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Submitted photo

Social studies teacher Ryan Hall has been selected as the Davies Career and Technical High School District Teacher of the Year. Pictured above, from left to right: Davies Director Mary Watkins; Katie Hall, Ryan's wife; Hall himself; and Harry Hall, Ryan's dad.

## Hall chosen as Davies' District Teacher of the Year

By JON BAKER  
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LINCOLN — When Ryan Hall opened the door to the conference room in the main office at William M. Davies Career & Technical High School on Wednesday morning, he knew something was awry when he saw a bunch of familiar faces smiling back at him.

"I thought it was one of two things — either an intervention or that I had won District Teacher of the Year," Hall deadpanned Friday. "By the way, yes, the intervention part is a joke. Anyway, I saw my wife, Katie, was there, and my dad, Harry, and a lot of my colleagues, those I have so much respect for.

"I have to say I'm humbled by all this, but it's not really my style," he

added. "I don't like the individual attention, the accolades, but I'm appreciative of it, of course. It's not something I seek out. I know there's a nomination process, and I know somebody nominated me; I had to go through the application process and provide a whole lot of information.

"The way I look at it, somebody thought I deserved this honor, so if I didn't apply for it, I would have been letting that person down, and I just wasn't going to do that. It wouldn't be fair to him or her. I was going to do my part."

According to Davies' Marketing & Communications Specialist Jax Adele Ventura, five esteemed educators were nominated, and their applications then meticulously studied by the Davies' District Evaluation Committee, which

used a comprehensive rubric to ensure fairness and transparency in the decision-making process.

Hall emerged victorious, Ventura said, "because Ryan's outstanding contributions to the field of education extend beyond the classroom. He exemplifies his passion for empowering students' voices and fostering a culture of belonging. As the advisor for the Social Justice Club, Ryan has led initiatives advocating for Healthy Meals for All in both school and the General Assembly.

"He also inaugurated an in-school thrift shop known as the Davies' Drip. Additionally, under his guidance, the club unveiled a Cultural Community Compact this school year, which serves as a guiding beacon for the Davies community."

This isn't the first time this year Hall has been recognized for his teaching and leadership prowess. Just a few months ago, he received the 2024 Providence Business News Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award.

In recognition of his achievement, Hall's name now will be forwarded to the R.I. Department of Education for further commendation; he, Burrillville District Teacher of the Year Gennaro Ferraro and numerous others statewide will be celebrated at the prestigious Waterfire's Salute to Educators event on Sept. 21.

Hall also will have the chance to run for the title of R.I. Teacher of the Year if he so chooses. As a token of appreciation for his stellar contributions, he

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## Police arrest 3 after routine check at local tent village

By RUSS OLIVO  
Contributing Writer

WOONSOCKET — A routine police check on a tent village beneath the Court Street Bridge took a turn for the chaotic May 31 as one man leaped into the Blackstone River to escape from officers, another got in a scuffle with them and a woman allegedly smeared three police cruisers with lipstick, scrawling the word "pig" on one.

The alleged scuffler, Jaime Perez-Rivera — already charged with obstructing and resisting as a result of that encounter with law enforcement — was arrested again on the very same charges three

days later, when police made another visit to the encampment. This time, police say, Perez-Rivera was running toward the Blackstone River when Officer Robert Frye shot him with a Taser, stunning him long enough for Frye and another officer to get handcuffs on him.

During the initial visit to the encampment, the first person to catch the attention of the police was Alfredo A. Balestier-Sanchez, 43, of 149 Second Ave. Police say he appeared to be quietly slipping away from a group of individuals when he noticed the arrival of officers, before picking up

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## Fauci pushes back partisan attacks in fiery House hearing over COVID origins and controversies

By LAURAN NEERGAARD  
AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON — Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert until leaving the government in 2022, was back before Congress on Monday, calling "simply preposterous" Republican allegations that he'd tried to cover up origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A GOP-led subcommittee has spent over a year probing the nation's response to the pandemic and whether U.S.-funded research in China may have played any role in how it started — yet

found no evidence linking Fauci to wrongdoing.

He'd already been grilled behind closed doors, for 14 hours over two days in January. But Monday, Fauci testified voluntarily in public and on camera at a hearing that quickly deteriorated into partisan attacks.

Republicans repeated unproven accusations against the longtime National Institutes of Health scientist while Democrats apologized for Congress besmirching his name and bemoaned a missed opportunity to prepare for the next scary outbreak.

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## Company that bred beagles for research pleads guilty to neglect, ordered to pay record \$35M fine

By MATTHEW BARAKAT  
Associated Press

A company that bred beagles for medical research agreed Monday to pay a record \$35 million as part of a criminal plea

admitting it neglected thousands of dogs at its breeding facility in rural Virginia.

Prosecutors said the penalties amount to the largest ever levied in an animal-welfare case.

The plea deal also bars

the company that operated the facility, Envigo RMS, as well as parent company Inotiv, from breeding or selling dogs in the future.

The federal investigation of Envigo drew national attention in May 2022 when federal author-

ities conducted a search of the breeding facility in Cumberland County, Virginia, and found nearly 450 animals in acute distress.

