

COMPLIMENTARY

JANUARY 2022

The Smithfield *Times*



smithfieldtimesri.net

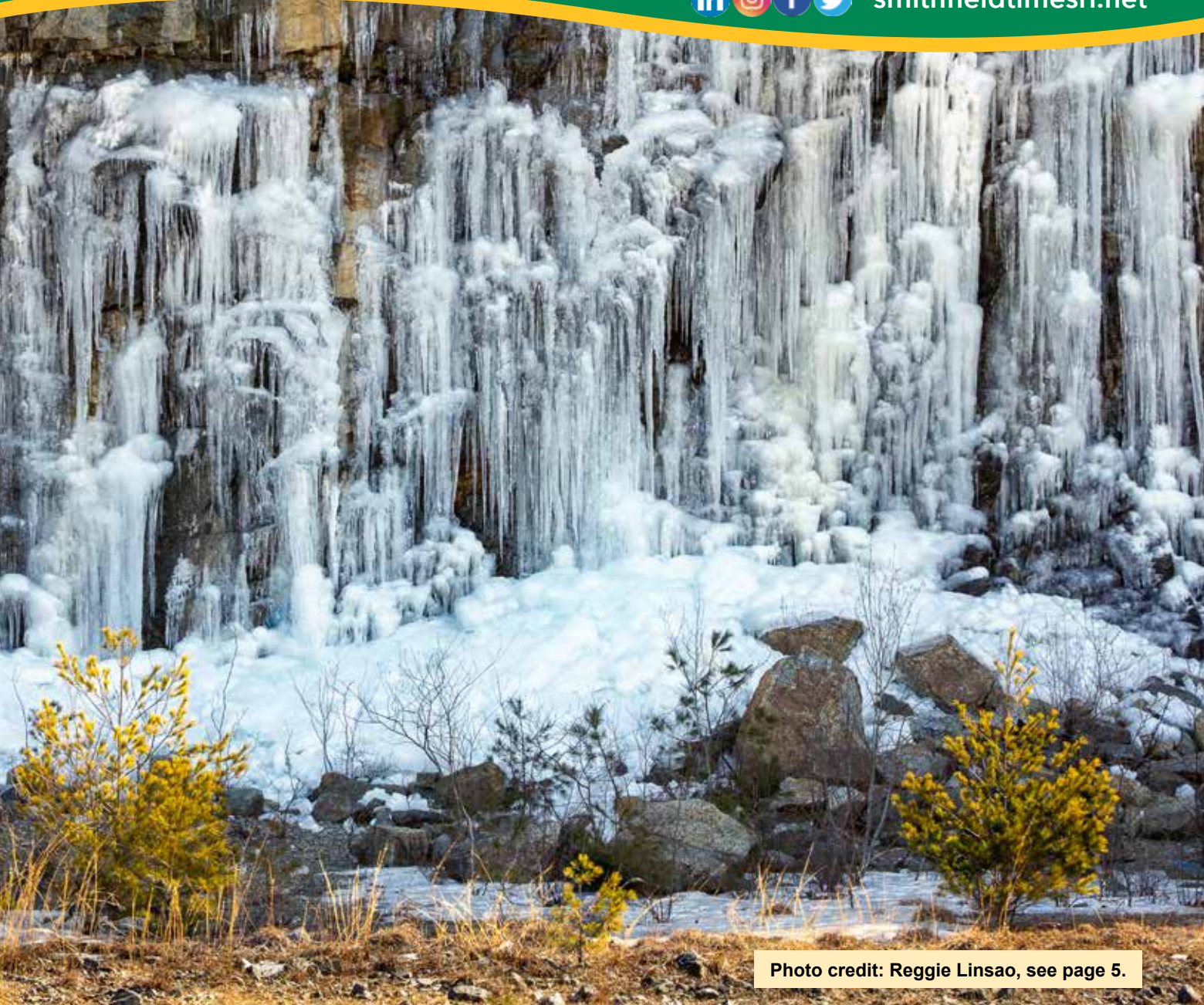


Photo credit: Reggie Linsao, see page 5.

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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

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In Our Community



All tired and worn flags can be dropped off at this new location at the Smithfield Town Hall on 64 Farnum Pike so they may be properly retired. Pictured here (L-R) are Michael J. Silvia, Commander of American Legion Post #64; Randy Rossi, Smithfield Town Manager and Antonio S. Fonseca, District #1 Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars, who all contributed to this cause.

ARMN Ben Gardiner, SHS '21, graduated from USAF Basic Military Training on November 24, 2021 in San Antonio, TX. He will serve in the AF Reserves at Westover AFB, Chicopee, MA as a Command and Control Operations specialist.



Smithfield Rotary President Dina Cassidy helps out for Salvation Army Support.

Substance Abuse Forum at Smithfield High

By Joe Siegel

The epidemic of opioid abuse in Rhode Island was discussed at a forum for parents of students who attend Smithfield Schools held on December 15 at Smithfield High School. The event was organized by the Town of Smithfield and the Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Council of RI.

"The system is badly broken," said John Tassoni, the Vice President of Operations, Community and Government Relations for the organization. Tassoni also hosts the program Recovery TV on Sundays at 9:30 am on MY RI TV.

"We've had a number of overdose deaths, and a number of suicides in Smithfield," Tassoni continued. "This is not going away. It's not going away anytime soon. The numbers are rising. When I (became involved in fighting substance abuse) five years ago, it was one in five families effected by an overdose. We're down to

one in two families. All the signs point to one in one (in 2023)."

David Neill, from the US Attorney's Office, said there 93,000 accidental overdose deaths statewide in

2020. "It's a brain addiction," Neill said. "It's a disease."

Fentanyl is coming into this country from China, Neill explained. As little as 2 milligrams of the drug can kill a person. Teenagers are buying and selling drugs on social media sites like Snapchat.

There was a screening of the short film "Circles and Silence," which featured individuals whose lives have been negatively impacted by substance abuse. 800 students at the high school have viewed the film. The speakers also discussed the lack of funding for drug treatment programs in the state.

"I couldn't get clean," said Shannon, a Peer Recovery Specialist at Anchor Recovery Center in Providence. "I didn't have the tools." Shannon started using drugs at the age of 15. She was later arrested and went to jail. Recovering from addiction was a challenge: "It takes time for the mind and body to adjust."

Deputy EMS Chief Jonathan Polak discussed Smithfield's Safe Stations program. The purpose of Smithfield Safe Stations is to provide immediate access to supportive services. Individuals living with substance use disorders may not be aware of the resources available to them or may not have the ability to access them. Smithfield Safe Stations breaks down barriers for individuals, allowing them access to critical supportive services provided by a peer in recovery when and

where they need them most. There were also tips provided on how to use Narcan and the signs to look for when someone you know may be suffering from a drug overdose.

Polak said anyone struggling with addiction is welcome to visit any one of Smithfield's three fire stations, speak with the trained staff on duty, and immediately get connected to treatment support and services. The service is free.

➡ **For more information, visit [preventoverdoseri.org](https://www.preventoverdoseri.org).**



Our cover photo this month features one of our 2021 Photo Contest submissions by Reggie Linsao, a Smithfield resident. It's called Winter Quarry and was taken at the old quarry on Wolf Hill. He says, "I'd heard about this place being popular with climbers, and this winter I found out why. I'm sure that the sheer walls are a good test in the spring/summer, but in the winter, they're covered with beautiful ice formations that make for fantastic photographs."

Smithfield Studio Celebrates 30-years of Self-Defense Instruction

By Paul Lonardo

Steve Smith and Rui Rodrigues opened Professional Martial Arts Training Center in 1991. After three years at their original location adjacent to the Smithfield skating rink they moved into a much larger studio at 711 Putnam Pike, where the business and their friendship continues to thrive.



Steve Smith and Rui Rodrigues in 1991 and 2021.

Steve Smith is a native of Smithfield and a standout athlete. In high school, he became the Sentinel's first ever All State hockey player (goaltender) before going on to play the sport at Providence College for the legendary NHL executive Lou Lamoriello, then the Friar head hockey coach. Steve is a bit of a local legend himself, being the lead vocalist for the long-standing rock band, *Steve Smith and the Naked*s, a group that has been entertaining music fans across the state and around the nation for almost fifty years.

Physical fitness has always been important to Steve, so when he began studying martial arts in 1971, it quickly grew into a passion. At the studio in Johnston where Steve was a student, he met Rui Rodrigues, who

bought the studio from the previous owner. Years later, when Steve began looking into opening his own studio in Smithfield, there was only one person he considered for a partner.

Rui Rodrigues arrived in Smithfield by way of Angola, Africa, and he and Steve hit it off from the start. Sharing a love not only for martial arts but for the community, of which Rui became an instant part, residing in Smithfield for more than twenty-five years, they formed Professional Martial Arts Training Center. Over three decades, they have maintained a great working relationship as well as a friendship.

There are different styles or disciplines of martial arts, which are named after their country in which they evolved.

punching and kicking, there's much more to it than that.

"It's mind, body, and spirit training," Rui says. "It's important for you to know who you are as an individual. The thing with martial arts training, it develops that sense of who you are. I've met people who've never trained a day in their lives, and I respect them like they're black belts because of who they are and how they carry themselves and their actions."

As students are starting to come back to the studio after a pause due to the pandemic, all ages are welcome. The dojo trains students as young as three, in their Tiger Tots program, right on

For example, Kempo is Japanese, Kenpo is Chinese, Kenpo is Japanese, Tae Kwan Do is Korean. At Professional Martial Arts Training Center students are instructed in Kempo Karate, which means "way of fists," a style which utilizes 50% hands and 50% feet.

