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Increasing clouds today with rain showers mixed with flurries arriving late.
Forecast, E10

The Providence Journal

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Leaving Rhode Island



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / MARY MURPHY

Kathleen McQuillan-Hoffman is trying to sell her West Warwick home and join her husband, Rob Hoffman, in Minnesota where he has landed a new job. They are among a number of people who are leaving Rhode Island for economic reasons.

Cost of living, government have driven folks away

BY KAREN LEE ZINER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Kyiesha Butler misses Rhode Island. She misses the ocean. She even misses the snow.

But the 32-year-old network systems administrator does not miss her fruitless attempts at home ownership here. Two years ago, feeling forced out, Butler moved to Georgia and bought a new 2,200-square-foot house.

"I came down here and bought a house in six months," says Butler, "after ten years of trying in Rhode Island."

"I miss it," Butler says of Rhode Island, "but this is great. I'm a homeowner. I get to be a part of the system. I love it here." Moving to Georgia "was the best thing for my family. I believe hard work should pay off, not put you in debt."

Clearly, newcomers have settled in Rhode Island in the past few years, including from higher-priced housing markets such as Boston and New York who find the Ocean State more

affordable. Census figures ascribe a slight population increase to immigrants. But some people say they are being squeezed out by taxes, job loss and high cost of living.

Butler is one of about a dozen people who responded to a recent Journal query on the paper's Web site, www.projo.com. The query sought people who are leaving or have left Rhode Island for reasons related to the economy, state government or both.

"Rhode Island is making it impossible for people to hang on to their homes."

DIANE BELLEMORE
native Rhode Islander

They include Butler, mother of two children, who grew up in East Providence and formerly worked for the attorney general's office, then for a nonprofit agency in Pawtucket.

They include Rob Hoffman and Kathleen McQuillan-Hoffman, professionals who are reluctantly returning to their home state of Minnesota after Hoffman lost his job at a nonprofit agency and could not find another opportunity here.

SEE **LEAVING, A10**

Rhode Island population

1950: 779,000
1960: 859,488
1970: 949,723
1980: 947,154
1990: 1,003,464
2000: 1,048,319
*2006: 1,067,610

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
*Estimate



Your turn: Are you leaving the state for economic reasons — housing, taxes, jobs, or government issues? To respond, go to projo.com

Tapes of detainees destroyed by CIA

The agency claims that the videos, showing the techniques it used during the interrogation of al-Qaida suspects, were destroyed to protect the agents involved from possible reprisals.

BY MARK MAZZETTI
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The CIA in 2005 destroyed at least two videotapes documenting the interrogation of two al-Qaida operatives in the agency's custody, a step it took in the midst of congressional and legal scrutiny about its secret detention program, according to current and former government officials.

The videotapes showed agency operatives in 2002 subjecting terrorism suspects — including Abu Zubaydah, the first detainee in CIA custody — to severe interrogation techniques. They were destroyed in part because officers were concerned that tapes showing harsh interrogation methods could expose agency officials to risk of legal jeopardy, several officials said.

SEE **TAPES, A13**

Romney touts shared values over theology

While saying "I believe in my Mormon faith," the GOP presidential hopeful tries to reassure evangelical Christians.

BY MICHAEL LUO
THE NEW YORK TIMES

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Mitt Romney asked the nation yesterday not to reject his presidential candidacy because of his religion, assuring evangelical Christians and other religious voters that his values matched theirs in a speech that used the word Mormon only once.

The only passing mention of his Mormonism in his 20-minute speech at the George Bush Presidential Library underscored just how touchy the issue of Romney's faith has been since he began running for the Republican nomination. He and his aides had agonized for months



ROMNEY

SEE **ROMNEY, A6**

Bush selects Smith for U.S. appeals court

BY JOHN E. MULLIGAN
JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU
and **G. WAYNE MILLER**
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON — President Bush yesterday nominated U.S. District Judge William E. Smith, of East Greenwich, to the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to succeed Judge Bruce M. Selya, who left full-time bench duty in December 2006 when he assumed senior status. The nomination is subject to Senate confirmation.

As they had after Mr. Bush nominated U.S. Magistrate Judge Lincoln D. Almond to the federal District Court last month, Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse declined to be interviewed about Smith's nomination.

Instead, the Rhode Island Democrats, who will enjoy much deference from their colleagues as the Senate weighs the nomination, issued a noncommittal joint statement.

"Rhode Islanders deserve to have highly qualified

SEE **JUDGE, A11**

A MESSAGE MISSED ON THE DAY THE WAR BEGAN



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Bill Stevens, 86, who moved to South County last year, was a 19-year-old radio operator in Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941.

But Bill Stevens, who was on duty as a radio operator in Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, knew it was already too late when a warning message from Washington arrived.

BY ARLINE A. FLEMING
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SOUTH KINGSTOWN — He had ventured out of his native Maine just once, on a 4-H trip, and Bill Stevens, one of 10 Stevens children living in rural Canton, hoped for something more than a farming job after graduating from high school.

So, still shy of age 18, he decided to enlist in the military.

Stevens waited until his January birthday to make it official and get sworn in. Soon thereafter, he, and the Army, discovered a talent Stevens didn't know he had — he was quick with Morse code. And he

could type.

These skills, and the fact that he had a high school diploma, earmarked him for radio school in New Jersey, where he would meet the girl who would become his wife, and get his pick of military posts. He chose Hawaii, which is where he was working as a radio operator on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941.

Retired Army Col. William B. Stevens, now 86 and a South Kingstown resident, has told his Pearl Harbor story before. He kept it to himself for 20 years after the war,

SEE **PEARL HARBOR, A8**



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LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE

Most observers doubt that the agreement President Bush reached with the nation's major financial institutions to freeze interest rates on subprime mortgages for five years will do much to help those Rhode Islanders facing foreclosure. **F1**

ENERGY BILL ADVANCES

The House approves an energy bill that would require car makers to boost average fuel economy by 40 percent by 2020, repeal billions of dollars in tax breaks for oil companies and encourage the use of renewable fuels. **A2**



TALKING TRASH

As if they needed any motivation, New England Patriots players react to comments by a member of the Pittsburgh Steelers "guaranteeing" a win when the teams meet Sunday. **C1**