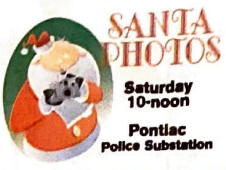




WARWICK BEACON



WARWICKONLINE.COM

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Saturday 10:00

Pontiac Police Substation



KAREN BACHUS

Chair to change

Members-elect hold key to leadership post

By JOHN HOWELL

While state legislators and the City Council have chosen leaders for the upcoming sessions, the Warwick School Committee has yet to pick who will lead them as the department embarks on the singular largest capital improvement project in Warwick's history — the construction of two high schools projected to cost \$350 million.

With five members, three of them newly elected, it stands to reason that either Karen Bachus or David Testa is in line as committee chair. Testa, who was elected six years ago, said last week he has spoken to the members-elect and expressed his interest in serving in the leadership slot. Bachus, who served as

chair and lost a bid to keep the seat, has been on the committee for 10 years.

The current chair is Judith Cobden, who chose not to seek reelection.

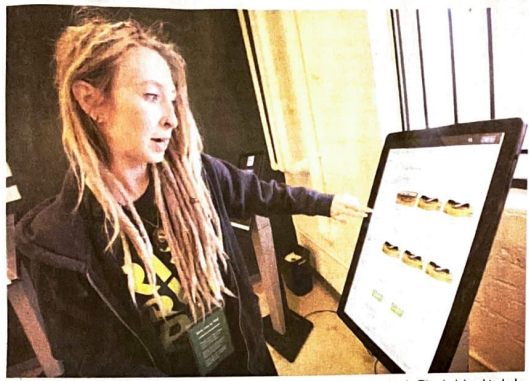
Bachus said last week it is "too early" for her to make the decision on whether she'll seek the position. Nonetheless, sounding like a candidate, she questioned how, as chair, Testa could negotiate a contract with the Warwick Teachers Union, seeing that his daughter was recently hired as a teacher.

Regardless of whom ends up leading the committee, Bachus, Testa and the income members, Shaun Galligan, District 1; Leah Hazelwood, District 2 and Michelle Kirby-Chapman, District 3 are in agreement that new Pilgrim and Toll



DAVID TESTA

CHAIR - PAGE 12



ARRAY OF PRODUCTS: Danielle Horn who works for RISE out of state was in Rhode Island to help coordinate the opening of recreational sales from the RISE store in Warwick. The store offers 22 products. She was excited to see the state, visiting Rocky Point Park and planning to see Newport. (Warwick Beacon photos)

WE'VE GONE TO POT

Buying weed legally in Warwick

By RORY SCHULER

Russ Matuszek sat behind the wheel of the Canna-Bus, a free-wheeling truckle parked outside the RISE dispensary.

"If they need us, we're here," said the driver, leaning forward in his seat, looking out into the road at the steady line of traffic waiting to turn right off Jefferson Boulevard and into the RISE parking lot. An additional parking lot was available next door, but mostly unused at 10 a.m. Thursday.

For the time-being, the shuttle was empty. Rain was in the weekend forecast, however, and Ma-

tuszek predicted his services would be in great demand on Saturday.

Matuszek works for Newport Travel. The company was contracted by the operators of RISE, to shuttle prospective customers to and from the pot shop.

On Dec. 1, RISE — formerly Summit Medical Compassion Center — opened to the general public, offering adults the opportunity to legally purchase over-the-counter recreational cannabis for the first time in Rhode Island.

Business was brisk around the Jefferson Boulevard building, Caribbean Vibe, a steel drum band,

POT - PAGE 6

Barking mad over pet lodge

Wethersfield Commons residents fear impact of dog daycare facility

By JOHN HOWELL

Many bought homes in Wethersfield Commons on Jefferson Boulevard because they were allowed to have a dog. But now that as many as 150 dogs may be housed at the very entrance to the 493-unit complex, they're barking mad.

An estimated 150 residents turned out last week to a Wethersfield clubhouse meeting to berate Carlos Gutierrez's plans to build a pet lodge similar to the one in Miami — Sorni Pet Resort and Dog Day Care — on Jefferson Boulevard. Residents are prepared to turn out in force Dec. 14 when the Planning Board conducts a public informational meeting at 6 p.m. in the community room of city offices in the Sawtooth Building in Apponaug said Joan Riley, who with

three other Wethersfield property owners visited the Beacon Monday morning.