For those who might think martial arts is just so much

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up to seniors. Besides Kempo Karate, there are classes in Thai boxing, MMA, American Open Sword, and Smithfield's Professional Martial Arts Training Center is the home of the original KBOX program, which Rui began in 1997. This cardi-kickboxing program combines martial arts with aerobics became wildly popular and is something he still teaches today.

A martial arts studio is often referred to as a "dojo," which is a Japanese term that means "Place of the way." A dojo is a kind of sanctuary, a place for immersive learning or meditation.

Group training is available, as the dojo has worked closely with the police department and the school system through the years, teaching self-defense programs to students. Developing and maintaining a strong community relationship has always been important

to both Rui and Steve. The dojo also offers self-defense training that is geared specifically for women.

Martial arts are a great way to stay in shape and to teach discipline and build confidence, especially in younger people. And in today's world, have knowledge of self-defense is always a good idea.

"Now more than ever, there's no better time for people to really take the time to be healthy," Rui says. "Really take the time for yourself. Take care of yourself."

Steve echoes that sentiment. "I've always said that martial arts are the greatest because it's something you can do for the rest of your life. I've been involved with martial arts for fifty years, and it continues to be a big part of my life."

For Steve, working as a musician and performing in bars and clubs for five decades, martial arts expertise is something that provides some much-needed peace of mind.

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Right now, in celebration of thirty years in business, Professional Martial Arts Training Center would like to thank the community for its support by running a six-week self-defense training program for Smithfield residents free of charge.

If this is something you find of interest, feel free to visit the dojo at 711 Putnam Pike or call (401) 256-4198. You can also find information on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pmatcri/>



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Ice – The Cold Harvest

By Jim Ignasher

It's hard to imagine with 21st century refrigerators equipped with ice makers, that there was a time when ice was considered a luxury, and that men once risked their lives to "harvest it" for market.

The idea of using ice to cool drinks and preserve food dates to ancient times, but because of its perishable nature, ice was practically unheard of in warmer climates until the early 1800s. That began to change when Frederic Tudor of Boston discovered a way to preserve ice aboard ships bound for southern locales, thus giving birth to the ice trade in America. By the 1840s ice was being shipped to various tropical ports worldwide. Packed with that ice were various perishable foods that otherwise couldn't have been shipped. The ice aboard many of those ships was collected from New England ponds and lakes, and by the later part of the century "ice harvesting" had become big business.

Ice harvesting existed on a small scale too. Some early New England farmers would collect it in the winter and store it in primitive stone-lined chambers built into the side of hills, but these were not commercial enterprises.

By the mid to late 1800s commercial ice houses began appearing along the shores of many larger bodies of water across the northeast. Here in Smithfield there was the Providence Ice Company with houses in Spragueville and Georgiaville, the Auburn Ice Company on Georgiaville Pond, the Winsor Ice House in Greenville, and a large ice house owned by Arthur Sibille at the end of Sibille Road in Esmond. It's possible there were others.

Commercial ice houses were usually large such as two on Georgiaville Pond

which measured 400 by 100 feet, and 120 by 60 feet.

Ice houses were constructed of thick wood timbers, with double walls more than twelve inches thick. The space between the walls was filled with straw and sawdust for insulation. The roof was also insulated, thereby making the house a giant cooler which allowed the ice to remain frozen throughout the summer months.

Ice harvesting was cold, sometimes wet, and always dangerous work. One documented accident took place on Georgiaville Pond in 1899 where a man broke his leg when a horse fell through the ice and drowned.

Early harvesting was done using a horse drawn ice cutter, the blade of which was set to a particular depth depending on the thickness of the ice which could be up to eighteen inches. Blocks of ice would be taken by sled to the ice house where they would be packed in sawdust purchased from local lumber mills and stacked to the rafters.

By the early 20th century more efficient mechanical ice cutters came into use thus increasing productivity. And one has to consider that ice from a pond might have contained certain "impurities" such as leaves or sticks.

Prior to the advent of electric refrigeration, the up-to-date modern kitchen had an "ice box" which often looked more like a piece of furniture than an appliance. Many were made of polished oak with fancy brass hardware and lined with zinc or porcelain. A large block of ice placed in a covered tray at the top kept the food below cold, or at least chilled. Today antique ice boxes are sought after by collectors.



Ice was delivered to homes by "the iceman" who traveled his route with an insulated wagon. Subscribers had numbered cards that they would place in a front window to signal they needed ice, and how much. In summer months children would flock to the wagon hoping for a few scraps with which to cool off.

The ice houses on Georgiaville Pond were conveniently located next to the rail line that once came through town. Unfortunately, this was also a detriment, for on May 5, 1892, sparks from a passing train were blamed for starting a fire which destroyed the structures belonging to the Auburn Ice Company. When it was over, the outer walls were gone, and only the stacked blocks of ice remained.

A similar fire took place on the night of April 20, 1915, when two ice houses belonging to the Providence Ice Company burned. A (Woonsocket) *Evening Call* newspaper article reported that *"The blaze illuminated the sky for miles, and the sparks and burning brands, carried by the wind, kept the people of Georgiaville and Esmond, in Smithfield, fighting incipient fires on the roofs of buildings."* It was also reported that *"A heavy timber growth on an island in Georgiaville Pond was set on fire and burned briskly all night."*

It was later determined that the fire had been deliberately set.

By 1930 electric refrigerators and mechanical ice making techniques gradually began to eliminate the need for ice harvesting, ice houses, and home ice deliveries, and thus the industry "melted away", so to speak.



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A Holiday Vendor Craft Fair was held at SHS on Saturday, December 11.



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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!



Cloudy and Foggy Glass Window Panes

One of the best benefits of modern windows is how energy-efficient they are. Among the many reasons they are so energy-efficient is because of the way the glass is set up in them.

The glass panes of these windows are typically made with some version of two panes of glass with gas in between (usually argon or krypton, though, just to err on the side of caution, I am not sure if Superman would have krypton in his window panes or not ...). These glass panes come in the form of what are called Insulated Glass Units (IGUs) which double the R-value (a measure of how well an insulated material resists the flow of heat, the higher the R-value, the better the insulating ability) of a glass window. In this specific case, energy-efficiency refers to keeping temperature-controlled air on the inside of your home (vs. having it leak out and heat up the neighborhood!).

If you happen to see a cloudy or foggy window, the culprit is a seal that has been compromised in the particular pane of glass you are looking at. The seal can become damaged for a number of reasons.

- Exposure to water, particularly after a flood or in a situation where the seal is subjected to frequently getting hit with water can lead to the seal weakening.
- Being subjected to heat over time

can also lead to the seal failing, especially with direct sunlight where the Sun's Ultraviolet (UV) rays tend to accelerate things.

- As windows age, the seal may also naturally wear out.
- Moisture from air escaping from the glass panels can lead to condensation and ultimately the cloudy or foggy look that is observed in these types of situations.

If you happen to notice a cloudy or foggy glass pane, contrary to some opinions out there, the entire window unit itself does not need to be replaced. The approach that we most often take toward correcting this type of issue is replacing the individual pane which is exhibiting the problem.

When done by a skilled technician, this

can be accomplished in a manner in which the replaced pane looks like it was original to the window itself (or at least to the point where unless one is laser focused on discovering it, will not be noticed).

The best way to not have a cloudy or foggy window issue is by doing what can be done to stay ahead of it from happening.

- Inspecting your window panes at least once per year for cloudy or foggiess can be quite beneficial in this regard.
- Making sure that your home is well ventilated is very important in general and can certainly help lessen the chance of premature wear on your windows.

See Ask an Expert, page 13

About Tom Lopatosky

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

- Alleviating any potential moisture challenges can be invaluable. This may mean utilizing a dehumidifier on the interior of your home in areas that seem to be overly humid and ensuring that your window areas are not exposed to any unnecessary excessive water on the exterior (a leaking gutter constantly spilling/dripping water on to a window, etc.).

Another option may be purchasing window film kits to add another layer of protection to your windows, although this can be done by the “average” homeowner, one must be super diligent while doing so, or else they can easily have a mess on their hands!

Cloudy or foggy glass panes can surely be annoying, especially if they appear in a spot of your home that tends to draw your eye every time you walk by it.

Aiming to prevent them from occurring in the first place can be extremely helpful in terms of avoiding this unsightliness, but if cloudy or fogginess in your window panes does happen, fortunately this is a situation that is fairly easy to address.

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It's Never Too Late

By Diane L. Marolla, LICSW



Happy New Year! The new year can be a fresh start. If there is something you want to change, I am here to say that it is never too late no matter how old you are.

As human beings, we are “creatures of habit”. We become comfortable doing the same thing over and over again. Most days, we are on “auto pilot”. We go through the day not even thinking about what we are doing or why.

When I work with my clients every day, I tell them it is never too late to make a change. I also say, that do overs can be fun. Typically, it is we that prevent us from making any changes. We use excuses like:

- I am too old.
- I've always done it this way.
- I don't have time.
- I don't have the money.
- It won't work.

As you read this article, are these the thoughts you have had in making changes in your life? If they are, I am here to challenge you on those thoughts.

First, we are never too old for anything. Yes, you can leave your job that you hate after thirty years, and someone else will hire you. You can leave an abusive relationship and start over. Yes, you do have the time, because it is up to you to make yourself a priority. Yes, you can become sober. No, you don't need a lot of money to get healthier physically, mentally or spiritually.

With all this said, here are some tips to begin making changes in your life.

1. Write down what you want to change.

For example, if you want to lose weight.

