

**STORM SIGHTING**  
Increase clouds today with highs near 30; snow arrives later tonight.  
Forecast, B6

# The Providence Journal

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## SAVING OPEN SPACE



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / MARY MURPHY

Joe Dutra, left, and Martha and George Neale, with their daughters Chandler, 14, and Hadley, 17, stand on the Neale's farm in Jamestown yesterday. The Pell Bridge to Newport is in the background.

# Paying for preservation

Conservationists celebrate the saving of farmland in Jamestown but say the state needs to spend more to protect open space.

BY PETER B. LORD  
JOURNAL ENVIRONMENT WRITER

JAMESTOWN — Huddled on a windy pasture overlooking Newport's Pell Bridge, conservation advocates from the town, the state and the federal government celebrated yesterday their combined efforts to preserve two of the most scenic working farms on the island, as well as a landscape enjoyed by untold numbers of visitors.

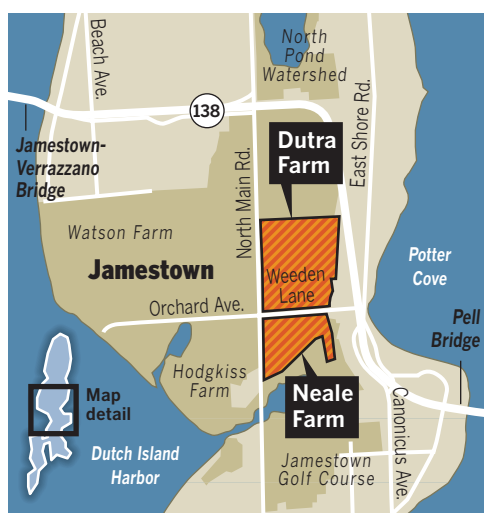
Jessie and Joseph Dutra and Martha and George Neale stepped before the crowd and thanked them for raising the \$9.3 million to buy the development rights to their farms, allowing them to stay in business. Dutra said, "I didn't think it would ever happen."

Combined with other deals the town has made during the last 20 years, Jamestown now has assured that about 1,000 acres in farms, wetlands and a golf course along Route 138 will forever provide a spectacular landscape for those driving by.

"It's comforting to know now," Dutra said, "that the farm will always be there."

## Open space

- Money: \$237 million in bonds approved since 1985
  - Preserved: 100,000 acres of woodlands, shoreline, farms
  - Protected: 79 farms, 5,722 acres
  - Pending: 23 farms, 1,918 acres
- (Rhode Island has about 900 farms, totaling 65,000 acres; 15 percent is protected.)



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GEORGE SYLVIA

But several officials used the opportunity to sound a warning that Governor Carcieri has not proposed enough state spending during the next few years to keep up the state's impressive track record of preserving farms and other open space.

"We're thrilled that Governor Carcieri's budget has some funds," said Janet Coit, director of The Nature Conservancy's Rhode Island chapter. "But we have a bunch of farms on the list [for preservation] and we really need more state funding. Please press the General Assembly for more funding."

Conservationists lobbied Carcieri last fall to propose \$15 million in bonds this year for open space and farm preservation. Faced with big budget deficits, he proposed \$5 million, and another \$30 million for water pollution efforts.

Coit and others said \$5 million won't provide enough to match expected federal grants to help protect farms.

They argue that in the next two years, \$5 million is needed for open-space grants; \$5 million for farmland acquisitions and another \$5 million to buy land for state parks and management areas.

For open space, each dollar of state money

SEE FARMS, A7

# Poll: R.I. heading in wrong direction

A Brown University survey finds respondents pessimistic and approval ratings sinking for the governor and Providence's mayor.

BY KATHERINE GREGG  
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — With three-quarters of Rhode Islanders now convinced the state is headed in the "wrong direction," most of the state's politicians — and especially Governor Carcieri and Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline — are taking the heat, according to a new Brown University poll.

