

SPARE CHANGE Book touches on all things Rhode Island

Looking for the perfect book to start — and settle — arguments? A handy guidebook called



JIM GILLIS

“Rhode Island 101” by a guy named Tim Lehnert is just out. Actually, Lehnert has tapped into people across the state for input on culture, crime, econom-

ics, sports and, most importantly, slang. Funny guy Charlie Hall, I-team snoop Jim Taricani and our own sports maven Rick McGowan weigh in with Top 5 lists. Hall’s Top 5 Lampoonable Rhode Islanders begs the question: “Just five?”

And there are scattered references to those who’ve made Rhode Island famous and infamous, such as Buddy Cianci (who served five years in prison and emerged and

AT A GLANCE

Daily News sportswriter Rick McGowan’s Top 5 Rhode Island athletes of the past 40 years:

1. Ernie DiGregorio (basketball).
2. Marvin Barnes (basketball).
3. Mark van Eeghan (football).
4. Rocco Baldelli (baseball).
5. Brian Lawtown (hockey).

‘RHODE ISLAND 101’

returned as a sort of conquering hero), Claus von Bulow (who never served time, though some think he should have) and Richard Hatch, who spent time in the slammer and is trying to inch his way back into reality TV.

It’s full of what you’d expect. You find out where the Big Blue Bug is, and what “Not for Nothin’” means (essentially nothin’) and lists of some of the best mob hits. I found it heartening to see a mention of “three-deckers,” the kind of houses I lived in as a kid.

The book mentions how three generations of one family can live in the same house, on separate floors, sparking the traditional Rhode Island phrase, “I live on top of my parents.”

So where do the arguments start? Right here.

The book lists five Hollywood movies filmed in the Biggest Little, but not “There’s Something About Mary,” though the Farrelly Brothers get their own item. There’s a list of oddball attractions that neglects Portsmouth’s Green Animals.

And under Top 5 Outrageous Newport Mansions, there’s no mention of Belcourt Castle, whose back-story is as interesting as its interior. And on the page of significant Jewish Ocean Staters, no mention of Bruce Sundlun (pronounced “Sunderland” by many RIsers), though Sundlun does get mentioned elsewhere.

But at least Middletown speech experts Crystal Sargent and Jacque Gorman provide ways to sniff out a Rhode Island accent. And it’s good to see old friend Paul Gaines get a nod on the list of significant African-American Rhode Islanders.

While we here in Newport County have less harsh accents than those “upstate,” we still can drop an “r” in some words — such as “loser” (loozah) and add one at the end, such as “idear” or “Sheiler.” And I was well into adulthood when I realized people across the fruited plain don’t use the terms “all set” or “down cellar.”

And I learned at 50 I’d never properly pronounced the name Theresa, opting for the Rhode Island-ish “Tressa.” You probably do, too. I mean, “prolly” do, too.

There are appropriate nods to the Cowbills, but none to Belly, the local band that made the cover of Rolling Stone in 1993. Richard Jenkins and Viola Davis get their due for Hollywood success, but where’s the late, great Van Johnson?

All in all, “Rhode Island 101” is a great guide to anyone who wants to know what stuffies are, what comprises an Awful-Awful or why cabinets have nothing to do with home furnishings.

Jim Gillis is a Daily News staff writer. Send him e-mail at Gillis@NewportRI.com.



David Hansen ♦ Daily News staff

Timmy Doherty of Portsmouth, a student at Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick, recently attended the Children’s Congress in Washington, D.C., where he met President Barack Obama.

His goal is to find a cure

A Portsmouth teenager with diabetes recently traveled to Washington, D.C., as a guest of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International.

By James A. Johnson
Daily News staff

PORTSMOUTH — Not many 14-year-olds get a chance to meet the president of the United States and talk to their senators in Washington about legislation they should support.

Timmy Doherty of Portsmouth, who has Type 1 diabetes, did just that when he attended a Children’s Congress for three days in June.

Doherty was the only delegate from Rhode Island among the 150 children selected from all over the country for the event, sponsored by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International. The foundation’s main purpose is to find a cure for diabetes.

The young delegates met other celebrities, including Nick Jonas, one of the Jonas Brothers, boxing legend Sugar Ray Leonard, Jared Allen, a defensive end for the Minnesota Vikings, Brian Kenny, an anchor on ESPN, and actress Mary Tyler Moore,

“When we found out he had diabetes, we promised him it would never stop him from doing anything. It hasn’t stopped him from doing a darn thing.”

KERRY DOHERTY

talking about her son Timmy Doherty

who is the international chairwoman for the foundation.

But the highlight of the trip was meeting President Barack Obama, who greeted the delegates on the White House lawn.

“That was amazing,” Doherty said. “We didn’t get to see him for that long, but it was pretty cool. We got to have our picture taken with him.”

The president told the delegates that he was proud of them and urged them to keep up the good work and to be strong, Doherty said.

The delegates were taken to the White House and then went outside, where they lined up for pictures, he said. First, some of the celebrities arrived and then they waited.

“Finally President Obama arrived and everybody kind of went crazy,” he

said. “Everyone was screaming and clapping and stuff.”

While the session with the president was the highlight of the trip, Doherty said he also enjoyed meeting Nick Jonas, although he is not a fan of the Jonas Brothers.

“I don’t like their music, but I like him a lot. He was pretty cool,” he said.