Write it down. Next, formulate a plan. What will you need to lose weight? Who will you need to lose weight? When it comes to weight and getting healthy, the only way is to eat healthier and exercise. I often hear the excuse that healthy food is expensive. Healthy food is NOT expensive. If you buy fresh produce, and if you don't buy processed food, eating healthy will not break your bank. If you always cook your own meals, and skip going to Dunkin Donuts every day, you will have the money to eat healthy. If you scan the grocery stores for sales each week and plan your meals accordingly, you can spend less money on food. How do I know this works? Simply said, this is what my mother did. As a child, I didn't know what it was like to go out to eat. We always ate at home. My lunch was made for me every day. My lunch consisted of a sandwich, an apple, chips, and milk. That was it. Dinner was always prepared foods, not processed and never fried.

2. Write down what is not working for you. Are you eating too much? Are you not exercising? Are you drinking too much? What relationships are not working for you? Why?

You must be honest with yourself in regards of what is not working for you. Yes, that means relationships and ALL relationships. If your boss at work is treating you badly, there are things you can do. Work with a therapist where you can talk about what aspects of your job are not working for you. If you're in a relationship that is not satisfying, yes, you can leave it. I'm not saying it will be easy. What I am saying is if you plan and put tools in your toolbox to get where you want to go, you can do it. Live to live peacefully and joyfully EVERY day. Don't work for someone who treats you badly. Leave a relationship where a partner does not treat you well. In the

words of George Washington “tis better to be alone then to be in bad company.”

3. Baby steps in making changes. Start small.

Surround yourself with people who support your change. Misery loves company. If the people in your life don't support you being healthy and happy, consider that those people are not good for you. If the people in your life drink in excess, then it is time to get those people out of your life. If sobriety is the change that you want, you need to surround yourself with people who don't drink, who don't want you to drink, and who will support your sobriety. Sober people really do exist.

If you want to get more physically fit, you don't have to join an expensive gym. All you need is a pair of sneakers, old clothes, and some weights. I have never been a fan of gyms. Gyms count on you signing up for a membership and then not going. I do recommend a personal trainer and home equipment instead. Are they expensive? No, they are completely affordable. A personal trainer will come to you at your home. I have worked out with the same personal trainer now for eight years. Derek and I have fun each week and he challenges me. Truth be told, Derek is often my therapist as he also listens to me. He knows that when I am struggling mentally, I will struggle physically. I have also purchased used equipment. In a previous article, I wrote about RI business Big Fitness owned and operated by Chris Soucie. Big Fitness is in Cranston RI. Chris has the same equipment that the big gyms have at a discount price.

If you are interested in a personal trainer, Derek Belisle's number is: 401-864-0862 Big Fitness website: <https://www.bigfitness.com/> or call 401-203-5659.

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Earlier in the school year one of Smithfield High School's assistant principals, Mr. Sullivan left to pursue other career opportunities. Dr. Jose Libano was hired to replace Mr. Sullivan and I recently had the opportunity to ask him some questions, so students, parents, and Smithfield residents alike can learn more about the newest member of the SHS leadership team.

Question 1: What are some goals you have coming to Smithfield High School?

As an assistant principal, my main responsibility is to support the principal and help foster a safe and respectful school environment. To do that, I think it's important that I build positive relationships with students and staff. That's been my priority since joining the community at Smithfield High School.

Question 2: How has it been adjusting to Smithfield High School?

It's been great! I really enjoy coming every day and am having fun seeing all that goes on here, in classes and through the different clubs, sports, and programs. I'm still learning names and faces, but I get a few more down each day and really appreciate the nice welcome that I've received so far.

Question 3: What is your previous educational experience?

I was a high school math teacher before becoming a school administrator and have served communities in Massachusetts and Rhode Island

as both an assistant principal and principal. My degrees are from Providence College and Boston College.

Question 4: What age levels have you worked with?

My K-12 experiences are all at the high school level, but for at least ten years now, I've also taught and worked with graduate students at Boston College pursuing degrees to become school administrators someday.

Question 5: Do you feel it is easy to connect and get to know the students here?

Absolutely! I've been super impressed by how nice and outgoing students are. It's been great getting to know those I've met so far, their interests, how their classes are going, and the things they do outside of school. Having these connections and relationships is important to me because I think it helps me make the school feel welcoming and like a second home.

Question 6: Do you think there are any positive effects to the pandemic?

That's an interesting question that I haven't fully digested yet. There's no doubt we're using technology more than we have in the past, which may or may not be a bad thing. I think we're also all a little more conscientious about washing our hands and making sure surfaces we touch are clean - that's good. And finally, the mask thing absolutely feels awkward, but I'm hopeful that this state requirement ends soon.

Question 7: What do you like to do in your free time?

In my free time I like to spend time with my wife, Yvonne, and our new dog. We have a 10-month old pug named Frankie. I also like to shop, travel, and eat out at different restaurants. I've also gotten into road cycling in the last few years, so I spend a lot of time on my bike and am getting the health benefits.

Question 8: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

The only thing I'd add is that I'm really happy to be at Smithfield High School. Students, families, and staff can trust that I'll always do my best. Go Sentinels!

It's clear that Dr. Libano has already made a difference at SHS — students can find him in the cafeteria every morning and lunch period, welcoming students as they start their days and getting to know them throughout the morning and lunch. He has worked to create a positive environment for the students and teachers through his connections with them.

Welcome Dr. Libano!



Happy New Year!

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The Nature of Things

The Beavers of Fort

by James Gass

There are several local wildlife refuges that I like to visit on a regular basis. One such place is the Florence S. and Richard K. Fort Nature Refuge in North Smithfield, owned by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. I've been visiting for over 20 years. I also used to be the refuge manager there.

Fort, as it's known by the locals, is a 235-acre property with gentle trails, mixed woodlands, wetlands, and three ponds that are the headwaters of the Woonasquatucket River. The land was originally acquired in 1910 by Richard and Florence Fort, who operated it as a cattle farm. As farming declined, their son William transformed the property into a private wildlife refuge, creating diverse wildlife habitat and a trail system. The children of the Forts eventually donated the land to ASRI, and it was opened to the public in 1997.

Though plenty of wild animals call Fort their home, the real attraction for me is the beavers. Generations of them have been there for decades, moving back and forth between the three ponds. Sometimes they'll build a lodge in one pond, use it for a few years, abandon it, and then build a new one in one of the other ponds. Sometimes it seems they're not using any of the lodges at all, perhaps occupying a bank den instead. But Second Pond usually has the most consistent activity.

I decided to go for a late afternoon walk at Fort the other week to check on the resident beavers. When I arrived at the parking lot I was surprised at how many cars were there. The entire lot was full, and some even had to park on the driveway leading in. The pandemic had an upside – people who were in



Photo by Bob Durant

quarantine with nothing to do but go hiking discovered places like Fort. I hope they care about it as much as I do.

Leaving my car, I passed a pickup truck with its tailgate open, which can only mean one thing. As I stepped onto the trailhead and walked past the "No Dogs" sign, a woman with a large dog on a leash walked sheepishly past me. Wildlife refuges are not public parks where you can bring pets, they are places set aside specifically to protect wildlife. Domestic dogs scare wild animals away, or in some cases, kill them. People usually take their dogs off the leash once they are on the trail. I wish they wouldn't.

I took the pond overlook trail down to First Pond. The land surrounding the pond was completely flooded. Yup, the beavers are here, I thought. I bushwhacked to the spillway that empties the pond from its southern end, and it was solidly dammed up with 2-3 feet of timbers and mud. Walking back up the trail, I spotted a small lodge on the far shore. I couldn't determine if it was occupied, although there were fresh cuttings of aspens and birches everywhere. Beavers eat the inner bark

(cambium) of these and other trees.

Taking the yellow trail across the power lines, I arrived at Second Pond. The land around this pond was also flooded. Walking down the trail about 30 feet past an observation bench, I came to an enormous lodge on the pond's eastern shore, about 5 feet high and 20-30 feet across, built with timbers, leaves and mud. It was one of the largest lodges I had ever seen, and clearly occupied. Beaver lodges are mini-fortresses, with walls 2-3 feet thick and a narrow chamber inside with a platform lined with dry grasses or shavings for warmth. Beavers live in family units of up to 12, and it looked like this lodge could easily accommodate that many.

I decided to take the red trail up to Third Pond to see if any beavers were there too. If so, this would be the first time to my knowledge that all three ponds were being utilized at once. Were the animals at Second Pond simply using it as their home base and flooding the other ponds to access food? Hard to say, but I soon had my answer. The road was flooded and I could barely get to the pond's outlet to see if it was dammed. It was.

It was getting to be dusk, so I decided to head back to Second Pond to see if any beavers were out and about (beavers are nocturnal but become active at dusk). As soon as I got near the bench I heard a loud "WHACK" and then a splash. A beaver was expressing its displeasure at my presence by slapping its tail on the water. Seconds later it reappeared, swimming around lazily. I watched it for a while, and then left it in peace. It was good to see beavers still thriving in this special place.

The Smithfield High School National Honor Society hosted the first ever Sentinel Holiday Story Night on Friday 12/10/21 from 6:30 to 8pm at the Greenville Common across from Smithfield Fire Station 1.

Holiday storytelling by town personalities, Dinolicious Food Truck, Touch a Trucks, free sweets and hot chocolate was provided by Jaswell's Farm and Providence Fire Canteen, carolers & dancers and cool holiday photo opportunities were also available. Comfort dogs Gracie and Buddy also joined the night's festivities! Also featured were demos and displays by the American Heart Association of RI and ResusciTech's Smart Certification™.