Democrat Cicilline saw the most precipitous drop, as his standing sank from 64 percent in the last survey to 51 percent. Republican Carcieri's approval rating slipped from 44 percent in September to a new low of 40 percent, despite his aggressive public-relations campaign of recent months to try to win back public support.

But not since 1991, when the state was reeling

SEE POLL, A7

# Jury convicts police officer of burglaries

North Providence police Sgt. Michael Ciresi's trial comes after an investigation by three police agencies.

BY RICHARD C. DUJARDIN  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Suspended North Providence police Sgt. Michael Ciresi was found guilty yesterday on 9 of 10 counts, including two burglaries, capping a probe that started in 2004 when a man caught in an armed home invasion of a drug dealer in Pawtucket told the police that Ciresi had given him the gun.



CIRESI

The 40-year-old Ciresi, a son of former North Providence Town Solicitor Robert Ciresi, closed his eyes but otherwise appeared unfazed as a jury foreman read out each of the verdicts and other jurors nodded their agreement. However,

SEE CIRESI, B2

# Lt. Gov. Roberts to unveil plan for health care

The proposal is patterned after a Massachusetts law that requires all residents to have health insurance.

BY CYNTHIA NEEDHAM  
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — Lt. Gov. Elizabeth Roberts is set to release a legislative package this afternoon aimed at increasing access to health care for the 13 percent of Rhode Islanders who don't have it, in part by requiring individuals and employers to purchase health insurance or face penalties.

Under her plan, businesses with more than 10 employees that don't offer health insurance would be compelled to pay a \$1,000-a-year assessment per employee, starting in July 2009. Individuals

SEE ROBERTS, A2

# Study finds America is again becoming a land of immigrants

BY N.C. AIZENMAN  
THE WASHINGTON POST

The number of Hispanics in the United States will triple by 2050 and represent nearly 30 percent of the population if current trends continue, according to a report released yesterday.

The study by the nonpartisan, Washington-based Pew Research Center also found that nearly one in five Americans will be foreign-born in 2050, compared with about one in eight today. Asian Americans, representing 5 percent of the population today, are expected to boost their share to 9 percent.

SEE 2050, A5



## WORKS OF ART STOLEN

In one of the most audacious art robberies ever, masked men walked into a museum in Zurich, Switzerland, grabbed four 19th-century masterpieces, including Edgar Degas' "Ludovic Lepic and his Daughter," at left, and fled. The works are estimated to be worth \$163 million. Story, A2

AP / KEYSTONE / STADTPOLIZEI ZUERICH VIA FOUNDATION E.G. BUEHRLE COLLECTION



## INSIDE TODAY

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| 6 SECTIONS |    |                     |
|------------|----|---------------------|
| Ask Amy    | F4 | Lotteries C4        |
| Business   | E1 | Obituaries D4       |
| Classified | E8 | People F1           |
| Comics     | F5 | Poker F4            |
| Crossword  | F4 | Rhode Island B4     |
| Editorial  | B4 | Sports C1           |
| Legal ads  | E4 | Television F6       |
| Lifebeat   | F1 | What's Happening F4 |
| Local News | D1 |                     |

## CHANGES IN TOYLAND

Hasbro, the world's second-largest toymaker, announces that Alfred J. Verrecchia will step down in May as the company's chief executive officer and be replaced by Brian Goldner, currently chief operating officer. E1

## STATUS QUO IN IRAQ

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates publicly endorses the idea of holding troop levels in Iraq at pre-surge levels after the additional troops deployed last year depart this summer. A5

## WHITHER WELSH

With Providence College's athletic director expressing disappointment over the men's basketball team's 13-10 record, some are beginning to wonder what the future holds for coach Tim Welsh. C1



## DANCING WITH THE PROFS

They may or may not be the stars of academia but seven Brown University professors are in the spotlight when they pair with seven students in a dance contest inspired by the popular TV show. F1