

Motorists wary at the pump

Rhode Islanders cheer the recent sharp fall in gasoline prices but say they'll continue to conserve.

BY TIMOTHY C. BARMANN
 JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

CRANSTON — If time travel were possible, this could easily be Rhode Island in the year 2005.

The sign on the Oaklawn Village Service Station says a gallon of regular gasoline is \$1.979, a price that hasn't appeared here for more than three years.

projo.com
Your turn: With gas prices near \$2 a gallon, what will you do with the money you save? Respond at **projo.com**

"It's great," said Joan Micheletti, 74, as she filled up her car at the Oaklawn station yesterday. "Hopefully they'll come down a little more."

Now that the price has dropped, will people continue their new energy-conserving habits, or will they go back to the gas-guzzling ways of the past?

It appears that, for now, Rhode Islanders have continued to conserve.

Gasoline consumption in October fell by 8.2 percent from October 2007, judging by a drop in sales tax receipts collected from service stations, according to data provided by the Rhode Island Division of Taxation. That was one of the biggest monthly year-over-year drops since at

SEE **GAS, A10**

The worst of both worlds drive deficit

Projected savings that failed to materialize coupled with declining revenue leaves the state facing a \$357.4-million budget hole.

BY KATHERINE GREGG
 JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — Giving state prison inmates a raft of new early release opportunities was supposed to make a big dent in the prison population and save the state millions of dollars in a tough budget year.

Inmates — with the exception of sex offenders and those serving life sentences — could earn extra days off their sentences for good behavior and participation in rehabilitation and treatment programs. But the number of prison inmates is up, not down.

The budget approved by lawmakers — and signed into law by Governor Carcieri last June — assumed the early-release initiatives would re-

SEE **DEFICIT, A4**

Lawmakers skeptical of auto bailout

Republicans balk at efforts by Senate Democrats to provide \$25 billion to Detroit's Big Three.

BY JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS
 ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Prospects dimmed yesterday for the \$25-billion bailout that U.S. auto-makers say they desperately need to get through a bleak and dangerous December.

Though all sides agree that Detroit's Big Three carmakers are in peril, battered by the economic meltdown that has choked their sales and frozen loans, the White House and congressional Democrats are unable to agree on how much government money should go toward helping them or where it should come from.

The new debate comes as the financial situation for General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler LLC grows more precarious. GM

SEE **BAILOUT, A10**

'Mobbed Up'



Nicholas S. Pari, 71
 North Providence



Lloyd Morse, 50
 Cranston



Raymond Silva, 34
 Providence



Albino Folcarelli, 50
 Johnston



Reinaldo Cruzado, 22
 Johnston



Thomas Salerno, 48
 Cranston



Carmine Appolonia, 56
 Coventry



Vaughn Parker, 37
 Providence



John R. Sousa, 63
 Johnston



Joseph Perry, 71
 Tiverton



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / CONNIE GROSCHE

State police yesterday arrested 18 people related to the mob, including Gerald Tillinghast, shown here at his arraignment, and Nicholas Pari, who was convicted in the 1978 murder of Joe "Onions" Scanlon.

Not shown
 James Rodrigues, 23,
 North Kingstown



Jose Sousa, 49
 East Providence



Jacqueline Lovelace, 46
 Providence



Anthony Delgiudice, 73
 Warwick



Michael Borders, 47
 Cranston



Gerald Kent, 43
 Exeter



Sean McCarthy, 37
 Richmond

Police allege 18 involved in a 'criminal enterprise'

BY MIKE STANTON
 and W. ZACHARY MALINOWSKI
 JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

Rhode Island's economy may be struggling, but business grinds on in the underworld.

In a predawn roundup that brought back memories of Rhode Island's heyday as a Mafia hotbed, authorities arrested 17 people yesterday, including two notorious aging mobsters and a onetime Cranston mayoral candidate, on charges of illicit activity ranging from drug- and gun-dealing to gambling and theft to counterfeiting, fencing stolen goods and insurance fraud. The purported contraband included counterfeit handbags and sneakers, jewelry, precious metals, cat-

alytic converters and other stolen goods.