The company later agreed to relinquish all 4,000 beagles at the facili-

ty, which were sent around the country for adoption.

U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Virginia Christopher Kavanaugh, whose office prosecuted the case, said Monday after a plea hearing at federal

court in Charlottesville that Envigo and Inotiv "prioritized profits and convenience over following the law."

He said the company generated \$16 million in

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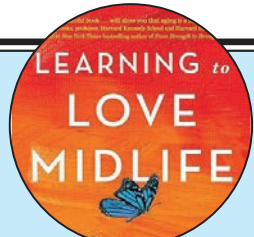
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# Fauci

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"He is not a comic book super villain," said Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., saying the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic had failed to prove a list of damaging allegations.

Fauci was the public face of the government's early COVID-19 response under then-President Donald Trump and later as an adviser to President Joe Biden. A trusted voice to millions, he also was the target of partisan anger and choked up Monday as he recalled death threats and other harassment of himself and his family, threats he said still continue. Police later escorted hecklers out of the hearing room.

The main issue: Many scientists believe the virus most likely emerged in nature and jumped from animals to people, probably at a wildlife market in Wuhan, the city in China where the outbreak began. There's no new scientific information supporting that the virus might instead have leaked from a laboratory. A U.S. intelligence analysis says there's insufficient evidence to prove either way -- and a recent Associated Press investigation found the Chinese government

froze critical efforts to trace the source of the virus in the first weeks of the outbreak.

Fauci has long said publicly that he was open to both theories but that there's more evidence supporting COVID-19's natural origins, the way other deadly viruses including coronaviruses cousins SARS and MERS jumped into people. It was a position he repeated Monday as Republican lawmakers questioned if he worked behind-the-scenes to squelch the lab-leak theory or even tried to influence intelligence agencies.

"I have repeatedly stated that I have a completely open mind to either possibility and that if definitive evidence becomes available to validate or refute either theory, I will readily accept it," Fauci said. He later invoked a fictional secret agent, decrying a conspiracy theory that "I was parachuting into the CIA like Jason Bourne and told the CIA that they should really not be talking about a lab leak."

Republicans also have accused Fauci of lying to Congress in denying that his agency funded "gain of function" research -- the practicing of enhancing a virus in a lab to study its potential real-world impact -- at a lab in Wuhan. NIH for years gave

grants to a New York nonprofit called EcoHealth Alliance that used some of the funds to work with a Chinese lab studying coronaviruses commonly carried by bats. Last month, the government suspended EcoHealth's federal funding, citing its failure to properly monitor some of those experiments.

The definition of "gain of function" covers both general research and especially risky experiments to "enhance" the ability of potentially pandemic pathogens to spread or cause severe disease in humans. Fauci stressed he was using the risky experiment definition, saying "it would be molecularly impossible" for the bat viruses studied with EcoHealth's funds to be turned into the virus that caused the pandemic.

In an exchange with Rep. H. Morgan Griffith, R-Va., Fauci acknowledged that the lab leak is still an open question since it's impossible to know if some other lab, not funded by NIH money, was doing risky research with coronaviruses.

Fauci did face a new set of questions about the credibility of NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which he led for 38 years. Last month, the House

panel revealed emails from an NIAID colleague about ways to evade public records laws, including by not discussing controversial pandemic issues in government email.

Fauci denounced the actions of that colleague and insisted that "to the best of my knowledge I have never conducted official business via my personal email."

The pandemic's origins weren't the only hot topic. The House panel also blasted some public health measures taken to slow spread of the virus before COVID-19 vaccines, spurred by NIAID research, helped allow a return to normalcy. Ordering people to stay 6 feet apart meant many businesses, schools and churches couldn't stay open, and subcommittee chairman Rep. Brad Wenstrup, R-Ohio, called it a "burdensome" and arbitrary rule, noting that in his prior closed-door testimony Fauci had acknowledged it wasn't scientifically backed.

Fauci responded Monday that the 6-foot distancing wasn't his guideline but one created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention before scientists had learned that the new virus was airborne, not spread simply by droplets emitted a certain distance.

# Obituaries

## Claire K. Lambert

Claire K Lambert 82, passed away on June 2, 2024, at St. Antoine Residence. She was the wife of the late Ronald J. Lambert. Born in Woonsocket, she was a daughter of the late Roy and Beatrice (Gelinas) Falardeau. Claire worked for the Dennison Manufacturing Co. for ten years before retiring. After her retirement she worked part time at Diamond Hill Laundromat for seven years. Claire enjoyed crocheting and was an avid bingo player. She is survived by her sons Joseph McKenna and Brendan McKenna both of Woonsocket, Michael McKenna and his husband Sid Paul of Richmond, VA and Kevin McKenna and his husband Joseph Lugo of Warwick, four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her brother Roger Elvis Falardeau.

Her funeral will be held Thursday, June 6, 2024, at 9:00 AM from the Fournier & Fournier Funeral Home, 99 Cumberland St. Woonsocket with a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 AM at St. Josephs Church, Mendon Rd., Woonsocket. Visiting hours are Wednesday, June 5, 2024, from 4-6 PM. Please visit [www.fournierandfournier.com](http://www.fournierandfournier.com) for guestbook and directions.