Their concerns focused on the noise of barking dogs, increased traffic, cut through traffic to Metro Center, impact on property values and the loss of a highly vegetated entrance that augments the complex's country feel.

Yet the nine acres making up the site — most of it is a pond — is zoned General Industrial in keeping with the city's long range vision of Jefferson Boulevard as the city's commercial and manufacturing backbone. The zone allows for a wide variety of uses from a fish processing plant to equipment storage yard, taxi operation, oil and fuel service operations and auto body shop among other

DOGS - PAGE 10

Life changing soccer

Former All-American college player attributes his life to the game

By JOHN HOWELL

Football, well it's soccer in this country, changed Mick Rooney's life. It's no wonder then for the last couple of weeks, Rooney's life has revolved around the World Cup. He tunes in for the 10 a.m. game and once that's over fits in some errands before going back to the "tollie" for the 2 p.m. match. He hasn't missed a single game and has an idea what will happen when his motherland team, England plays.

"I'm sure England will break my heart," he said standing back from the TV in the final minutes of Saturday's matchup between Argentina and Australia. Argentina came away with the 2-1 win. That morning Netherlands beat USA, eliminating them from the competition.

"It would have been really nice if they won," he said, "but they really didn't have a very good game."

Rooney knows. He's a seasoned



OWING IT TO THE GAME: Mick Rooney on the sideline at a Bishop Hendricken soccer game. Rooney is a former All-American and longtime coach. (Photo courtesy of Hendricken)

ROONEY - PAGE 24

Warwick site of new Catholic high school

By JOHN HOWELL

With enrollment dropping and schools consolidating, a group dedicated to offering a classical Catholic education to high school students announced last week that Bishop Thomas J. Tobin has issued a canonical degree approving the creation of a Chesterton Academy of Our Lady of Hope. The school is located in a vacant building at 457 Jefferson Boulevard in Warwick, making it one of a network of more than 40 academies in the country.

"We are overjoyed to receive this approval from our Bishop," said Michael Casey, President of the Board of Directors of Chesterton in a release. "Under the mantle of Our Lady, it is our hope to build a vibrant Catholic culture within our school community by educating our students in the timeless truths of Jesus Christ and His Catholic Church."

In a joint interview Monday, Casey and Edward Walsh, who has been instrumental in the formation of the school, said the immediate objective is to retain a headmaster who can build a team and commence operations in the fall of 2023.

"The big thing is to get a headmaster and the hiring of teachers," said Casey. He said there have been a number of applicants and that face-to-face interviews will start soon. The goal is to have a headmaster in place by March. Ideally, the school would open would start operations with 9th and 10th grades with anywhere from 15 to 25 students. The 11th grade would be added the following year and the year after would see the first graduating class. Chesterton Academy schools tend to be small with a top enrollment of about 160.

Walsh described the school as offering "a classi-

SCHOOL - PAGE 9

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DYNAMIC DUO



The defending champion Bishop Hendricken basketball team is set to tip off its season and will be led by standout returners Azmar Abdullah and Eze Wali. See story on page 23. Pictured is Abdullah.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"We've got to make it happen."

- School Committee member-elect Leah Hazelwood talking about the importance of building new Pilgrim and Toll Gate High Schools. Page 1



Leaf it to the wind



A few scattered rain drops and a strong southerly wind didn't stop members of the Warwick Historic Cemetery Commission from turning out in numbers last Saturday for the fall cleanup of Brayton Cemetery in Apponaug. As Danny Hall (using his leaf blower) pointed out, the wind worked to their favor. "Usually at this time of the year it's from the north and we're fighting it," he said. The leaves were piled on the embankment overlooking Apponaug Cove. Former Mayor and retired RI Supreme Court Justice Frank Flaherty chose a more traditional means to cleanup - a rake - and Sue Caboceros delighted in the figurine she found under all the leaves in the Jencks plot. It was properly restored to its position. (Warwick Beacon photos)



Matching grants aim to keep Warwick food pantries, soup kitchens stocked

The Rhode Island Foundation will match every donation the public makes to Trinity Repertory Company during its 2022 run of "A Christmas Carol" with an equal grant to the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, up to a total of \$60,000. The goal is enable the Food Bank to keep its warehouses stocked for member agencies like the Westbay CAP Marketplace on Jefferson Boulevard and the Pilgrim Lutheran Church on Warwick Avenue.

