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PRIMARY ELECTION
on TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020**

Final day for unregistered voters to register to vote as well as deadline for voters to disaffiliate from party for the Tuesday, April 28, 2020 Presidential Preference Primary Election is **Sunday, March 29, 2020**. Voter registration forms are available at the Smithfield Board of Canvassers, 64 Farnum Pike and the Smithfield Police Department, 215 Pleasant View Avenue, Smithfield, R.I. 02917.

Final day to apply for a Braille or Tactile Mail Ballot is **Monday, March 16, 2020**.

Final Day to submit application for a regular mail ballot for primary is **Tuesday, April 7, 2020**.

Prior to Sunday, March 29, 2020, registrations are received daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Town Clerk's Office. Also, you can download a voter registration form by visiting www.sec.state.ri.us/elections to fill in, mail in or drop off.

Mailing address is: Smithfield Board of Canvassers, care of the Smithfield Town Clerk's Office, 64 Farnum Pike, 7, RI 02917. You may access additional information such as your precinct designation and voter history. Online voter registration is also available at <https://vote.sos.ri.gov/>.

As an existing registered Smithfield voter, who has had a recent change of address or a recent name change, you may wish to update your voter registration form.

Carol A. Aquilante, MMC, Town Clerk/Clerk to Board of Canvassers

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Sp/4 Steven C. Pechie of Esmond was home for a twenty-day furlough before reporting for duty with the Strategic Air Command in Panama.

1st Lieutenant Anthony J. Pascitelli of Greenville was serving with the United States Air Force.

Air Force Sergeant Richard Johnson just completed a one-year tour of duty in Thailand.

Army Private William Hession completed basic training at Fort Dix.

Staff Sergeant George Fitzpatrick of Esmond came home after serving four years in Vietnam.

USMC Corporal Robert A. Gurney, Jr., of Greenville, was serving with the 1st Marines Air Wing in Vietnam.

Tec. Sergeant Kenneth W. Fuller was serving with the U. S. Air Force in Vietnam.

Air Force Lieutenant Stephen S. Weyden of Esmond was home on leave before reporting for duty in Thailand.

Steve Boudreau, a 17-year-old junior at Smithfield High School, was working as a jockey. On March 2nd he won the second race at Narragansett while riding a horse named "I'm Sugar Pie".

On March 6 The Beatles released their hit song, "Let It Be".

The movie "Airport" premiered in New York City. The film had an all-star cast and was based on the bestselling novel of the same name by Arthur Hailey.

On March 7 there was a total eclipse of the sun, said to be the "eclipse of the century". Days before the eclipse, newspapers and magazines printed instructions for making a "sun box" for safely viewing the event. This hi-tec device was basically a cardboard box with a pin hole in one end and a sheet of white paper at the other.

The Greenville Fire Department acquired a "Raysled". It was a small fiberglass boat with a square front designed for both ice and water rescues.

The Elks Lodge on Farnum Pike held a St. Patrick's Day dinner dance that was well attended.

Girl Scouts of the "Yankee Smithfield Neighborhood" celebrated National Girl Scout Week with their first father-daughter dance held at the Smithfield High School. 450 people attended, and it was hoped that the dance would become an annual event.

Mrs. Anthony Lancia was in charge of planning the event.

At the dance, there was a brief ceremony during which Mrs. Thomas Hall was presented an award for her 35 years of service to the Girl Scouts.

Jane Kaminski, Joanne Daigle, Charlene Winfield, and Deborah Vallee, served as the honor guard.

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Community Helper Luncheon

First Grade students at R.C. LaPerche Elementary School sponsored a luncheon for community helpers that live and work in the town of Smithfield. In attendance were doctors, dentists, firefighters, librarians, police, soldiers, therapists, teachers and more. The luncheon was a CELEBRATION to honor people who work and support our community. First graders have been studying community helpers as part of their social studies curriculum. Each student came dressed as their favorite community helper and shared informational stories with their guests that they researched and wrote. Students and guests then enjoyed a luncheon to say Thank You to our Community Helpers.



Photo credits: Albert Tavakalov



Althea Rainville celebrated her 100th birthday on January 16 with her son Peter Rainville of Alaska and her daughter Jeannine Fortin of Burrillville.





Paws the Polar Bear arrived at the Smithfield Sr. Center on February 12 to deliver roses to the ladies for Valentines Day.