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Cousins of late Emily Halloran-Otrando honor her spirit by collecting books for the community

Reading was a passion for the late Emily Halloran-Otrando. Growing up, she adored stories about fairies, the American Girl franchise, and most of all, Harry Potter. She dreamed of being just like character Luna Lovegood, who had beautiful long hair that Emily admired. Mournfully Emily passed away suddenly in September 2014 after contracting Enterovirus D68, which eventually led to sepsis. Emily was only 10-years old at the time, the same age as her beloved cousins, Katie Villandry of Smithfield and Patrick McPartlin of South Kingstown.

Today, Katie and Patrick are seniors at Smithfield High School and South Kingstown High School, respectively. They continue to keep their cousin's legacy at the forefront of their lives. Just as Emily loved reading with all her heart, Katie and Patrick chose to use books to continue honoring Emily's spirit and give back to the community.

Since November 7, 2021 (which coincides with Emily's birthday), Katie and Patrick have been collecting books at various businesses around Rhode Island. Their goal is to collect over 5,000 books in their cousin's honor by January 31, 2022.

Once the collection is over, each book will have a sticker in it with Emily's name and will be donated to Books Are Wings. Books Are Wings is an organization that prides itself in giving children access to free books, with the hopes of bringing the passion of reading to children across Rhode Island.

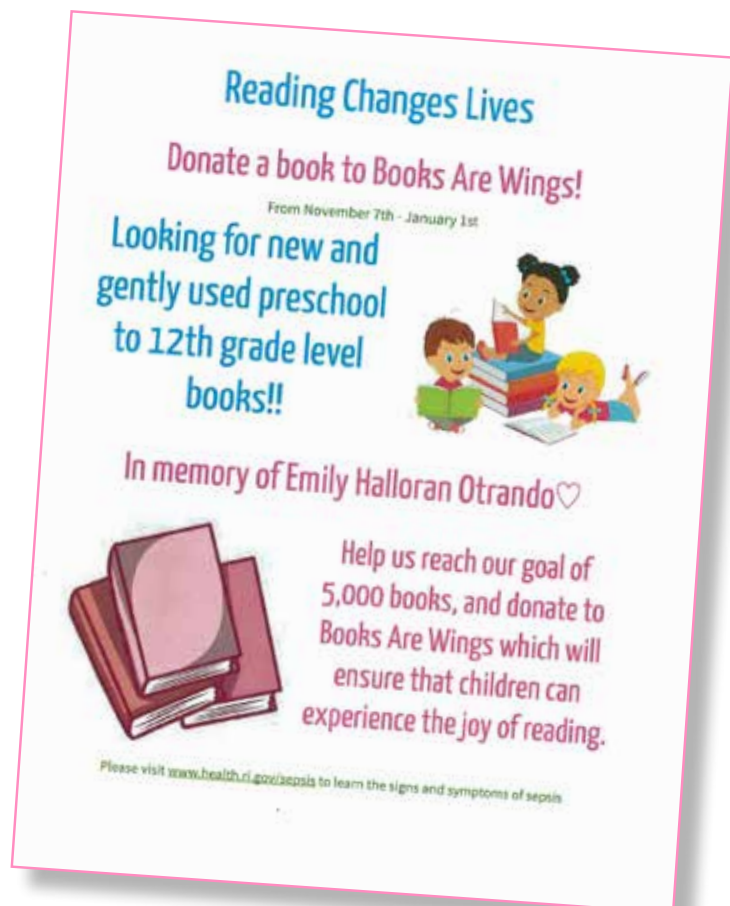
Donation boxes are located at the following businesses and schools across the state:



Katie Villandry and Patrick McPartlin

- All Smithfield public schools (Smithfield High School, Gallagher Middle School, Pleasant View Elementary, Old County School, and LaPerche Elementary)
- Cumberland High School
- Cumberland Community Elementary School (Emily's former school)
- South Kingstown High School
- Tony's Pizza Palace in Smithfield
- Marie K. Jennison School of Dance in Smithfield
- Under the Willow Bakery in Cumberland
- 401 Motoring in Portsmouth
- Papa's Physical and Hand Therapy in North Providence

New and gently used books for children between the ages kindergarten and grade 12 are greatly appreciated!





Inside The Brown Bag

By Peg Brown

I am sure that if you hear one more version of “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas,” you’ll immediately turn down your car radio dial. However, from my view of the palm trees outside my door in Southwest Florida, it’s a tune I stream well into March. The holidays always invoke a bit of nostalgia, and as I age, the memories of those bitterly cold winters on the edge of the St. Lawrence River somehow seem a bit magical. Not unlike the following quotation from The Sugar Queen: “Snow flurries began to fall and they swirled around people’s legs like house cats. It was magical, the snow globe world.”

Well, maybe in hindsight!

Winters of the North Country weren’t really endless – they just seemed that way. Winter was always a challenge – and fickle. There could be 10-foot snow drifts, often reaching the roof of your front porch, or you could be helping Dad rake leaves in late December. Stories of early years reported ice on the St. Lawrence so thick you could drive your car across to Canada and, according to legend there were one or two vehicles that tried that feat, only to become beasts of the deep. Snow removal was less sophisticated in those days – snow blowers were yet to be essential winter equipment and young entrepreneurs roamed the streets, shovels slung over their shoulders, offering to clear your sidewalk for just \$1.00. (I do think those days are over!)

Hats and mittens were mostly homemade. As children we always had a piece of yarn threaded through the sleeves of our jackets connecting both mittens so we wouldn’t lose one. It was also very convenient to have your mitten dangling just in reach, ready to be pulled back on

with your teeth after you picked up the elusive rope to your sled.

And sled, we did. Using the traditional PF Flexible Flyers with their distinctive red runners that you could hand steer (now for sale on EBay as vintage), and nearly immobilized by snow pants, jackets, scarves, hats and heavy boots, we searched out the best hills for sledding – almost always in the immediate neighborhood. When a hill was not available, I am ashamed to say we used the street.

One of the favorite pastimes of the boys in our neighborhood was to “hitch a ride.” This involved running after a passing car, grabbing the bumper, and using your boots as skis, spraying slush in all directions, as you were pulled down the street until the driver either stopped or – more likely – hit the accelerator.

A safer (almost always) winter pastime was ice skating. While there were many places in town that provided a skating surface, the most popular skating rink was outdoors at the local high school. For those who didn’t receive skates under the tree for Christmas, there were many used pairs available for rental. Someone also provided a skate-sharpening service (25 cents), to put the edge back on your blade periodically. There were always more than one of two romances sparked at the rink; learning to skate backward was a real accomplishment; being at the end of the occasional impromptu whip was a thrill; and hockey play was relegated to one corner.

Recent conversations about climate change have prompted me to wonder if “an old-fashioned winter” is truly a relic of the past. Full disclosure –climate change is a discussion I leave to the



experts. I did, in the vernacular, do a little data mining in pursuit of an answer to my question however.

In the decade between 1901 and 1910, an average of 41.0 inches of snow fell in Boston. In the decade between 2011 and 2019, the average was 58.0 inches. The average snowfall in Providence for 2020/2021 was 29 inches – BUT the average for Ogdensburg, the town of my childhood for that same year, was 57 inches. My assumption: “and old-fashioned winter IS still possible – you just have to find the right hill.

And if I’m being total honest, a walk on the beach might just lead me to abandon any misty recollection I have of a snow globe winter and replace it with Carl Reiner’s view: “A lot of people like snow. I find it to be an unnecessary freezing of water!”

Authors Note:

A recent analysis of snowfall averages across the USA during the 20th-21st century by Christopher C. Burt (Jan. 3, 2020) summed up the difficulty in drawing any meaningful conclusions from such a study. “The bottom line is that comparing old snowfall measurements with new ones is comparing apples to oranges and, unfortunately, makes looking for historical trends (especially when talking about climate change), a hapless enterprise.” So much for my assumption!

The Festive Return of Smithfield's All-Lit-Up Christmas Parade

By Paul Lonardo

After going virtual last year, the sixth annual All Lit-Up Christmas Parade returned last month, and despite so much uncertainty during the practically year-long planning, the event turned out to be a great success. The numbers of participants and the observers may have been slightly lower than years past, but spirits were high. For many, the event was even more anticipated after having to watch last year's parade on an electronic device from home. Plenty of folks came out to celebrate on Saturday, December 4th and the weather more than cooperated, with dry conditions and no wind. The mercury held sufficiently above freezing to make in-person participation pleasurable. The temperature was crisp enough to make the hot chocolate taste just right.

The parade got underway at dusk, just at 4 p.m., starting from its usual location at Smithfield High School on route to the Village Green, across from the Greenville Fire Department on Putnam Pike, where the lighting of this year's Christmas tree took place. The celebration featured live musical entertainment, refreshments, and snacks, including treats courteously supplied by Dunkin Donuts. And of course, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus made a special visit, traveling all the way from the North Pole, much to the joy of all the little ones on hand.

Among the forty-four participants who had floats and vehicles in this season's parade, there were many familiar faces, and some new friends, as well. The Star Wars characters that marched along the route were particularly entertaining to the children of all ages. There

were also ten antique fire trucks on display this year, the most that had ever been in the All Lit-Up Christmas Parade.

Parade Committee co-chair representatives Tom Winfield and Kate McAdam-Prickett, along with Town Manager, Randy Rossi, with the help of the Smithfield Police and the Smithfield Department of Public Works, made sure every possible safety measure was taken into account, blocking off streets and securing the parade route.

So many people and organizations, from the members of parade committee to the innumerable volunteers and business sponsors, all contributed their time and considerable effort to make this holiday tradition an enjoyable and safe event. It was, as it has always been, truly a community effort.