An 18th suspect was already in prison on unrelated charges. More arrests are expected in what authorities call "Operation Mobbed Up."

In breaking up not one, but two, alleged criminal rings based at the Valley Street Flea Market in Providence, the state police may also have found a clue to solving a mystery that has endured in Rhode Island mob lore for three decades — where is the body of "Joe Onions"?

One of the men arrested yesterday, Nicholas S. "Nicky" Pari, 71, went to prison for the 1978 gangland slaying of mob informant Joseph "Joe Onions" Scanlon, despite

SEE **RAID, A11**

After 30 years, new clue in mystery of missing mobster

State police investigators are digging near an apartment complex in Riverside where the man who helped murder Joseph "Joe Onions" Scanlon says he is buried.

BY W. ZACHARY MALINOWSKI
 JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

EAST PROVIDENCE — The low drone of an orange backhoe hummed yesterday through the Riverside neighborhood where the authorities believe Joseph "Joe Onions" Scanlon was buried after he was shot in the back of the head in a Providence social club three decades ago.

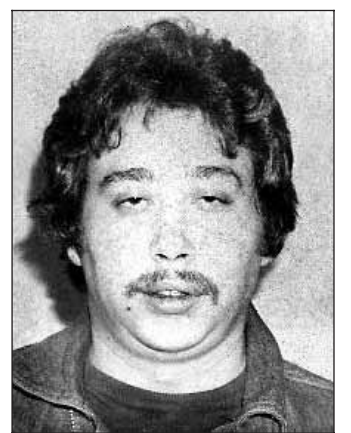
As the late afternoon sun turned to darkness, a gaggle of state police troopers in marked windbreakers peered into the 10-foot hole, hoping to find bones, clothing or some other evidence of Scanlon.

Also watching were the two highest-ranking state law enforcement officials in Rhode Island, Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch and Col. Brendan P. Doherty, superintendent of the state police.

"That's wild," said a woman who stood outside her modest home as the digging continued. "I thought it was a drug bust."

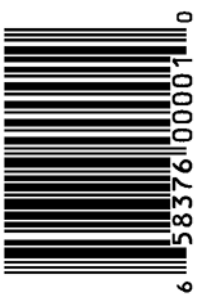
Earlier in the day, Nicholas "Nicky" Pari had told in-

SEE **BODY, A11**



Reputed Providence mobster and police informant Joseph "Joe Onions" Scanlon.

projoVIDEO Extra: To watch the excavation and more on the investigation, go to **projo.com**



INSIDE TODAY

© 2008 Published daily since 1829
 5 SECTIONS

Ask Amy	E6	Obituaries	B4
Business	D1	People	E1
Classified	D5	Poker	E6
Comics	E7	Rhode Island	B1
Crossword	E6	Sports	C1
Editorial	B6	Television	E8
Legal ads	A11	Today's Events	E3
Lifebeat	E1		
Lotteries	C4		



A COLLABORATION OF THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
 SANTA FUND AND HASBRO
 To contribute, send a check or money order to:
 Children's Holiday Hope Fund
 c/o The Providence Journal
 75 Fountain St.
 Providence, RI 02902

PLANE CRASH IN SMITHFIELD

Two people die when a small plane that took off from T.F. Green Airport in Warwick crashes in the woods as it approached North Central State Airport in Smithfield. **B1**

SHOOTING STAR

Bill Reynolds on why the seven second-half three-point shots made by URI's Jimmy Baron against Duke Sunday was one of the greatest shooting performances he has ever seen. **C1**



BRIDGING THE PARTISAN DIVIDE

President-elect Barack Obama and former rival John McCain pledge to work together on the economic and national security challenges facing the country in their first meeting since the election. **A2**