

INSIDE

Tax incentives proposed for businesses that are hiring. A5

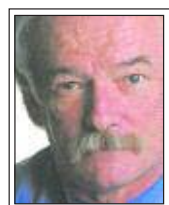
LOCAL & STATE

OBITUARIES A4 ♦ CALENDAR A4 ♦ POLICE & FIRE A5

IMPOLITICLY CORRECT

Corruption knows no boundaries

Catch any out-of-state newspapers last week? If not, you might have missed these reports.



JOE BAKER

into pay-to-play politics in Pennsylvania.

"Twenty-three people in Luzerne County — including a school superintendent, three county judges, four courthouse officials and five school board members — have been charged."

Included among the alleged abuses were two judges who took \$2.8 million in kickbacks to place juveniles into for-profit detention centers. The FBI apparently is not done. The report says it is looking into allegations that teaching candidates paid bribes to school board officials to get jobs.

Then there was the start of a trial into "the largest-ever corruption investigation" in New Jersey history.

"Among the defendants: Three mayors, two state assemblymen and other public officials, charged with corruption; prominent rabbis from Brooklyn and Deal, N.J., charged with money laundering; and, in one case, a man charged with brokering the sale of a human kidney."

The case resulted in 44 arrests. Ten already have pleaded guilty.

I'll bet that kind of news depresses all those doomsayers out there who insist Rhode Island is the corruption capital of the country. I know I've heard it too many times to count: "It can only happen here."

Fact is, it can happen anywhere — and does.

Of course, 2009 gave us the Rod Blagojevich scandal. The Illinois governor was impeached — by a unanimous state Senate vote — for trying to sell the U.S. Senate seat vacated when Barack Obama was elected president.

In Louisiana, U.S. Rep. William "Cold Cash" Jefferson was sentenced to 13 years in prison after being found guilty of 11 charges, including solicitation of bribes, wire fraud, money laundering and racketeering.

Kind of makes Operation Dollar Bill, which resulted in the arrest of former Rhode Island Sen. John Celona, look downright miniscule in comparison.

The old cliché "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" is true wherever power is wielded. Political corruption knows no borders. You only need people and money. There are all kinds of people out there looking to get ahead. Some do it through hard work. Others want a shortcut, and political power has always been one of the shortest of shortcuts.

The Ocean State is, in fact, probably not even close to being in the top half of states in terms of political corruption. But I have a theory about the perception that it is: We're such a small state that it's nearly impossible to keep most corruption under wraps for long.

That doesn't excuse it when it happens — and it assuredly will happen again. All I'm saying is that we shouldn't engage in these repeated acts of self-flagellation. It's OK to be outraged by corruption uncovered and certainly to try to make more informed choices about those who lead us.

But repeating that tired old mantra that it doesn't get any worse than here only drives it deeper into people's minds, proving the old political maxim that if you repeat an untruth often enough, it becomes reality.

Joe Baker is a Daily News staff writer. Send him e-mail at Baker@NewportRI.com.

Hundreds vaccinated at free clinic

By Matt Sheley
Daily News staff

NEWPORT — More than 500 people turned out at Rogers High School Saturday for a free H1N1 vaccination clinic coordinated by the state Department of Health and the Newport Fire Department, with the assistance of volunteers from the American Red Cross and others.

Fire Capt. Peter Kirwin said 554 people were vaccinated during the four-hour clinic, the first of its kind on Aquidneck Island. The next one is slated for Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Gaudet Middle School on Aquidneck Avenue in Middletown. It is open to anyone 18 or older, regardless of where they live.

The mood was light, and there was little waiting time for those who turned out for the free vaccines.

"It took about 10 to 15 minutes from when we walked in the door to here," local resident James P. Casey said, who received an H1N1 shot as did his wife, Audrey. "The paperwork took longer than anything else, but it was all very easy and very well run."



David Hansen ♦ Daily News staff

Molly MacDonnell, a student at the University of Rhode Island, administers an H1N1 vaccine to Audrey Casey of Newport on Saturday at Rogers High School. Casey's husband, James, is looking on.

"A piece of cake," said Middletown resident Alyssa Beebe, who received the vaccine via a nose spray. "You walk in, sign up, sit down and it's all done. Couldn't have been better, and I'm glad I didn't need to get the shot because I'm not

TO GO

Free H1N1 vaccination clinics are scheduled in Newport County for anyone 18 or older, regardless of where they live. No identification is needed, but a signed consent form is required.

Jamestown: Saturday 8 a.m. to noon; Melrose Avenue School, 76 Melrose Ave.

Middletown: Sunday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Gaudet Middle School, 1113 Aquidneck Ave.

Portsmouth: Tuesday, Feb. 9, 4-8 p.m., Portsmouth High School, 120 Education Lane.

big on shots."