A drone flew over the night's festivities, and the images that it captured are now available for viewing on Smithfield's All Lit-Up Christmas Parade Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Smithfields-All-Lit-Up-Christmas-parade-411115442556920/>. Plans are already underway to make 2022 parade bigger and better than ever, and if you want to be part of the fun, be sure to register early.



Applications are also available on the Facebook page.



A BIG Thank You!

Smithfield's All Lit Up Christmas Parade would like to thank the following groups and individuals who helped to make the 5th Annual Parade a huge success:

Committee

- **Tom Winfield**, Chair
- **Kate McAdam-Prickett**, Co-Chair
- **Chief Robert Seltzer**, SFD
- **Charlie Walsh**, Deputy Director Smithfield Public Works
- **Captain Ken Brown**, SPD (retired)
- **Ann Marie Donahue**, Editor, *The Smithfield Times Magazine*
- **Dorothy Swain**, Director Greenville Public Library
- **Karen Armstrong**, Director Senior Center
- **Bob Caine**, Director Parks and Recreation
- **Bruce Beaumier**

General

- **Rev. Wendy Kiefer-O'Brien**, Pastor, and the **Greenville Baptist Church**
- **Rev. Dante Tavoraro**, Pastor, and the **St. Thomas Episcopal Church**
- **Randy Rossi**, Smithfield Town Manager
- **The Smithfield Town Council**
- **Chief Robert Seltzer**, his **Command Staff**, and the **men and women of the Smithfield Fire Department** and their **Honor Guard team**
- **Todd Manni**, Smithfield EMA and C.E.R.T team
- **The men and women of Smithfield Department of Public Works**
- **Chief Richard St. Sauveur** and **Captain Michael Smith** and the **Smithfield Police Department**
- **Tom Lopatosky** and *The Smithfield Times Magazine*
- **Chief Joseph DelPrete** and the **Glocester Police Department**
- **United Rentals of Smithfield**
- **Sergeant Courville** and **The Providence Police Mounted Command**
- **The Providence Canteen**

- **Our Grand Marshals:** **Todd Manni**, Director Smithfield EMA and the **volunteers of our Covid Vaccination Sites**
- **Haley DeBerardis**, Honorary Grand Marshal
- **Steve Ucci** and his **Cadillac Eldorado**
- **The Valley Breeze Observer**
- **Adler Brother Construction**
- **Boyle and Fogarty Construction**
- **Deidre Donovan**
- **Dave and Gia Celani**
- **Michael Branch** of **Variety Collision**
- **The Smithfield Sentinels Boy's Hockey Team**
- **Smithfield High School Chorus and Band**
- **The Greenville Baptist Bell and Choral groups**
- **Dunkin** who gave us gift cards for all parade participants
- **Ann O'Day**
- Councilman **David P. Tikoian**
- **Paul Harrison**
- **Gary Tikoian**
- **Madeline and Elizabeth Prickett**
- **Ella and Avery Covino**
- **Kendall Tessier**
- **Blaise Manni**
- **Nannette Corcoran**, Mrs. Claus
- **The Cavanaugh Company**
- **Charlene Winfield Capuano**
- **Rebecca Winfield**
- **Mary Capuano**
- **Michael "Mike" Corcoran**
- **David (Scoop) and Becky DelGallo**
- **Jerry Haggerty**
- **Scott Bouchard**, Drone Pilot

All of our Parade Participants and our Wonderful Community who came to celebrate with us!



Smithfield's All Lit Up Christmas Parade



Photos by: Sandra Achille





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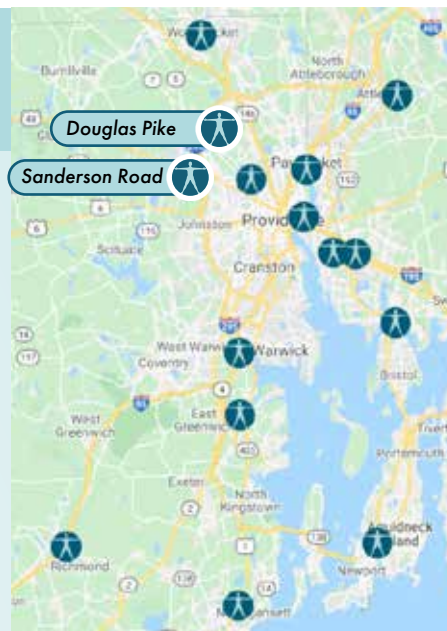
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A View From the Cheap Seats

Dan Pieroni

You're Either with Them or Against Them: Sports Rivalries and How They Impact Us

A friend in my Design and Implementation of a Counseling Program class at Providence College recently asked me who I was going to root for in the upcoming PC/URI interstate rivalry basketball game. After briefly thinking it over for a moment I admitted I was conflicted.

URI has previously conferred upon me a Master of Arts degree in Communication Studies, and I am scheduled (knock on wood) to receive a Master of Arts in School Counseling from Providence College this coming May. Thus, I am an alumnus of one school, and a current graduate student at the other.

I could have copped out by saying that I didn't care who win as long as both both teams played hard, but I believe the fun of being a sports fan is to experience as the old adage about the thrill of victory, and the agony of defeat. Where would the agony be? Where would be the lamenting over lost opportunities, and where would be the anticipation to beat them again/seek revenge next year?

Many contemporary counseling scholars stress the importance of living in the now. Put another way, the past is the past, it cannot be changed, and there's no use dwelling on it, as tempting as it may be. When applied to a sports context, the team I was choosing to root for may seem obvious on the surface, but in reality is anything but.

Yes, I worked hard for my degree at URI, I went to games to support and root on their athletic teams and was decked out in their garb from head to

toe during my time there. However, I do the same things now at PC that I did while at URI. Herein lies the conundrum of the rivalry.

I think there are two kinds of sports rivalries.

There is the rivalry seeped in hatred for another city or fanbase's values. For example, Celtics fans view Laker fans as glitzy showbiz wannabees who love the fast break as much as they love to be seen at courtside.

Laker fans view Celtics fans as rigid old traditionalists who love the pick and roll almost as much as they love addressing each other as "Murph" or "Sully".

In other words, this age-old, sometimes bitter rivalry is built on a foundation of a culture clash and difference of opinion. It is much like the Red Sox/Yankee rivalry, or the Michigan/Ohio State rivalry. You don't like them, and they don't like you for the same reasons. Victory tastes sweet when you win, and bitter when you lose.

Depending on where you stand, there is never enough time to savor the victory, or you can't wait until the next time you play them to avenge the loss. Perhaps the sports rivalries based on culture clashes can be best summarized with this declaration: You will never see me in Yankee Stadium belting out "New York New York" while chanting the names of the Yankee starting lineup in solidarity with the bleacher creatures of Yankee Stadium.

Then there's the rivalry based on geographic location, where you

have rooted for both teams due to circumstances. The PC/URI conundrum is exemplified here. Returning to my earlier point regarding living in the now. I suppose I should have said I was rooting for PC since I am currently a student there and am somewhat ingrained within the school culture even though I am a graduate student and do not live on campus.

When I think about it, URI did give me a good education and I enjoyed my time there very much. I know I would root for URI under any other circumstance. In essence, I do not want URI to necessarily lose because they were still an important part of my life I fondly remember, but PC is in the here and now, and PC is where my heart lies.

That now begs the question of who I will root for once I am a graduate of both schools.

When I thought about this, I was reminded of a conversation I had with a Scituate High School football player when I worked as a substitute teacher there a few years ago.

They were about to play our beloved Sentinels in the playoffs, which sadly for most of you reading, they won. As with the PC/URI game, I was conflicted in who to root for, my alma mater, or my then employer, where I had earned the respect of many football players and could not bear to disappoint them. I told that football player that I was going to go to the game with a homemade sign that said "go Spartinals" on it."

To answer the previous question, Go Friarrams too!

The Mysterious Worcester Catacombs

By Thomas D'Agostino – www.tomdagostino.com

In 1930 several articles were published in the *Worcester Telegram* after a man accidentally discovered an underground passageway leading to about 30 rooms roughly 40 feet below the city of Worcester. The tunnels and rooms were made of brick with columns supporting them. It was later found that at least three entrances were known in the basement of various businesses. Then they were forgotten until a man named Charles Longeway Sr., while researching a project discovered the old articles. This began a lifelong journey into the origin of the underground catacombs.

Mr. Longeway later worked as a draftsman for the city of Worcester and as a civil engineer for the state of Massachusetts. His research led to several theories and stories in regard to the labyrinth of rooms. He later published a book, *Worcester's Forgotten Catacomb*, on his research and discoveries.

Some theories suggest they were built for the Underground Railroad; another was for gambling and drinking. One proposal was they were used as an old jail. One more possibility was that they were cellars to buildings that were raised when portions of the city was graded leaving the rooms deep below the city. One theory I proposed was that they may have been originally built to hide liquor during the period after the American Revolution when Worcester was heavily taxing alcohol. Each known doorway was once an entrance from a tavern. Whatever the reason, the actual truth has eluded everyone.

Arlene and I received a call from

Mr. Longeway who in his attempts to flush out the truth behind the rooms, decided to try a more esoteric approach.

On a Sunday morning, armed with paranormal investigative equipment, we entered a section of the catacombs through the cellar of a building. Most of the entrances had been walled up for one reason or another. In the tunnel we performed an investigation, recording and asking questions based on what little we knew about the catacombs. Other questions were brought about by the use of tarot cards, a very effective and successful method we have adopted over the years.

