

WINNING STREAK
Sunny today with afternoon highs near 80; clear and cool tonight.
Forecast, E16

The Providence Journal

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“By allowing a deficit-burdened budget to become law, ... the Governor embarked upon a perilous mission ...”

JUDGE PATRICIA HURST

“I am hopeful union leaders will take the agreement reached with its leadership back to the members for reconsideration.”

GOVERNOR CARCIERI

Judge blocks bid to hike health care costs

The court is critical of efforts to balance the budget by requiring state workers to pay a greater share of their health insurance.

BY KATHERINE GREGG
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — A Superior Court judge has told the largest state employees union that it is up to the Rhode Island Labor Relations Board — not the courts — to decide whether Governor Carcieri can, by executive order, force thousands of state employees who work for the executive branch to pay a greater share of their

health costs, a move the governor has been counting on to save \$10 million.

But the judge yesterday flatly barred Carcieri from imposing similar increases on state workers employed by the other branches of government: the courts and General Assembly.

In the 19-page decision she issued yesterday, Superior Court Judge Patricia Hurst criticized Carcieri for taking the po-

sition that he can disregard “the laws of the state when he deems it expedient,” and trying to deflect blame for the state’s current financial predicament.

“By allowing a deficit-burdened budget to become law while relying upon future

revenues that he and the Legislature had dubious power to secure, the Governor embarked upon a perilous mission, fraught with constitutional and other legal difficulties that, unfortunately, may well cost the state more in time and litigation than it stood to gain,” she wrote.

But Republican Carcieri nonetheless declared her decision a “victory,” that will allow him to retroactively — and without further negotiation — require higher health-insurance contributions from thousands of members of Council 94, Ameri-

can Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — and several smaller unions — who soundly rejected the proposals in contract votes last month.

A statement from his office said: “We are looking forward to advancing our case before the State Labor Relations Board. I am hopeful union leaders will take the agreement reached with its leadership back to the members for reconsideration.”

It appears both sides will be back in

SEE **DECISION, A8**

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Extra: Read Judge Hurst's 19-page ruling at projo.com

WHERE GRIEVING CHILDREN CAN COME TOGETHER



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Jonathan Dadalt, 9, receives a clown's nose at Camp BraveHeart, in South Kingstown, after sharing a memory of his cousin Jacob. The camp, for children coping with the death of a relative, is sponsored by Home & Hospice Care of Rhode Island.

A camp for the brave of heart



Amari Stewart, 5, of Providence, and her father, Tony, run under a parachute. Amari's grandmother died in June.

BY ARLINE A. FLEMING
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SOUTH KINGSTOWN — Under a sturdy old oak tree at the YMCA's venerable Camp Fuller, 4-year-old Olivia Helms shared a memory of her late father with three clowns — and an admiring crowd.

“He took me to a toy store,” she said yesterday, grinning. One of the clowns repeated her words so everyone could hear.

Her dad, Duane Helms of Cumberland, has been gone just over two months.

Her brothers Justin, 6, and Christopher, 8, shared memories of Red Sox- and Patriots-game outings, special times with the man who died of synovial cell sarcoma four days before Father's Day. Their mom, Kelly, watched her children with a mixture of pride and sorrow.

At this two-day mid-August camp meant

SEE **CAMP, A9**

Isolation room deemed to violate school, fire rules

A report prepared by consultants hired by Block Island's School Committee recommends major changes in the room's design and school policies.

BY KATIE MULVANEY
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

BLOCK ISLAND — An isolation room set up in the basement of the Block Island School for students who needed to “chill out” violated state education regulations and the state fire code, according to a report by independent consultants.

The room violated regulations because its door had two sliding bolts on the outside, and also because staff members were unable to observe a student at all times through the small window in the

door, the consultants concluded.

If a time-out room is needed for students in crisis, it should be a smaller, padded room that can be clearly observed, and equipped with a lock that disengages immediately when the person monitoring from the outside takes his or her hand away, the consultants said. The district should also develop clear policies for dealing with students who need crisis intervention, and all staff in the 150-student school should be trained

SEE **ROOM, A6**

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Extra: Read the 7-page New Shoreham School Facility Report, and take a look at video inside Room 20, at projo.com

DESPITE SOFT MARKET, PRICY CONDOS STILL SELL

BY PAUL EDWARD PARKER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

While many are feeling the pinch of high oil prices and the credit crunch, the rich do not seem to be pinching pennies, at least as far as the high-end condominium market in Rhode Island is concerned.

A new condo complex on the harbor in Newport, the Residences at Brown & Howard

Wharf, went on the market last month. Already, 6 of the 16 units have been sold or are under contract, at prices ranging as high as \$3.6 million, which is likely a record for a Rhode Island condo.

Although the Brown & Howard prices are exceptional, they are in keeping with a

SEE **CONDOS, A6**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / FRIEDA SQUIRES

Jean and Donald Reeve, of Farmington, Conn., recently moved into a condominium at the Residences at Brown & Howard Wharf in Newport that they bought for \$1.875 million. “Newport still represents a good value for the dollar,” Jean Reeve says.

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Video: Later today, watch a video showing why people are paying big bucks for condominiums in Newport at projo.com

Poll: Voters still looking for answers on the economy

BY MICHAEL COOPER and DALIA SUSSMAN
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Senators Barack Obama and John McCain are heading into their conventions neck and neck in the presidential race, with voters focused overwhelmingly on economic issues but convinced the candidates are not paying enough attention to their priorities, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News poll.

Slim majorities said neither candidate had made clear what he would do as presi-

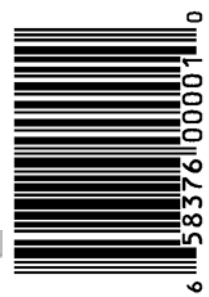
dent, suggesting that both need to use their conventions to provide voters with a better sense of their plans for addressing the deteriorating economy, high energy prices, access to health care and national security.

McCain, the presumptive Republican nominee, is still closely associated with the deeply unpopular President Bush. Nearly half of those surveyed said that they expect him to continue the Bush administration's

policies if he is elected president. But voters, by a wide margin, view McCain as better prepared to be president than Obama, and as more likely to be an effective commander in chief.

Obama, the presumptive Democratic nominee, was trusted more by voters to handle their top concern, the economy. Sixty-five percent of those surveyed said they were confident that Obama would make

SEE **CAMPAIGN, A7**



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The Providence Journal SUMMERTIME FUND™



A total of \$820 was donated last week. See the latest donations B3.

IDENTITIES STOLEN

A former security guard at Rhode Island Hospital pleads guilty in federal court to stealing patients' and job applicants' identity information. **B1**

HELP FOR HOMEOWNERS

A Providence nonprofit group offers to help residents struggling to meet their mortgage payments renegotiate their loans. **F1**

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