Smithfield's All Lit Up Christmas Parade would like to **Thank** the following **individuals** for making the Fourth Annual Christmas Parade a **Big Success!**

Committee

Chief Robert Seltzer, SFD
Tom Winfield, Chair
Kate McAdam-Prickett,
Co-chair
Charlie Walsh
Captain Ken Brown, SPD
Ann Marie Donahue
Dorothy Swain
Karen Armstrong
Bob Caine

General

Rev. Wendy Kiefer-O'Brien,
Pastor and the Greenville
Baptist Church
Randy Rossi, Smithfield
Town Manager
Chief Robert Seltzer, his
Command Staff, and the
men and women of the
Smithfield Fire Department
Todd Manni, Smithfield EMA
and C.E.R.T team
Smithfield Department of
Public Works
Smithfield Police Department
The Smithfield Times
Chief Joseph DelPrete and the
Glocester Police Department

Marcel Austin and United
Rentals of Smithfield
St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Rev. Pamela L. Corcoran
Lonnie Thurber and Bob
Buonaccorsi, Grand Marshals
Noah Antunes, Junior Grand
Marshal
Maya Izzo, Illuminator
Representative Steve Ucci
The Valley Breeze Observer
Jeremiah and Adler Brother
Construction
Scott Bouchard
Michael Branch
Brandon England
Lou Reo, and the RI Antique
Apparatus Society
Jared Nunes, Nunes
Construction
The Smithfield Sentinels Boy's
Hockey Team
Smithfield High School Chorus

The Greenville Baptist Bell
and Choral groups
The Providence Canteen
Sarah Seltzer
Ann O'Day Lynch
Tom Ward, The Valley Breeze/
Observer
Tom Hunt, Coca Cola of RI
David Sleboda
David Tikoian
Gary Tikoian
Madeline Prickett
Blaise Manni
Nannette Corcoran
The Cavanaugh Company
Bruce Beaumier
Charlene Winfield Capuano
Rebecca Winfield
Mary Capuano
Jane Walker
David and Becky DelGallo
And All of our Parade
Participants



Smithfield High School's Guys and Dolls Coming Soon!

By: Marilyn Busch

Early this past Saturday morning I was utterly transported back to the 1950s at Smithfield High School as students rehearse some lively musical numbers in preparation for their upcoming production of *Guys and Dolls*. Considered by many to be a perfect musical comedy, *Guys and Dolls* was a sure-fire hit when it opened on Broadway in 1950 and was adapted into a successful film in 1955 starred Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando.

The beloved romantic comedy stars Senior Tim Edsall as con-man Nathan Detroit, ringleader of the Manhattan's notorious floating crap game. Showgirl Adelaide is played by Senior Haley Martins. Martins sings the hilarious "Adelaide's Lament," about her desire for Nathan to finally pop the question and settle down.

Senior Jon Twining plays Sky Masterson, a fast-talking gambler who takes a bet to woo a strait-laced missionary - all the way to Havana Cuba. Senior Serena Roy plays the object of his affection, Evangelist Sarah Brown, and her exuberant "Marry the Man Today" duet with Martins as Adelaide is a showstopper.

Under the musical direction of SHS choral director Katherine Young, the vocally gifted student performers of *Guys and Dolls* will take audiences from the bustle of 1950s Manhattan to the dance clubs of Havana.

Featuring the soaring harmonies of such classic songs as "Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat", "Luck Be a Lady," "I've Never Been in Love Before," "If I Were a Bell," and more, the show will surely have you leaving the theater humming one of Frank Loesser's memorable tunes. Be sure to get your tickets to what promises to be the local production of the year when SHS's *Guys and Dolls* shows us all what lengths a guy will go when he truly falls in love with a "doll."



Poster Art by Grace Barden

Smithfield High School presents
Guys and Dolls March 20 and 21 at 7:00pm and
March 22 at 2:00pm at Smithfield High School.
Advance tickets are \$12/\$10 seniors and now
on sale online at <http://our.show/shsguysanddolls>.
Admission at the door will be \$15.



L – R. Katherine Young, SHS Choral Director, Haley Martins and Serena Roy singing during rehearsal of *Guys and Dolls*.

Obituaries



Edward A. Colucci
February 1, 2020
www.andersonwinfield.net



Frances M. (Stepka) Bagley
February 8, 2020
www.robbsfuneralhome.com



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