Who built them? Why were they built? What year is it? The cards gave other great cues for questions such as who financed them and how long were they in use?

It is told of a fight that took place in the center room, a 130 by 18 foot apartment in 1850 with English fighting star Gem Mace and another opponent whose name has been lost to antiquity. We asked who won and other questions pertaining to facts we had gathered.

The walls are English brick two thick. The limestone mortar is very old and dry but the structural architecture was designed to withstand the centuries. The windows and doors are arched at the top with the same style brick. One window was sealed with a more modern brick.

Later, I read several histories of Worcester and Worcester County but

found no mention on the underground rooms and tunnels whatsoever.

The EVPs we recorded did give us something. (EVP is short for Electronic Voice Phenomena. This is, in short a method of recording the voices of spirits.) When I reviewed the recordings, several strange answers were captured on the recorder. One question was as to why the system was built. A gruff voiced whisper was heard saying "Fun. Smoke."

Arlene asked what year it was and a soft voice slowly answered, "1925." Other EVPs recorded were, "so cold," "Thank You" and one that we could not understand when Arlene asked who built the rooms.

Another thing I noticed was a long rectangular dirt section in a parking lot above where the catacombs lie. The parking lot attendant divulged that it was some sort of staircase leading to tunnels that had been sealed, but the pavement over it never quite stayed intact.

There are stories the old timers told of the catacombs and the people who used them to travel from one building to another, but the purpose of their construction and age still remains a mystery. All we have to go by at this point is what research uncovered and the recordings of the voices from beyond.

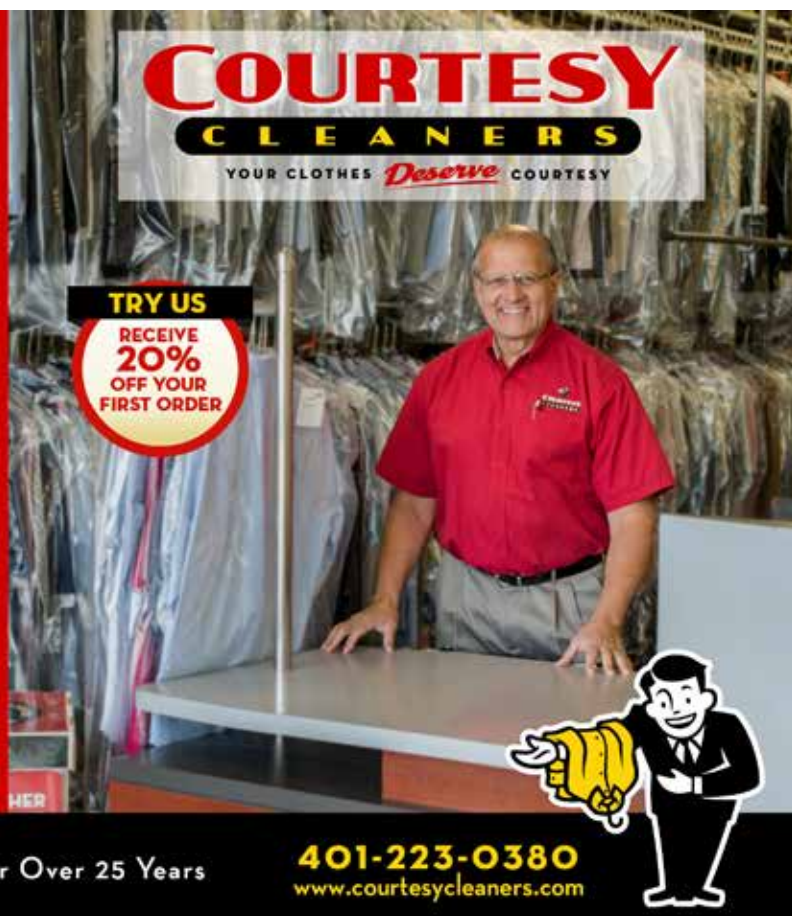
If anyone has any information or stories in regard to these catacombs, feel free to contact me at my website above. Thank you and many happy haunts.

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50-years Ago – January 1972

by Jim Ignasher

22-year-old Army Sergeant N. Bruce Hanson of Esmond was recuperating from serious wounds he received from a land mine explosion while serving in Vietnam. He'd been in the army for five years, and was due to come home on February 4th when the incident happened.

Army Major Frederic Parker of Greenville was serving in the Army Corps of Engineers, and had just completed a tour of duty in Vietnam.

The Smithfield School Committee approved the purchase of fifty band uniforms for the high school band, at a cost of \$123.00 each.

The Smithfield High School presented a fashion show. The first half featured clothing outfits made by girls in their home economics class, and the second half was a presentation of winter fashions from the Outlet Department Store.

On January 8, Miss Cindy Johnson of Greenville, a sophomore at Smithfield High School, won the "Make it yourself with Wool" Junior Regional Contest held in Albany, New York. She'd entered wearing a wool tweed paint-suit that she'd made herself. She would go on to compete in the national competition to be held in Phoenix, Arizona.

An additional three-and-a-half miles of Route 295, from Rt. 146 to Douglas Pike, was opened for travel by the state. The 5.7 mile stretch from Douglas Pike to Hartford Avenue in Johnston was scheduled to open in the summer of 1973.

A brand new Chevrolet Nova was offered for sale by the Scuncio Chevrolet dealership

that once stood where the Stop & Shop is today. The price, \$2,318.

The Smithfield DPW, which by the way was established in 1928,

auctioned off the first piece of equipment ever purchased by the department, a 1928 Caterpillar tractor with an attached double-wing snow plow. The vehicle had been named

"Nelly Belle",

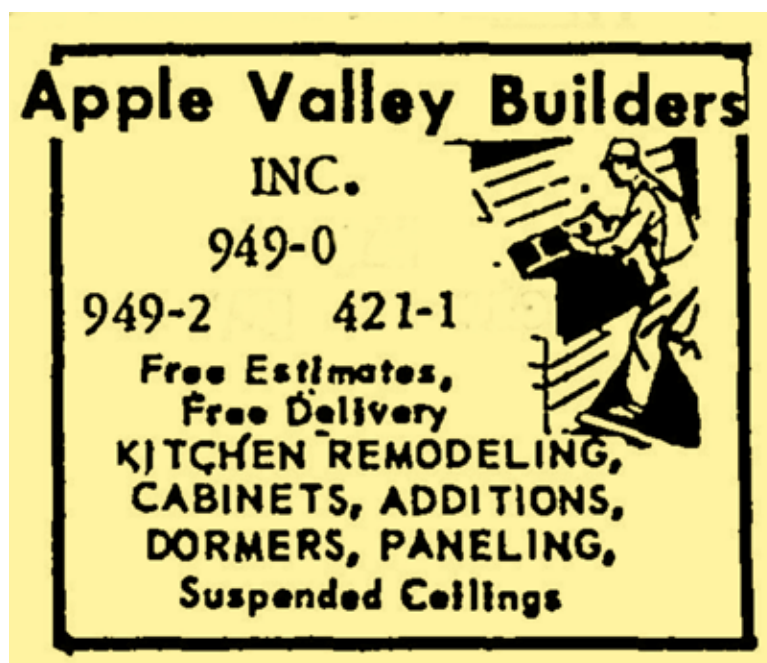
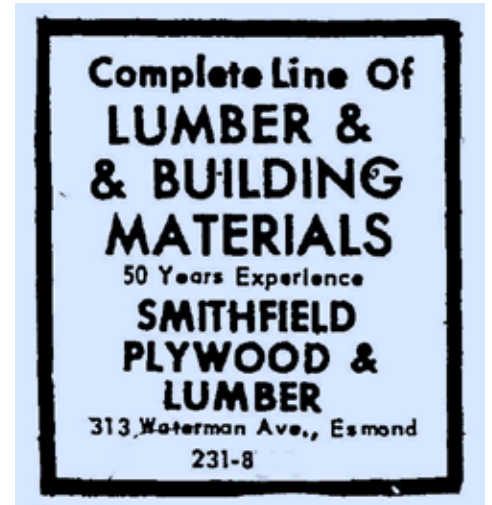
and besides serving as a snow plow, it was also used in road grading.

A story relating to the tractor tells how one winter it was used to open Whipple Avenue, which was covered in deep snow, so that an expectant mother could get to the hospital.

The machine was considered to have historic value, and there was a discussion about giving it to the historical society, but this was prior to the society obtaining the Smith-Appleby property and with no place to store it, the tractor went to a private party.

If one went to the Apple Valley Cinema they might have seen *Straw Dogs*, a thriller starring Dustin

See 50 Years Ago, page 31



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Hoffman and Susan George, or *Friends*, a foreign teenage romance film, or *Shaft*, a New York City Police drama starring Richard Roundtree.

The NASA space probe Mariner 9, began mapping the surface of the planet Mars for the first time. Meanwhile, President Richard Nixon announced that the United States would begin development of a Space Shuttle program.

In other scientific news, Hewlett-Packard introduced the first scientific electronic hand-held calculator, the HP-35. This was the first calculator of its kind that could go beyond simple addition, subtraction, and multiplication and was capable of doing logarithms, trigonometry, and other exponential math. Prior to this, mathematicians used "slide rulers". Remember them? The cost was \$395.00, which according to Internet conversion tables, translates to about \$2,500 today.

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SOUR GRAPES by Tim Jones

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I KNOW! CALL MY PHONE! YOU GOTTA CALL MY PHONE!

I CAN'T.

WHY NOT?

I LOST YOUR NUMBER.