Since the H1N1 strain hit in the spring of 2009, health care professionals have tried to come up with ways to stem the spread of the particularly aggressive virus. Hand sanitizers, face masks and other measures have become mainstays in many business environ-

CLINIC A4

Authors don't always go by the book

Writers discuss the pros and cons of publishing works on their own

By Faye Parenteau
Daily News staff

"You should write a book."

Talk about a loaded compliment. If only the well-wisher knew what he or she was inflicting on a would-be author. At Island Books in Middletown, author Hannah R. Goodman of Middletown recently talked about the experiences that led her to self-publish three young adult novels, including her latest, "Fear of Falling," which deals with relationships and young heartbreak in a climate of homophobia.

"You write a good book and people like it, so you think you will get published. But that's not the case," Goodman said. Her own foray into working with a conventional publishing house turned into a years-long process of "revising over and over and over."

As the process became exhausting, Goodman decided to bring the book to press on her own. "Looking back, from a publishing standpoint, I didn't know what I was getting into," she said.

Other local authors agree that the advantages of self-publishing — creative control over the look and content of the final product, control over where and how the book is marketed — can work against writers who aren't prepared for the volume of work involved.

"You do have to work harder," author Marie Younkin-Waldman said. She recently published "To Hear The Birds Sing: Conversations With My Heart," a memoir about the radical way her life was transformed after her hearing was restored through a cochlear implant.

'Looking back, from a publishing standpoint, I didn't know what I was getting into.'

HANNAH R. GOODMAN
self-published author from Middletown

"I found a qualified editor whom I respected and with whom I had worked in our community," she said. "Having a local reputation helps somewhat, but people are also very busy and preoccupied with their own lives these days. You really need to be prepared to do some creative marketing yourself and to take advantage of social networking and the Internet, especially if you want PR beyond your community."

Newport resident and playwright and novelist Jan Shapin was able to find a broad audience for her first published novel, "A Snug Life Somewhere," both locally and in the Pacific Northwest, where part of the book takes place. The work is a coming-of-age story set against a backdrop of labor unrest and radical politics during the early 20th century.

She said that she enjoyed the process of finding venues for the work, including giving talks and organizing book-signing parties. Under Shapin's arrangement, the company covered the full cost of publishing, but did not spend money on promotion. This fell entirely to her, and it can have certain advantages.

"You can take your time to build an audience," she said.

AUTHORS A4



Author Hannah R. Goodman, center, of Middletown talks to readers recently at Island Books in Middletown about her decision to self-publish three young adult novels. "You write a good book and people like it, so you think you will get published," she said. "But that's not the case."

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Hannah R. Goodman is a former high school English teacher, a writing consultant and the author of three books for young adults: "My Sister's Wedding," "My Summer Vacation," and "Fear of Falling." www.hannahrgoodman.com.

Jan Shapin is a produced playwright and the recipient of a Rhode Island Council for

the Humanities grant. Her first published novel is "A Snug Life Somewhere." www.janshapin.com.

Marie Younkin-Waldman is the author of "Simply South County" and "To Hear the Birds Sing: Conversations With My Heart." www.tohearthebirdssing.com.

'Having a local reputation helps somewhat, but people are also very busy and preoccupied with their own lives these days. You really need to be prepared to do some creative marketing yourself ...'



Marie Younkin-Waldman

'You can learn how to promote your book and yourself as an author without the pressure to perform to the expectations of the publisher.'



Jan Shapin

ON THE WATER

John H. Chafee is a tribute to a strong bay advocate

Boat: John H. Chafee.
Owner: State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.
Designer and builder: Wesmac Marine, Surry, Maine.
Year: 2004.
Hull: Kevlar.
Length: 50 feet (15.24 meters).

History: The boat named after the late U.S. Sen. John H. Chafee is emblematic of his legacy. Elected in 1976, Chafee was a strong voice for clean air and water in Washington, D.C., as well as a lifelong advocate for the best interests of Narragansett Bay. He was instrumental in securing funding for the boat that bears his name.

With Narragansett Bay and the nearby ocean waters intrinsic to the past, present and future of our state, it only makes sense to monitor and report on what is arguably our most precious asset, and that is the mission of the John H. Chafee.

Built out of extremely durable Kevlar, the Chafee is a sturdy platform for research both inside and outside of the bay. On any given day, the Chafee leaves



Will Tuthill photo

her berth at Fort Wetherill in Jamestown, usually with a team of biologists or marine scientists aboard. Their research is key to our understanding of the rapidly changing marine environment, and the boat is a fitting tribute to an extraordinary senator.

"On the Water," a weekly feature that highlights local and visiting boats of interest to the area, is produced by freelance writer Will Tuthill.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Regular features on the Local & State section front:

Monday: 'On the Water,' highlighting local and visiting boats of interest.

Tuesday: 'Off the Clock,' taking a look at the extracurricular activities Newport County residents are passionate about.

Wednesday: 'Remember When?' What was making the news this month in history.

Thursday: 'Then & Now,' produced in conjunction with local historical organizations.

Friday: 'Student of the Week,' shining a spotlight on local students.