

**A WASHOUT**  
Rain arrives by this afternoon with temperatures climbing into the 50s late.  
**Forecast, E10**

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Prudence Island once was teeming with them, but today residents are asking . . .



The walls of Billy Silvia's home display his collection of deer killed while hunting on Prudence Island since he was 14 years old. Silvia, 52, has lived on the island year-round for 22 years. Deer can only be taken on Prudence Island by hunters using bow and arrow.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / JOHN FREIDAH

## Clinton, Obama rein in attacks

The Democratic presidential candidates adopt a milder tone in their debate leading up to the crucial Super Tuesday contests.

**BY PATRICK HEALY and JEFF ZELENY**  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

LOS ANGELES — Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama faced off in their first one-on-one debate of the presidential race last night, delivering their final arguments on who is better prepared for the White House before the multistate contests on Tuesday and highlighting their differences on issues such as health care and immigration.

Unlike the last debate, when they pointedly attacked each other on personal conduct, as well as the issues, they aimed their sharpest words at Republicans. Clinton criticized President Bush over his stewardship of the economy, and Obama chided the apparent Republican front-runner, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, for supporting Bush-backed tax cuts for wealthy Americans after initially opposing them.

"Somewhere along the line the Straight Talk Express lost some wheels," Obama said, referring to one of McCain's political slogans.

SEE **CAMPAIGN, A4**

## Charity's reserves questioned

While Meals on Wheels has trimmed its waiting list, some critics ask why the program hasn't used its cash reserves to serve everyone.

**BY TRACY BRETON**  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — As a result of a year-end fundraising blitz, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island has been able to pare down its waiting list for home-delivered meals, despite a cut in state financing.

In mid-November, there were 220 frail Rhode Island seniors on a waiting list for Meals on Wheels. As of yesterday, there were just 46, according to Patricia Sullivan, finance director for the organization.

This comes despite a 20-percent cut in state aid or \$100,700.

SEE **MEALS, B3**

## Medicaid balks at paying for RIPTA passes

**BY BRUCE LANDIS**  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — A federal clampdown on the state's Medicaid program will cost as many as 18,000 needy Rhode Islanders their free bus passes and will force the state to make up for millions of dollars in lost transit money to avert wreaking havoc on the state's bus system, state officials say.

The state is also expecting an attempt by the federal government to demand repayment of millions of dollars in past Medicaid money that was spent on transit. Those

SEE **RIPTA, A5**

# Where are the deer?

**BY TOM MOONEY**  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PRUDENCE ISLAND — Late-afternoon shadows darken the boat landing as Joel and Jane Maguire step off the ferry after a day of running mainland errands, and guide their golden retriever into the car for the ride home.

It will take only a few minutes to traverse the dirt roads and crumbled asphalt to the west side; the island wiggles down Narragansett Bay for six miles and is just a mile across at its widest point, the southern end. But where the Maguires live is, in island scale, the frontier.

The other night they had dinner with their entire neighborhood. Everyone

Some residents suspect that state officials want to eliminate deer from the island; others blame the coyotes that recently found their way ashore.

showed. Five diners.

Most other evenings the Maguires' dinner company are of the split-hoof variety. They come bounding over the stone wall and into the backyard whenever Joel clangs his dinner bell. But lately the deer — Prudence Island's endearing and divisive trademark — aren't answering the chow call.

"Usually we'd see deer all along this

road," says Jane on the way home from the ferry landing. "Especially at this hour of the day. You'd have to drive carefully because you'd never know when one might leap out of the woods."

Joel Maguire pulls into their yard, overlooking the West Passage, and heads out back. He clangs the suspended bell and waits. And waits. He peers into the bordering green thicket where in years past he's had as many as 23 deer emerge from the thorny brush — his own *Field of Dreams* moments.

"I haven't seen a deer in two months," he says.

SEE **PRUDENCE, B3**

## COUNTDOWN TO SUPER BOWL XLII

# PATS' SUPER BOWL FATE MAY BE IN THE CARDS

**BY G. WAYNE MILLER**  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

You may favor office pools and Vegas odds. We went supernatural in predicting particulars of Sunday's Super Bowl.

We began at The Silver Willow, a small store on Route 6 in Rehoboth owned by Charles Cochrane, an avuncular sort who calls himself "the Celtic Cricket." The Cricket greets us in his outer chamber, which overflows with mystical accouterments, then brings us into a room in back. A black cat peers down from a windowsill. A candle burns alongside a crystal ball, tarot cards and a velvet bag arrayed on a table cloaked in purple cloth. We sit facing each other. Charles dims the lights.

"We're going to start out with some tarot," he says. "Give them a quick shuffle for me. Put them down on the table. I want you to cut them once."

The cards are cut.

"I guess the major question everyone wants to know is

SEE **PREDICT, A5**



Charles Cochrane, owner of The Silver Willow shop, in Rehoboth, uses tarot cards, a crystal ball and a bag of hazelnuts to help his clients learn what the future might hold.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL  
FRIEDA SQUIRES

## INSIDE TODAY

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6 SECTIONS			
Ask Amy	<b>E8</b>	Local News	<b>C1</b>
Bridge	<b>E8</b>	Lotteries	<b>D5</b>
Business	<b>F1</b>	Obituaries	<b>C4</b>
Classified	<b>F5</b>	People	<b>E1</b>
Comics	<b>E9</b>	Rhode Island	<b>B1</b>
Crossword	<b>E8</b>	Sports	<b>D1</b>
Editorial	<b>B4</b>	Television	<b>E7</b>
Legal ads	<b>F4</b>	What's Happening	<b>E8</b>
Lifebeat	<b>E1</b>		
Movies	<b>E1</b>		

## AL-QAIDA LEADER KILLED

A top al-Qaida commander who had been involved in planning attacks on U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan is reportedly killed by a U.S. air strike in Pakistan. **A3**

## SCHOOLS GET A WARNING

The state warns eight districts and a state-run school that they fail to meet the more rigorous high school graduation requirements that go into effect for this year's senior class. **B1**

## PC SLIPS TO NOTRE DAME

PC let a golden opportunity for an upset win slip away in regulation as it loses to Notre Dame in overtime, 81-74. **C1**

## THE BEST OF THE BEST

Find out if your choices for the best films in 10 different genres match those selected by Michael Janusonis for a poll being conducted by the American Film Institute. **E1**