Tim Jones – Cartoonist



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Snowman Holiday Cheese Ball Recipe

Prep Time

15 mins

Chilling

4 hrs

Ingredients

- 2 8 oz blocks of cream cheese at room temperature
- 3 1/2 cups sharp cheddar cheese at room temperature
- 1 oz package ranch seasoning mix
- 1 1/2 cups finely shredded jack cheese

Instructions:

- Mix cheeses with ranch seasoning mix
- Chill for 1 hour
- Divide mixture onto plastic wrap and form balls, using 1/3 of the mix for the snowman head.
- Refrigerate for 4 hours
- Once cheese ball is firm, press finely shredded jack cheese onto cheese ball.
- Place snowman head on body. Use tip of a baby carrot for the nose and black peppercorns for the eyes, mouth and buttons.
- Serve with veggies and crackers.



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Tips To Help You Make Your Smart Home ... Smarter

By Scott McKinley

Nearly everything in your home can now be linked through Wi-Fi, allowing you to control functions like temperature, music, and security systems all through an app. While this type of freedom and flexibility can make your home more convenient and efficient, it's easy to feel overwhelmed with the number of smart devices on the market. A few simple things to keep in mind can go a long way toward helping you set up the right smart home experience so you can enjoy all the smart devices you've purchased over the years.

Connecting devices and making sure they're working properly can be a frustration for some people. Just being connected is important to millions, for a variety of reasons. A recent survey¹ showed that half (49%) of U.S. consumers had an increased need to be connected as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. What's more, 40% have connected a new device in their home since the crisis began.

Demand is coming from renters and homeowners alike. An average of 44% of renters¹ say they would have a greater interest in a future rental if smart home products were provided as amenities. This is true across a wide range of connected products. Connected door locks, security and HVAC systems are the most popular items, with more than half of renters voicing a preference for these features.

There are several other home gadgets and devices that people are looking to connect and making sure they're connected properly is important to keeping your home as smart as possible.

Smart Televisions

Smart televisions are an easy place to start in regards to smart devices, and the set-up often takes just a few minutes. Most televisions come ready to connect to your Wi-Fi, and you can simply download streaming services apps directly to your set. With this connectivity you should avoid the need to buy additional and expensive accessories for streaming content, as most operating systems are now built directly into the TV itself. Simply connect to your Wi-Fi with a reliable, secure password and download some apps to get started.



Installation can be as easy as watching a video tutorial, app or even a YouTube video from the manufacturer. But before making any purchase be sure the one you're interested in is fully compatible with your home's wiring, furnace, and air conditioning units.

Boosting Internet Connections

Finally, smart home or connected devices really have no use unless they have a strong internet connection. However, what can you do if you have slow or poor internet strength and speed, or if you have a large house and your internet signal doesn't fully reach all areas of the house?



The first step is to make sure your router is located in a centralized place within your home. Since Wi-Fi signals don't travel well through dense objects like concrete, metal and wood, the more walls your signal has to move through, the more strength it loses. Just a simple move of the router to another location can solve many signal strength and coverage issues.

If you are not able to centralize your router, then there are some additional options that can help. If your router fails to provide every corner of your home with adequate Wi-Fi coverage, mesh network systems and Wi-Fi 6 routers are potentially great ways to strengthen your Wi-Fi signal and fix dead spots in your home. But which one is best for you?

Mesh systems are really designed to solve poor signal coverage that can reduce your internet strength. Before making an investment in a mesh Wi-Fi system, it's

Smart Thermostats

Smart thermostats are also quite popular today, and they are a good investment for a new home. These devices enable you to adjust your home's temperature remotely, and this allows you to warm up or cool down your house even before you walk in the door.



This works because the smart thermostat is connected remotely via your smartphone, and in addition to setting the temperature remotely you can also check and adjust energy consumption in real-time, no matter where you are. This helps to save money over time since you'll be able to turn off air conditioners you mistakenly left on or turn down the heat if you're not home. Newer model devices allow you to learn your schedule habits and adjust the temperature without your direct input. Some can even detect when you are coming home and automatically set your temperature to your preference when you are within a specified range.

See Tips, page 27

See Tips, from page 26

wise to first check to see if you have any signal strength issues in the places where you need to use Wi-Fi. There are some great Wi-Fi speed test systems, or apps like the Ookla Speed Test, that you can use to check your signal strength at various places within your home. You might be surprised how much signal loss you have as you move further away from your router. Based on the speed test results you can make the right decision for your situation.

Sometimes, your signal strength issues can be caused by using routers that are just out of date and not ready to handle the demands of today's streaming, gaming and smart product use. Another great solution is a Wi-Fi 6 router that is offered by many manufacturers today. Wi-Fi 6 systems can extend the range in the home, transmit data faster, and through their multiple processors they can process signals from different sources simultaneously.

About The Author: Scott McKinley is AVP, Premium Technical Support for Pocket Geek Home. For more information visit www.pocketgeekhome.com.

¹ <https://dealerscope.com/2021/01/eye-on-the-consumer-help-consumers-outsmart-their-smart-homes/>



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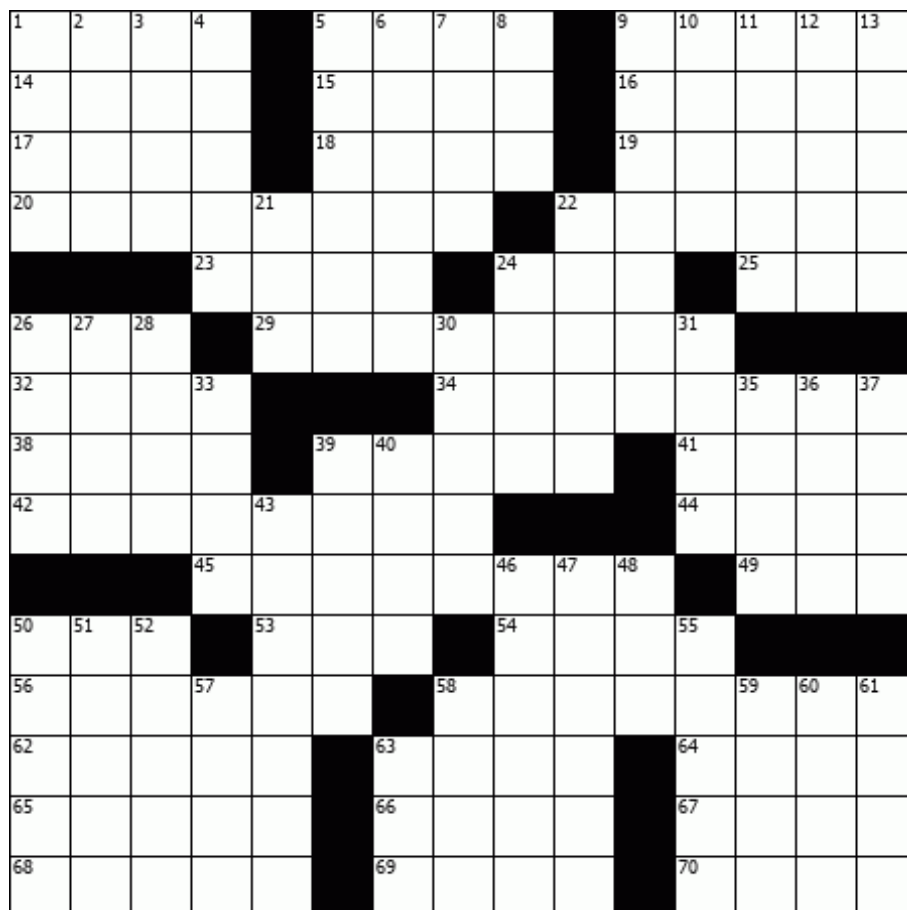
   

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Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. Court dividers
5. Writer ____ Barry
9. ____ diver
14. Shakespeare's river
15. Iraq's neighbor
16. Stately home
17. Farm tower
18. Let borrow
19. Beginning part
20. Allot
22. Beer mugs
23. Garden walk
24. Butter portion
25. Confederate general
26. Fall mo.
29. Used logic
32. Rhyme creator
34. Before birth
38. Copier
39. More angry
41. City transportation
42. Citrus drink
44. Tavern drinks
45. Less chewy
49. Psychic ability (abbr.)
50. Museum offering
53. Radio spots
54. Native minerals
56. French caps
58. Large handkerchief
62. Green shade
63. Besides
64. Property claim
65. Appointments
66. Wheel tracks
67. Scads (2 wds.)
68. Put forth
69. Remainder
70. Hideaways



Down

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Space agency (abbr.) | 22. More rational | 46. Uses the oven |
| 2. Morally wrong | 24. Skin opening | 47. Author ____ Hemingway |
| 3. Highway fee | 26. October's stone | 48. Vermilion |
| 4. Nosy person | 27. Manage | 50. Residence |
| 5. Expand | 28. Abound | 51. Take it easy |
| 6. Vocalist ____ Franklin | 30. Buying frenzy | 52. Stale |
| 7. Wind indicator | 31. Facts | 55. Lettuce dish |
| 8. Conclusion | 33. Horse's gait | 57. Always |
| 9. Enamored | 35. Saga | 58. Melancholy |
| 10. Candy ____ | 36. Cutting tools | 59. River in Egypt |
| 11. Up to the time that | 37. Speech impediment | 60. Bright sign |
| 12. Supported | 39. Smooths wood | 61. Colony insects |
| 13. Ascended | 40. Gambling term | 63. Make a boo-boo |
| 21. Station wagon | 43. Least cluttered | |

