

GETAWAY DAY

Mostly sunny today with highs in the upper 70s; increasing clouds tonight.
Forecast, C6

The Providence Journal

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TUESDAY
JULY 3, 2007

50¢
\$2.40 per week by carrier

The state wants to move four people with severe retardation out of a group home in Lincoln, but they're fighting back to save . . .

The only home they know



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB THAYER

Resident Lisa Steele, left, enjoys a laugh with a Kenny Martin during snack time at the kitchen table of the group home, on Southwick Drive in Lincoln. The state, citing budget cuts, is trying to close the home.

BY KIA HALL HAYES
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Advocates for four adults with severe retardation who have lived together for 25 years in the same group home in Lincoln are fighting an effort to move them to another home in Smithfield.

It's the same battle that was fought — and won — 12 years ago.

Beth Keeling, the home supervisor, says closing the home would devastate the men and women who live there.

"They know home, they want home, they sign for home," she said.

The state Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals first closed the adults' Southwick Drive home, in Lincoln, in 1995 and moved the group to a home on Rogler Farm Drive in Smithfield to save \$100,000.

Then, William L. Brennan, the father of resident Patrick Brennan, filed suit on behalf of the four adults, claiming that the



Susan LaValle, left, who works at the group home, helps Patrick Brennan, one of the four residents, to his seat in the living room. He decided he wanted to watch the movie *My Fair Lady*.

move was traumatic and had a negative impact on their development. Superior Court Judge Patricia A. Hurst agreed, ordered the home reopened and stated that the residents' guardians should be given the opportunity to appeal or consent to any future effort to close the home.

Citing another budget crisis,

the state has again decided to close the Southwick Drive home and transfer the four — who range in age from 47 to 51 — to the Smithfield home. Providence lawyer John J. McConnell Jr., who represents the residents, said their families were notified

SEE HOME, A4

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Gallery: For more photos of the Southwick Drive group home and its residents, go to www.projo.com

Problems mount in state's pursuit of pollution case

DEM faces setbacks on the legislative and legal fronts in its effort to get a major corporation to pay for cleaning up contaminated soil in Tiverton.

BY MIKE STANTON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Rhode Island's fight to force a Texas utility company to clean up contaminated land in Tiverton has just gotten tougher, thanks to legal miscues, financial missteps and politics.

Angered by outside legal bills of about \$1 million from a Washington, D.C., law firm, the Rhode Island Senate 10 days ago killed legislation that Governor Carcieri had sought to help regulators in their bitter legal struggle with the Southern Union Co.

Southern Union, capitalizing on the

SEE DEM, B3

Fish are biting for Putin



RIA NOVOSTI KREMLIN VIA AP / MIKHAIL KLIMENTYEV

Russian President Vladimir Putin lands a striped bass during a fishing excursion yesterday with President Bush off the coast of Kennebunkport, Maine. The two later discussed Mr. Bush's plan for a missile-defense system in Europe. **Story, A2**

Bush spares Libby time in prison

The president commutes part of the sentence of the vice president's former top aide.

BY AMY GOLDSTEIN
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — President Bush commuted the sentence of I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby yesterday, sparing Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff 2½ years in prison after a federal appeals court had refused to let Libby remain free while he appeals his conviction for lying to federal investigators.

Mr. Bush, who for months had sidestepped calls from conservatives to grant Libby a reprieve, broke his silence early last evening, touching off an immediate uproar from Democrats, who accused the White House of circumventing the rule of law to protect one of its own.

The president announced his decision in a written statement that laid out the factors he had weighed. Mr. Bush said he decided to "respect" the jury's verdict that Libby was guilty of four

felonies for lying about his role in the leak of a covert CIA officer's identity. But the president said Libby's "exceptional public service" and previously unblemished criminal history led him to conclude that the 30-month sentence handed down by a judge last month was "excessive."



LIBBY

The president noted that he had promised not to intervene until Libby had exhausted his appeals. But he stepped in short of that point. "With the denial of bail being upheld and incarceration imminent," Mr. Bush said, "I believe it is now important to react to that decision."

Although he eliminated Lib-

SEE LIBBY, A4

U.S. military sees Iran behind attacks in Iraq

And for the first time, an American spokesman suggests that Hezbollah is working with insurgents.

Reed heads back to Iraq this week to assess, analyze

BY MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE
and **TINA SUSMAN**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A U.S. military spokesman accused Iranian leaders yesterday of using guerrillas from Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group to train militiamen fighting American troops in Iraq and to organize attacks, including a January ambush on an Iraqi-U.S. outpost that killed five American soldiers.

The United States repeatedly has accused the Shiite Muslim-led regime in Tehran of aiding Shiite Muslims and even Sunni

BY JOHN E. MULLIGAN
JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Sen. Jack Reed will embark Thursday on his 10th wartime tour of Iraq, returning in time to help lead Senate Democrats next week in a fresh attempt to push the Bush administration toward a strategic change of course.

"You go out with a concept," Reed said, referring to his view that President Bush's injection of thousands of additional troops this year has failed thus far to produce clear progress in

SEE IRAQ, A4

SEE REED, A4

Contractor to 'face up' to DOT billing mistakes

An audit of the BETA Group, a Norwood, Mass., engineering firm, has been turned over to the state police.

BY KATHERINE GREGG
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — The current owners of the BETA Group say they were aware that the company had "management problems" in the mid-1990s, but unaware that company employees working on state Department of Transportation projects were billing their hours to "the wrong project" until a keen-eyed DOT

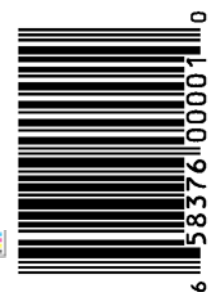
auditor uncovered the problem in 2003.

"I think they were reporting the appropriate number of hours," company spokesman Michael Doyle said yesterday. "They were just assigning it incorrectly to projects because they were just being sloppy about it and allowed to be sloppy

SEE DOT, B6

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Extra: For more on the investigation, or if you have a tip about the DOT, go to www.projo.com



INSIDE TODAY

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6 SECTIONS

Ask Amy	F4	Lotteries	C4
Business	E1	Obituaries	D4
Classified	E7	People	F1
Comics	F5	Poker	F4
Crossword	F4	Rhode Island	B1
Editorial	B4	Sports	C1
Legal ads	E4	Television	F6
Lifebeat	F1	What's Happening	F4
Local News	D1		

SOME RELIEF FOR MOTORISTS

The average price of regular gasoline in Rhode Island is \$2.919 a gallon, down a penny from last week and 16 cents lower than it was four weeks ago. **E1**

PLANNING YOUR HOLIDAY

You'll find a complete list of fireworks and other events celebrating the Fourth of July in Lifebeat, **F1**

PASSAGES

JIMMY WALKER, BEVERLY SILLS

Jimmy Walker, considered the greatest basketball player in Providence College history, dies at 63. **C1**

Beverly Sills, the diva who helped popularize opera among the American public, dies at 78. **A2**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Filled with noisy mayhem, amazing special effects and breathtaking adventures, *Transformers*, the movie based on Pawtucket-based Hasbro's line of toys, is designed to appeal to boys from 8 to 80. **F1**