Meeting celebrities was fun for Doherty, but the main purpose of the June 22-24 event was to give the delegates a chance to tell their stories and to urge Congress to support an increase in federal funding for diabetes research.

To do that, Doherty and his mother, Kerry, met with Rhode Island’s two Democratic senators, Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse, and a staff member for Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy, also D-R.I.

The meeting with Whitehouse was impressive, Timmy Doherty said, because he took them into a Senate hearing on the health care reform package before Congress and showed them what was going on.

“All three said they would support what we needed them to support,” he said.

Doherty gave each of the three federal legislators a scrapbook his mother had put together showing facets of

CURE A4



Plenty of laughs

Children watch a performance by Keith Michael Johnson, pictured above, on Thursday during Children’s Night at Easton’s Beach in Newport.

David Hansen ♦ Daily News staff photos



MIDDLETOWN

Navy takes back tank farm

By Matt Sheley
Daily News staff

Tank Farm 5 in Middletown is going back to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Navy.

Navy officials recently informed town officials they want to have the exclusive right to police and patrol the area off Burma Road, which is home to the Navy’s firefighter school, Town Administrator Shawn J. Brown said.

In June 2008, the Town Council adopted several changes to the jurisdiction of properties both inside and outside the fence line of Naval Station Newport, including the designation of the tank farm, which was listed at that time as proprietary jurisdiction, meaning state and local fire and police personnel would respond to emergencies there.

But after reviewing the situation, the Navy approached the town about the issue again, saying it had reconsidered its position. The council agreed with the recommendation, and unanimously adopted a resolution approving the request from the Navy during a recent meeting.

“The Middletown Town Council resolution is in support of the initiative to logically align legislative jurisdiction for Navy property located within the two towns of Portsmouth and Middletown, as well as Navy property located within the city of Newport,” Naval Station Newport spokeswoman Lisa Rama said.

“Legislative jurisdiction over federal property does not affect who owns the property, but rather addresses which law applies — federal or state. This initiative to rationalize legislative jurisdiction at Naval Station Newport seeks to have the Navy exercise jurisdictional control over all parcels involving Navy mission-essential activities, and have the communities of Portsmouth, Middletown and Newport exercise local/state jurisdictional control over parcels involving non-mission-essential activities.”

Brown said it made sense to get everyone on the same page.

“Middletown is continuing to work with the Navy to reconcile what jurisdiction exists between the town and the Navy base,” Brown said. “We need to make those boundaries clear and it will lead to greater efficiencies with all sorts of operations, whether it’s inside or outside the fence line.”

Going back several years, responsibility for patrolling areas of Naval Station Newport had been in question.

The issue surfaced when the Landings neighborhood on Coddington Highway became a private apartment complex after being used for years as housing for Navy families.

The town was able to negotiate an agreement with the company that took over the property — GMH Military Housing — to receive payments of more than \$1 million a year and annual \$100,000 payments toward a new police station in return for police and fire protection for the Landings, Coddington Cove and Greene Lane neighborhoods. GMH was bought out by Balfour Beatty Communities in the spring of 2008, with the Britain-based firm pledging to honor that arrangement.

Middletown Finance Director Lynne S. Dible said Tuesday that Balfour Beatty was complying with the terms of the deal the town signed with GMH in August 2006.

“We are getting our monthly check and they’re honoring the contract,” Dible said.

Send reporter Matt Sheley e-mail at Sheley@NewportRI.com.

READING REAPS REWARDS

Two organizations donate to literacy program

The Newport County Fund of The Rhode Island Foundation has given a \$6,500 grant and the Rotary Club of Newport has given \$5,000 to Reading Reaps Rewards, Newport’s summer literacy program.

The initiative aims to ensure local children have access to learning opportunities throughout the summer and encourage them to keep up on their reading. And with a science theme for this summer’s initiative, the students — whether they realize it or not — will actually start thinking and acting like scientists as they acquire new knowledge and skills by studying and engaging in literacy-boosting, science-themed activities.

Educational research shows that students who read and engage in education-

al activities throughout the summer come back to school ready to learn and maintain or increase their reading comprehension level.

The funding allows the Newport Partnership for Families, the Newport Public Education Foundation, Newport public schools, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County, the Newport Community School and the Newport Family-Children Opportunity Zone to join forces again this summer to continue the R3 initiative and to work toward providing 300 Newport students in kindergarten through eighth grade with literacy development lessons including experiential and enrichment learning activities.

What can you do to support the literacy program?

♦ To become a trained literacy volunteer, contact Kathleen Shinnars, Coordinator of BOLD, or Books Opens Life’s Doors, at 847-2100, Ext. 267.

♦ To make a donation to the R3 Summer Literacy Fund, please make checks payable to the Newport Public Education Foundation and send them to the Newport Partnership for Families, 435 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840.

Throughout the summer, The Daily News will publish a weekly update on the program and its donors.

Donations received this week include:
♦ Michael and Ellen Murphy: \$50.
♦ Margaret E. O’Neil: \$50.

SEND US YOUR MEMORIES

Were you there in ‘65 when Dylan turned electric? When the Indigo Girls performed in a monsoon? When Pete Seeger led the crowd in “We Shall Overcome”?

The Daily News is looking for your Newport Folk Festival memories and pictures, as the festival celebrates its 50th anniversary in August.

Send your memories by e-mail by Saturday, July 25, to CityDesk@NewportRI.com or by mail to 101 Malbone Road, Newport, RI 02840.