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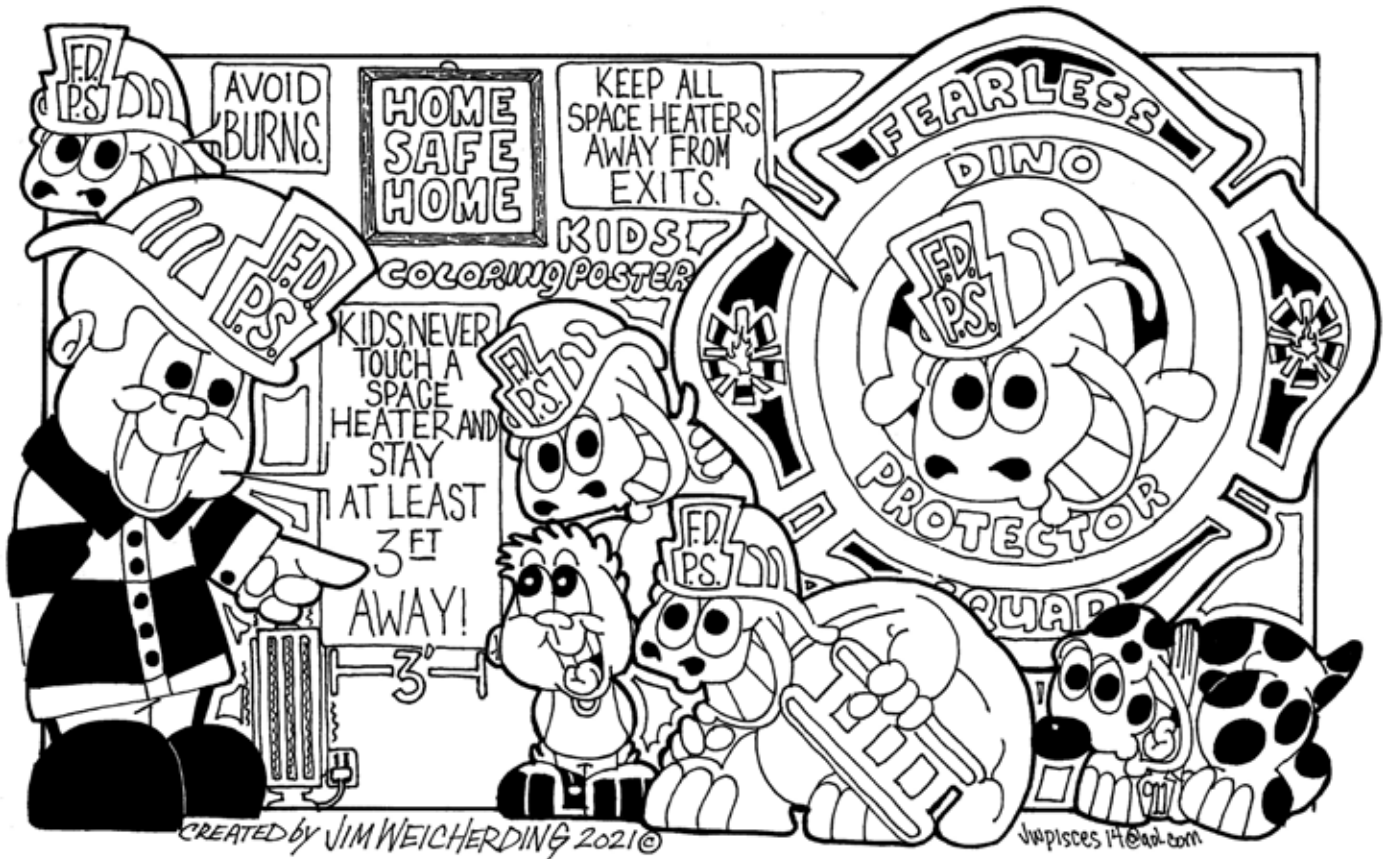
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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						New Year's Day 1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	Martin Luther King Jr. Day 17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



Payne's Picks

By Sarah Payne

January 2022



TV Releases

The Righteous Gemstones (Season 2) – January 9

Two years ago I wrote about the first season of Danny McBride's HBO show called *The Righteous Gemstones*, a dark comedy starring McBride, John Goodman, and Adam Devine, about a dysfunctional family of televangelists. The show is twisted, yet hilarious, and I'm very excited to see what McBride has up his sleeve for season two. In an interview with *Entertainment Weekly*, McBride shared that he'd already finished writing season two while production for season one wrapped in late 2019. Only three days into production for season two, the set had to shut down because of COVID. When he was in quarantine, McBride said "there were so many things that suddenly starting coming to my head that I thought might be more efficient, or story lines that I felt like at the end of the day weren't adding up." Basically, the entire second season was rewritten because of COVID. This season will touch on the pandemic, but only subtly, said McBride: "like many corporations, COVID was very kind to the Gemstones. They were able to deliver to the world a streaming service that allowed people to stay at home and watch Gemstone broadcasts. So while everyone around them suffered, they're in a better position than they've ever been in before."

How I Met Your Father (Season 1) – January 28

The 90s and the 2000s felt like the golden age for sitcoms (at least for a millennial like me), with shows like *Seinfeld*, *Friends*, or *How I Met Your Mother (HIMYM)*. This month, HIMYM creators Craig Thomas and Carter Bays attempt to recreate the magic with a spin-off series on Hulu starring Hilary Duff, who plays the female Ted Mosby telling her son the story of how she met his father. To me, the heartfelt yet witty writing was really at the heart of *HIMYM*'s success, so it will be interesting to see the direction *How I Met Your Father* show runners Isaac Aptaker and Elizabeth Berger (*This Is Us*) take.

Movie Review

The Power of the Dog

As of this writing, Netflix's Western drama *The Power of the Dog* is landing on nearly everyone's "best of" movie lists for 2021. So does it live up to the hype? Yes and no. It's much richer and more nuanced than most Netflix originals – and the performances from Benedict Cumberbatch, Kirsten Dunst, Jesse Plemons, and Kodi Smit-McPhee are certainly captivating. I can't write too much about the plot without giving away spoilers, but I personally find the film moves much too slowly. There's an intense build up to what you anticipate will a shocking and possibly horrific conclusion. The big reveals comes and it's really not as surprising as I think director and writer Jane Campion intended it to be. Perhaps something is lost in translation, as the film is based on a 1967 novel of the same name by Thomas Savage.

TV Review

Squid Game

I'll admit I was a bit late to the game – to *Squid Game*, that is. Last fall it seemed like this Netflix show from South Korea was all anyone could talk about. And in November Netflix announced *Squid Game* is its most popular show ever, with more than 2.1 billion hours watched since its release. I suppose I'm always a little skeptical of something with this much mass appeal. But once I got used to the English-dubbed version of the show, I was immediately hooked. Be forewarned: there's a lot of violence and gore. The show is about a contest where 456 players risk their lives playing deadly children's games for a chance to win a large sum of money. If you can stomach the basic premise, there are some genuinely funny moments. While Netflix has yet to announce a season two, the finale certainly teases up the storyline perfectly.



Greenville Public Library

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Adult Events

Mystery Book Club

Tuesday, January 4 at 1:30 pm

Picnic Table Reads Book Club

Thursday, January 20 at 1:00 pm

Virtual Book Chat

Thursdays, January 6 & 20 at 6:00 pm



Coffee & Books

Wednesday, January 12 at 10:30 am

Home Sweet Home Book Club

Monday, January 24 at 6:30 pm

An Evening of Astronomy with Sandi Brenner

Thursday, January 13 at 7:00 pm

Please register for all programs online on our event calendar at greenvillelibraryri.org or by calling 401-949-3630.



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Saturday Specials:

Saturday, January 15th @ 11:00 a.m. Snapology: Gamebots

**Saturday, January 29th “Grab and Go” Stem Activity:
 Marshmallow Snowman**

Story Times:

Tiny-Tots Story Time - Tuesdays mornings from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Preschool Story Time - Wednesday mornings from 10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**Thursday, January 27th from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 Pajama Story Time**

Book Groups:

Bookworms Book Group - Thursday, January 6th at 4:30 p.m.

Books are Fun! Book Group – Thursday, January 13th at 4:30 p.m.

Middle School Book Group – Tuesday, January 11th at 4:30 p.m.

Kindergarten Countdown: Thursday, January 20th from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

Arts and Crafts Club: Monday, January 10th from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Computer Classes:

Excel Basics And Spreadsheets – Monday, January 24,

from 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Excel Part II – Monday, January 31, from 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Origami Craft - Pick up the kit on January 25th, while supplies last.

Individual technology Help Sessions – Wednesday evenings from 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Ancestry For Beginners – Tuesday, January 25, @ 6:30 p.m.

Thursday Nigh Book Group - Thursday, January 27th at 6 p.m. via Zoom. E-mail bethanyemott@hotmail.com for the zoom link.

3-D Paper Snowflakes - Thursday, January 6th at 5:30 p.m. Please register at myespl.org.

Friends of the Library News:

Coffee, Cake & Conversation Book Group - Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

The FOL can be reached via email at friends.east.smithfield.library@gmail.com or you can leave a message for Catherine Lynn at the Circulation desk. The next meeting will be held on January 8, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. The annual meeting will be held in February.

Obituaries



Nancy S. Hurley
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Louise E. Devine
November 30, 2021
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William E. "Red" Schecher
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Barbara Elizabeth Salisbury
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Answers to Crossword Puzzle from page 36.

N	E	T	S		D	A	V	E		S	C	U	B	A
A	V	O	N		I	R	A	N		M	A	N	O	R
S	I	L	O		L	E	N	D		I	N	T	R	O
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E	X	E	R	T		R	E	S	T		D	E	N	S

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