

BUNDLE UP
Cloudy today with temperatures falling to the low 30s; windy tonight.
Forecast, A14

The Providence Journal

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Tally of a tragedy: 462 were in The Station on night of fire



The figure, compiled by The Journal from a variety of sources, is the highest number yet recorded of those at the nightclub on Feb. 20, 2003.

BY PAUL EDWARD PARKER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The Providence Journal has identified 462 people who, according to legal documents, police witness statements, survivors and others,

were in The Station nightclub when it caught fire in 2003, ultimately killing 100 people and injuring more than 200 others.

The count of 462 exceeds all of the various limits on the club's capacity that had been calculated by the Town of West Warwick. Those limits ranged from as low as 253 to as high as 404, according to town documents.

It also underscores the lax oversight at the nightclub. No one — not the nightclub's owners, not public officials — kept track of how many people were in the building, and no evidence has been disclosed that town officials formally transmitted the capacity limits to the brothers who owned The Station.

Shortly after the fire, The Journal began compiling a list of who was in the building. The newspaper has periodically updated and published that list.

The count rose to 462 last month after Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch, in response to a public records request by The Journal, disclosed tens of thousands of pages of evidence that investigators had collected while preparing for criminal trials stemming from the fire. The material released Nov. 8 included a

A victim is rushed from the burning Station nightclub, on Cowesett Avenue in West Warwick on Feb. 20, 2003.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL FILES / KRIS CRAIG

SEE **STATION, A8**

"All volunteer force...seven years of war — we've never done this before as a nation."



AP / SAURABH DAS

"The ground forces are not broken," Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said last month, "but they are breakable."

Army at the breaking point

Diminished levels of readiness, lower recruiting standards and rising attrition rates among junior officers point to a watershed moment for the service, says Sen. Jack Reed.

BY JOHN E. MULLIGAN
JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — When a Navy admiral took over as the nation's top uniformed leader this fall, he homed in on the military establishment's fears for the future of the Army by touring several forts in the heartland and listening to the concerns of young infantry, artillery and recruiting officers.

After 12 months fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan, 12 months back home before redeployment is "just not good

enough," one Army captain at Fort Sill, Okla., told Adm. Michael G. Mullen, enunciating one of the many problems that add up to major worries about an all-volunteer force that is in its seventh year of wartime stress.

"The ground forces are not broken," Mullen said in October in one of his first public appearances as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "but they are breakable."

Mullen's pronouncement echoes a rising refrain in Congress and the Pentagon that the modern, all-volunteer Army is undergoing the hardest test in its 34-year history. More than the next phase in the struggle for a stable Iraq is riding, therefore, on President Bush's reduction of troop

U.S. Army active-duty force

May 1945: About 8 million, at peak of WW II
June 1950: 593,000, after demobilization
June 1953: 1.53 million at peak of Korean War
September 1968: 1.51 million, at peak of Vietnam War
September 1973: 791,500, at inception of all-volunteer force
September 1979: 759,000, lowest force level following post-Vietnam draw-down
September 1986: 781,000, peak force level since inception of all-volunteer force
December 1999: 471,000, lowest force level since inception of all-volunteer force
December 2006: 510,000
2012 (projected): 547,000

(Figures include draftees before conscription gave way to the all-volunteer Army in 1973)
Source: Department of Defense

SEE **ARMY, A10**

West Warwick fires its manager

The Town Council dismisses Wolfgang Bauer after he acknowledges overspending on a local project by \$802,000.

BY CYNTHIA NEEDHAM
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

WEST WARWICK — The Town Council has fired Town Manager Wolfgang Bauer for alleged "gross mismanagement" of funds related to a Pawtuxet River improvement project.

Bauer admitted overspending by \$802,000 the amount of money allocated to the Pawtuxet River Walk project, writing checks to contractors without first verifying that there was enough money in the project budget to cover the costs or allowing the town's finance director to review the expenses.

After Bauer notified the council last week of the over-expenditures, it unanimously voted Saturday to terminate the veteran manager, effective immediately. Early last month, Bauer, 64, announced he planned to retire next year.

In a news conference yesterday, council members called for a town-conducted foren-

SEE **MANAGER, A11**

Fashion, too, affected by climate shift

With seasonable changes no longer predictable, the apparel industry is turning to weather forecasters.

BY MICHAEL BARBARO
THE NEW YORK TIMES

In the capricious world of fashion, where hemlines, fabrics and colors fall in and out of favor with breathtaking speed, designers and retailers have always relied on one constant — the orderly changing of the seasons.

But now it seems the seasons have become as fickle as fashion.

Two consecutive years of volatile weather — last November and this October for much of the Northeast — have proved disastrous for companies that rely on predictable temperatures to sell cold-weather clothing like sweaters and coats.

So the \$200-billion American apparel industry is making sweeping changes in how it makes and sells clothing. The industry, filled with esoteric job titles like visual merchandiser and fabric assistant, has even

SEE **WEATHER, A6**

Image rekindles sex-abuse allegations

The portrait of a former pastor of Sacred Heart Church, accused of abuse a young girl more than 50 years ago, sparks a confrontation in West Warwick.

BY LYNN ARDITI
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

WEST WARWICK — Parishioners and others attending Sacred Heart Church, on Providence Street, yesterday reacted with surprise, confusion and, in some cases,

rage toward a group leafleting outside who said that a former Sacred Heart pastor, who died in 1990, raped a young female parishioner there more than 50 years ago.

The dozen or so protesters, including those who described themselves as "clergy sex-abuse survivors" and their family members, carrying fliers and signs, demanded that the portrait of Monsignor Anthony A. DeAngelis in the church hall be taken down, his name removed from a nearby apartment building and his honorable status in the parish erased. They had

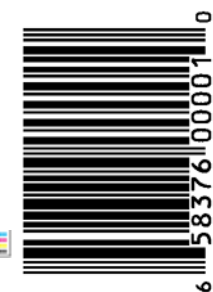
gathered in hopes of talking with parishioners leaving morning Masses.

Most of the exchanges were civil, if emotional. Many parishioners avoided

SEE **PROTEST, A8**

Ann Hagan Webb, who alleges she was raped by the late Monsignor Anthony A. DeAngelis when she was a child, is among the protesters outside the parish he once led.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG



INSIDE TODAY

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5 SECTIONS / XX PAGES

Ask Amy	D4	Lifebeat	D1
Bridge	D4	Lotteries	B4
Business	A12	Obituaries	C2
Classified	E1	People	D1
Cornics	D5	Rhode Island	C1
Crossword	D4	Sports	B1
Editorial	C3	Television	D6
Kidsbeat	D4	What's Happening	D4
Legal ads	E5		



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A WOMAN'S PLACE

After taking a circuitous route to get there, Gail Simone becomes the first woman in the comic book's 66-year history to write for the Wonder Woman series. **D1**

CLOSE VOTE IN VENEZUELA

Officials in Venezuela say the results of a referendum that would vastly increase the powers of President Hugo Chavez and allow him to hold office for life are too close to call after millions cast their ballots. **A2**



PUTIN RETAINS POWER IN RUSSIA

Voters give Russian President Vladimir Putin's political party an overwhelming victory in parliamentary elections, ensuring he will remain in control of the country even after he steps down as president. **A2**