

WIND-WHIPPED
Windy today with partly cloudy skies and highs in the 40s; cold tonight.
Forecast, E10

The Providence Journal

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The end of the line



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Joel Hovanesian says he can no longer cover his fuel costs while searching for squid or fluke, and the longtime Point Judith fisherman is not alone. "This is the most dangerous job in America and I don't want to do it for measly pay," he says.

After making a living off the sea for decades, tighter regulations, falling fish prices and soaring fuel costs spell the end for Joel Hovanesian.

BY PAUL DAVIS
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

NARRAGANSETT — Fisherman Joel Hovanesian did the unthinkable this week. He told his three-man crew to find other work.

"It's over," the 51-year-old captain says.

Hit hard by tightening regulations, a spotty season and soaring fuel costs, Hovanesian recently tied his boat, Excalibur, to a dock at Point Judith, the state's most important fishing port. He says he can no longer cover his fuel costs while searching for squid or fluke. He let his crew go after fuel prices,

rising for five straight weeks, hit a three-year high on Saturday.

"I said, this doesn't make any sense," says Hovanesian, who met with state Department of Environmental Management Director W. Michael Sullivan this week, and who last year urged Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse to find a way to help the ailing fishing industry.

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Extra: For our multimedia series, Rough Seas, examining the struggles for control of the sea, go projo.com

"This is the most dangerous job in America and I don't want to do it for measly pay," says Hovanesian, who crawled into the holds of boats to unload fish as a 13-year-old boy.

"There's a new catchword around the bulkhead these days. It's a three letter word: bad. You hear it everywhere. How are things going? They're bad, people say. Bad."

On Saturday, the price of marine diesel fuel jumped to nearly \$3.65 a gallon, up from around \$2 a gallon a year ago, says Chris Drew, the owner of Drew Oil Corp. in Cranston. His company delivers fuel to fishermen in Narragansett, North Kingstown, Warren and

SEE **FISHING, B6**

Tibetan protests spread in China

The Beijing government deploys additional troops and orders out foreign journalists as unrest spills into nearby provinces.

BY GREG BAKER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ZHONGDIAN, China — China blanketed restive Tibetan areas yesterday with a huge buildup of troops, turning small towns across a wide swath of western China into armed encampments.

Beijing acknowledged that last week's anti-government protests had spread far beyond Tibet's borders and that the police opened fire on protesters. It warned foreign tourists and journalists to stay away from a huge expanse of territory across four provinces.

In an overture of peace, the Dalai Lama offered to meet with Chinese President Hu Jintao and other leaders, reiterating that he was not asking for Tibetan independence.

China has repeatedly ignored calls for dialogue, accusing the exiled Tibetan leader and his supporters of organizing violence in hopes of sabotaging the upcoming Beijing Olympics and promoting Tibetan independence.

SEE **TIBET, A4**

Businessman facing federal fraud charges

David Whitaker, who ran Mixitforme.com from a Westminster Street building in Providence, is accused of defrauding customers of \$13 million.

BY PAUL GRIMALDI
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Federal authorities yesterday arrested the alleged architect of an Internet scheme that bilked nearly \$13 million from people who ordered electronic goods from a company he set up over a toy store he ran in downtown Providence.

David Whitaker, who has a long criminal history, was arrested at Los Angeles International Airport by U.S. Secret Service agents and other federal authorities after he disembarked from a flight originating in Mexico. He had been living in Acapulco until Mexican authorities expelled him.

Whitaker fled Rhode Island two years ago after the company he cofounded, Mixitforme.com, imploded amid complaints it hadn't delivered thousands of iPods, video-game systems, cell phones and other con-

SEE **SCAM, A5**

Annual Good Friday walk has come a long way

BY RICHARD C. DUJARDIN
JOURNAL RELIGION WRITER

PROVIDENCE — It's Good Friday and friends of Sister Mary Reilly know that as surely as day follows night, this is the day you'll find her with her walking shoes.

The 78-year-old Sister of Mercy hasn't missed the annual Good Friday Walk here since it began 30 walks ago and she doesn't intend to miss today's either. A contingent of girls from Sophia Academy, the school she founded seven years ago in the city's North End, are eager to join her.

You could say there would be no Good Friday Walk if it weren't for Sister Reilly. She recalls how, after reading an article three decades ago in the National Catholic Reporter about Kate Doherty — a Quincy, Mass., woman who had organized a 20-mile walk to raise money for shelters and soup kitchens — she decided to invite Doherty to her home.

She invited several members of religious orders, too, for the discussion about having a



Sister Mary Reilly with Sophia Academy students Sheyla Tejada, Jeanette Batista, Julie Diaz, Yeisha Bautista, Merci-Pauline Ujeneza, Abigaio Caraballo, Adriana Ortega and Faith Yon. The students will take part in the 30th Good Friday Walk today.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
JOHN FREIDAH

projo.com **Extra:** For more on local Easter celebrations, go to projo.com

Obama's speech seen as inspiring national discussion about race

BY LARRY ROHTER and MICHAEL LUO
THE NEW YORK TIMES

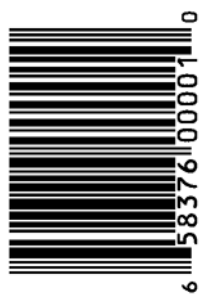
The speech Sen. Barack Obama delivered earlier this week in Philadelphia has been viewed more than 1.6 million times on YouTube and is being widely e-mailed. While commentators and politicians debate its political success, some around the country appear to be already taking up Obama's call for a national

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conversation about race.

Religious groups and academic bodies, already receptive to Obama's plea for such a dialogue, seemed especially enthusiastic. Universities were moving to incorporate the issues Obama raised into classroom discussions and coursework, and churches were trying to find ways to do the same in

SEE **RACE, A7**



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FEWER JOBS IN R.I.

A report being released today shows Rhode Island last month shed 1,200 jobs as payrolls shrank to their lowest level in nearly four years as the state's jobless rate inched up to 5.8 percent. **F1**

TEEN IN CRASH PLEADS NOT GUILTY

Seventeen-year-old Andrew T. Bessette pleads not guilty to two felony charges stemming from a car crash that left one youth dead and another injured. **B1**

VATICAN REJECTS TALK OF 'CRUSADE'

The Vatican rejects the charge contained in the latest taped message from Osama bin Laden that Pope Benedict XVI was leading a "new crusade" against Muslims, and Italian security officials express concern about the pontiff's safety. **A2**



CELTICS SWEEP IN TEXAS

After notching victories in Houston and San Antonio, Ray Allen, left, helps the Celtics complete their sweep of Lone-Star state teams with a 94-90 win over the Dallas Mavericks. **C1**