The funding is intended to replace the donations for the Food Bank that the theater has traditionally collected from audiences. Until Trinity Rep went dark in 2020 due to COVID-19, the actor playing Ebenezer Scrooge had stepped forward at the end of every performance of "A Christmas Carol" and asked theatergoers to leave a donation for the Food Bank. Audiences would then drop their contributions in collection buckets on their way out of the theater. In 2019 alone, the tradition raised more than \$60,000.

In the interest of public health and safety, the theater will not have collection buckets at this season's performances. Instead, the public can trigger the matching grants by contributing to Trinity Rep online at trinityrep.com/match or by texting SCROOGE to 44-321. Through this matching challenge, their donations will benefit Trinity Rep's artistic, education and community programs, as well as the Food Bank.

The need remains high at food pantries and meal sites as people cope with the rising cost of everyday expenses and the ongoing economic effects of the pandemic. Arts organizations that rely on ticket sales are still struggling to recover from fall off at live performances. Our matching grant will enable people to feed hungry Rhode Islanders while still supporting the arts," said Neil D Steinberg, the Foundation's president and CEO.

Have your party with US!

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'Tis the season to be jolly

Sun. Dec. 11- BELLA, Glendale 1pm
Thurs. Dec. 15- WHITE'S, Westport 12:30
Fri. Dec. 16- COURTHOUSE CENTER, Kingston 7:30pm
Tix: courthousesarts.org

With Charlie Hall and Doreen Collins

Reservations, Dates, Bookings at
AGINGDISGRACEFULLY.NET

Schools

(Continued from page 1)

cal model" including courses in philosophy, theology and Latin using the "Socratic method of education" where students are taught "how to think not what to think."

Father Robert Marciano, president of the all-male Bishop Hendricken High School, learned of the effort to start a Chesterton Academy in Rhode Island sometime ago.

"We are quite different and proud of what we offer to live up to our mission that is to develop the whole person, spirit, mind and body, and form boys into young men of character, integrity, faith and service of God and others," he said in an email.

Fr Marciano doesn't see the new school as a competitor but rather "as a partner in our efforts to offer the excellence of a faith-based Catholic education in a variety of ways."

He explained, "I am of the disposition that parents should have a choice as to the type of education that they want for their children, including in the public sector, but always for the mission of the Catholic Church."

Fr Marciano volunteered to help, saying, "We would be more than happy to offer our resources to this new school and open a dialogue of cooperation, as we recently did with LaSalle Academy. Although our campuses might be separate and miles apart of mission of faith and dedication to our Catholic identity is united."

The city's central location with the convergence of Routes 95 and 295 was critical to the selection of the Jefferson Boulevard site because of its easy access, they said parents from as far away as Fall River and parts of Connecticut that are in range of a 30 to 40 minute drive are considering the school.

"It's going to take some time," Walsh said when asked if the co-ed school would be offering sports and extracurricular activities. He said there are nearby sports facilities that would allow them to offer sports. As the school grows, the plan is to move to larger facilities hopefully with in the same Jefferson Boulevard area.

Casey described the school as different in that students would be expected to assist in operations such as assisting with the clean-

up after lunch tuition is \$8,000.

The mission of the Chesterton Academy as described on the website is, "to prepare our students to triumph over the materialism and despair that pervade our culture and to accept our Lord's offer to have life and have it abundantly. Our classical curriculum combines a broad, liberal arts education with a strong emphasis on the development of Christian virtues and an appreciation of beauty. Through our Three Pillars Model, we form our students in intellect, character and spirituality."

Chesterton Academy of Our Lady of Hope is named for the English writer and Catholic convert, G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936). He was considered an outstanding man of letters in the early 20th century. An accomplished essayist, novelist, and poet, he wrote a hundred books on all different subjects. In 1922, he shocked the literary establishment by converting to Catholicism. He was later eulogized by Pope Pius XI as a "gifted defender of the faith."

There is presently a popular movement to have him canonized.

An open house between noon and 3 p.m.

HELPING WARWICK'S NEEDY

You Can Help A Needy Family

Canned goods and non-perishable food items can be dropped off at the locations listed below, or a cash donation can be made payable to **Neighbors Helping Neighbors c/o Warwick Beacon**, 1944 Warwick Avenue, Warwick, RI 02886 or Dept. of Human Services, Pilgrim Senior Center, 27 Pilgrim Parkway, Warwick, RI 02886 (use coupon below).

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NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS AND FINANCIAL DONATIONS CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- Pilgrim Senior Center
- Beacon Communications
- Warwick City Hall

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Yes, I would like to make a donation to the Holiday Basket Program

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