

EASY TO TAKE

Dry, clear and cool today with highs in the 70s; clear and cool tonight.

Forecast, B6

The Providence Journal

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WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 20, 2008

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Benefactor long at odds with scholarship fund oversight

Alan Shawn Feinstein sued the Education Partnership two years ago over its handling of a scholarship fund named for his father.

BY MIKE STANTON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Philanthropist Alan Shawn Feinstein's troubles with the Education Partnership didn't begin with the nonprofit's recent descent into receivership.

Two years ago, Feinstein sued the Education Partnership over its handling of a scholarship fund named after his father, Louis Feinstein. After 12 years of successful operation, Feinstein said yesterday, fewer scholarships were being awarded,

expenses were up and information was hard to come by.

"All of a sudden, the students seemed to be getting far less, and it was costing far more, and we weren't getting any answers," said Feinstein. "Where was all that money going?"

When the Education Partnership went into receivership in June, saying that it couldn't pay its bills, dozens of college students who had been promised Louis Feinstein scholarships were affected. Feinstein vows to pay those scholarships. But questions remain.

A court-appointed receiver, charged with sorting out the advocacy group's tangled finances, says that the Education Partnership apparently mingled funds from different sources. That troubles Feinstein, who had been fighting for the past three years for more accountability, only to see the scholarship fund's balance dip from \$1 million in 2005, when the Education Partnership took control, to \$763,000 last year, to some \$300,000 or less when the organization closed its doors in June.

"The stock market had been going up during those years," said Feinstein. "We were asking how come there was so much less money in the fund. But it was very difficult to get our calls returned."

After a court hearing yesterday, receivership lawyer Diane Finkle said that \$323,000 remains in a Morgan Stanley investment account labeled "Education Partnership," but it's unclear whether some or all of that money is from the Louis

Feinstein scholarship fund. Feinstein said that the scholarship money was at Morgan Stanley. But it will be up to the accountants, lawyers and, ultimately, the judge, to sort out.

Valerie Forti, the former executive director of the Education Partnership, did not respond to a call seeking comment. Her lawyer has advised her not to talk. Forti is married to Providence Journal deputy editorial page editor Edward Achorn.

Feinstein's 2006 lawsuit sheds new



FEINSTEIN

SEE FEINSTEIN, A7

Natural gas versus home heating oil

MAKING THE SWITCH



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB BREIDENBACH

Alberto Carreia, left, and Rich Davis, employees of Boiler Busters, help transport the old oil furnace out of the basement of the Cavanaugh home in Cranston. The furnace is being replaced with the natural gas furnace sitting in the background.

The prospect of \$4-a-gallon heating oil this winter has many seeking cheaper alternatives, and one of them is natural gas.

BY TIMOTHY C. BARMANN
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

CRANSTON — There are eight men crammed into Jimmy Cavanaugh's tiny basement, and two of the biggest guys are now at the center of attention. They're maneuvering a dolly holding a new steam boiler, a blue metal boxy device the size of a small freezer, which needs to go into the corner beneath an assembly of 2-inch heating pipes.

"Got a water line to your left," one of them calls, as some of the men try to help. The others scramble to get out of the way.

Cavanaugh, 75, sits to the side and watches in amazement. "What an operation," he declares.

Before the end of the day, plumbers will have it all connected and wired, ready to heat Cavanaugh's two-story house as soon as the weather turns cold.

There was nothing wrong with Cavanaugh's old steam boiler, which he had installed just eight years ago. But there's a



Tony Freitas, above right, of JKL Engineering, talks with homeowners Joyce and Jimmy Cavanaugh during the installation. Left, Steve Pina, of JKL Engineering, works on pipe fittings.



SEE GAS, A6

Suburban, urban school gap remains

Nearly three-quarters of schools in the state made "adequate yearly progress" last year as required by the federal government, but urban schools fared significantly worse than suburban schools.

Education divide

Nearly three-quarters of the state's 304 public schools made adequate yearly progress on the annual state tests in 2007-2008. But performance varied significantly among urban, urban ring and suburban schools.

Level/type	Total schools	Pct. making progress
Elementary schools		
Urban	48	50
Urban ring	64	94
Suburban	81	91
Total	193	82
Middle schools		
Urban	12	42
Urban ring	13	85
Suburban	29	79
Total	54	72
High schools		
Urban	18	17
Urban ring	11	18
Suburban	28	75
Total	57	46
All schools		
Urban	78	41
Urban ring	88	83
Suburban	138	86
Statewide total	304	73

BY JENNIFER D. JORDAN
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Little has changed for the state's urban schools. The latest round of school classifications, released yesterday, show urban districts again in need of state intervention, having failed to make enough progress on state tests for multiple years.

It's a chronic problem the districts and the state Department of Education have been unable to fix, and now deep cuts in staffing and budgets further hamper the state agency's ability to aid the worst-performing districts.

Yesterday at the State House, the state released the annual classifications — the first time in several years all public schools were included in one report — which

SEE SCHOOLS, A9

Source: R.I. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education

Lynch: Judicial commission erred in withholding letters

In an advisory opinion, the attorney general says the panel that selects judicial nominees may only withhold letters or portions of letters that contain "personal and medical information" about the candidates.

BY EDWARD FITZPATRICK
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — The Judicial Nominating Commission cannot, as a blanket rule, prohibit the public from seeing letters that it receives regarding finalists for state judgeships, Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch's office said yesterday.

But on a case-by-case basis, the commission can withhold all or part of a letter if it contains "personal and medical information," the attorney general's office said in an advisory opinion prepared at the commission's request.

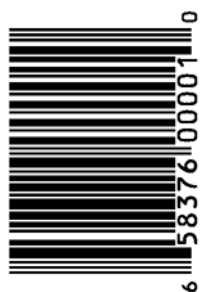
The commission, which interviews candidates and recommends finalists for state judgeships, asked for Lynch's opinion

following an inquiry by The Providence Journal, which is seeking access to letters submitted either for or against eight finalists for a Superior Court vacancy.

In the past, the commission has provided The Journal with copies of letters regarding judicial candidates. But Stephen J. Carlotti, who was appointed commission chairman by Governor Carcieri in February 2007, said he would not release such letters when The Journal made an inquiry in June. He then said the commission would seek the attorney general's opinion.

In a letter to Lynch, Carlotti said the commission believed that

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CARCIERI FACES PROBE

The Ethics Commission orders a formal investigation into Governor Carcieri's hiring of a relative and former campaign worker for a state job in 2002. B1

TALIBAN ATTACK

Afghan insurgents kill 10 French soldiers and wound 21 others in the biggest assault in years. A9

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