

CLOUDS ARRIVE
Increasing clouds today with highs in the mid-30s; cloudy tonight.
Forecast, E16

The Providence Journal

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COPING WITH HEALTH-CARE COSTS



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / STEVE SZYDLOWSKI

Dr. Margaret Sun, of East Providence, examines Marissa Medeiros, 14, in her office, as her mother, Rose Zia, and sister, Aisha Zia, 17 months, watch. Sun is involved in a program in which a number of providers charge people \$25 for basic medical care.

A bid to offer 24-hour gambling

Twin River's owners present figures they say show that allowing round-the-clock gambling would mean millions more in state revenue.

BY KATHERINE GREGG
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — The owners of the Twin River greyhound racetrack and slot parlor yesterday dangled \$16.5 million annually in possible new state revenue from round-the-clock gambling before a governor and a legislature hungry to close a gaping budget hole.

In a private meeting yesterday morning with state Lottery Director Gerald Aubin, top executives at the Lincoln gambling hall laid out their in-house projections for how much more Twin River could produce annually for the state if it were allowed to remain open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Within hours, those projections had also been delivered to state Rep. William San Bento, the Pawtucket Democrat who chairs the legislature's Lottery Oversight Commission.

The legislature's biggest champion of expanded

SEE **GAMBLING, A10**

Plan looks at local finances

Among Governor Carcieri's proposals is to move pension plans of new municipal workers into the state system.

BY CYNTHIA NEEDHAM
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

Governor Carcieri, together with the state's new Department of Revenue director, has proposed a set of sweeping reforms aimed at tightening local spending and bringing property tax relief to Rhode Island communities.

Carcieri's "Municipal Fiscal Control and Responsibility Act" would force all cities and towns that are not keeping up with contributions to their self-administered pension plans to move new employees to the state Municipal Employees Retirement System.

SEE **TAXES, A6**

Parole Board grants Derderian release next year

The board, in its decision to shave a year off the prison sentence of the Station nightclub owner, says it will not reconsider his parole status.

BY DANIEL BARBARISI
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

CRANSTON — Station nightclub owner Michael A. Derderian will be released one year early from his four-year prison sentence, receiving his freedom on parole in October 2009, the state's Parole Board decided yesterday.

Derderian appeared before the Parole Board yesterday, which will release him over the opposition of victims' families who felt he should serve his entire term for his role in causing the fire that killed 100 people in 2003.

SEE **PAROLE, A8**

An affordable option

A new program called HealthAccessRI charges a monthly fee of \$25 or \$30 to provide primary care.

BY FELICE J. FREYER
JOURNAL MEDICAL WRITER

For most of her life Emily Lisker was hesitant to see a doctor, no matter how bad she felt. A self-employed artist with no health insurance, she shuddered at office-visit fees of \$100 or more. But last winter, when she came down with a bad cough, Lisker immediately called her doctor and immediately got an appointment.

Lisker was finally able to do that because she is one of a couple of hundred uninsured people who have enrolled in an innovative program called HealthAccessRI. In this program, she pays \$30 a month for a "membership" in

her primary care doctor's practice, essentially keeping him on retainer. That means that even without insurance, she can get frontline medical help whenever she needs it, paying just \$10 for each office visit.

Lisker was especially glad to have that kind of access last winter. Her doctor ordered an x-ray that revealed pneumonia, a serious matter for Lisker because she has asthma. She paid the full cost of the x-ray. She also paid for some expensive antibiotics. But she avoided what might have happened in the days before HealthAccessRI:

SEE **CARE, A9**

HOW IT WORKS

HealthAccessRI is a new way for people with little or no health insurance to obtain the services of a primary care doctor at a low price.

Cost: Varies by practice but consists of these elements: One-time enrollment fee of \$15 to \$80; monthly fee of \$25 or \$30; office visit fees of \$5 or \$10.

Doctors: 7 practices with a total of 21 family-medicine doctors

What you get: 24-hour telephone access, sick visits, well child care, check-ups, school and sports physicals, family planning, yearly physicals.

What you don't get: Hospitalization, specialty care, x-rays, laboratory work, prescription drugs, emergency room visits, mental health care.

For more information: www.HealthAccessRI.com; (401) 647-3595

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Your turn: To react to this proposal, go to **projo.com**

For McCain in S.C., history seems to be repeating itself

The GOP presidential candidate is again the target of smear tactics similar to those that derailed his 2000 campaign, but this time he's fighting back.

BY ELISABETH BUMILLER
THE NEW YORK TIMES

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Volunteers making telephone calls for Sen. John McCain in South Carolina last weekend noticed something odd: four people contacted said in remarkably similar language that they opposed McCain for president because of his 1980 divorce from his first wife, Carol, who raised the couple's three children while McCain was a

prisoner of war in Vietnam.

By Tuesday afternoon, a group calling itself Vietnam Veterans Against McCain had sent out a crude flier accusing the candidate of selling out fellow POWs to save himself.

By Tuesday evening, a group called Common Sense Issues, which supports former Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, had begun making what it said were a million automated calls to households in

SEE **MCCAIN, A8**



AP / CHARLES DHARAPAK

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., left, joins Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., yesterday at a campaign rally in Spartanburg, S.C.



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A total of \$1,050 has been donated. See latest donations on Page B3.

WORRIES OVER THE ECONOMY

Amid growing fears that the nation is in danger of sinking into a recession, lawmakers in Washington begin work on a series of tax cuts and spending measures to stimulate the economy. **A8**

MOSS DENIES ALLEGATIONS

Wide receiver Randy Moss denies the allegation that he committed "battery causing serious injury" against a Florida woman, who received a temporary restraining order against the Patriots' star, who described the charge as "extortion." **C1**



HOLLYWOOD ON SMITH HILL

Hollywood stops by the State House as actor Richard Gere, in Rhode Island to shoot a film, puts in an appearance as backers of a law that provides tax incentives to filmmakers tout the measure's benefits. **B1**