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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

NEWSSTAND: \$1.50

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

See ARREST, page A2

Fauci pushes back partisan

By JON BAKER

jbaker@pawtuckettimes.com

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

See HALL, page A2

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.

See FAUCI, page A2

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 authorities 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-

ities conducted a search ty, which were sent around of the breeding facility in 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

See BEAGLES, page A3

INSIDE: HEALTH

can help

Page A3

Learning to Love Midlife

How reframing your mind-set



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INDEX:	
Amusements	A5
Calendar	A6
Comics	B5
Lotteries	A2
Obituaries	A2
Opinion	A4
Sports	B1

WEATHER: TODAY High: 75 Low: 55 LEARNING 10 LOVE MIDLIFE

FROM PAGE ONE

PAWTUCKET - John W.

O' Connor, 73, a lifelong resi-

dent of Pawtucket, passed away

peacefully on Thursday, May

30, 2024, at the HopeHealth

Hulitar Hospice Center in Provi-

dence. Born in Pawtucket, RI,

on November 3, 1950, he was

the son of the late James O'Con-

John grew up in Pawtucket and

was employed for many years as

an independent auto mechanic.

He formerly worked for the

nor, Sr. and Mary Rose Lima.

Fauci

Continued from page A1

"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 grants to a New York nontrace 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 coronavirus cousins SARS and MERS jumped into people. It was a position he repeated Monday as Republican lawmakers questioned if he worked behind-thescenes to squelch the lableak 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 ready 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

profit 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 coronavirus-

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."

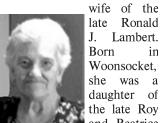
The pandemic's origins weren't the only hot topic. The House panel also blasted some public health measures taken to slow spread of the virus before COVID-19 vaccines, spurred by NIAID research, helped allow a return to normalcy. Ordering people to stay 6 feet apart meant many businesses, schools and 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-feet 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 John W. O'Connor

Claire K. Lambert

Claire K Lambert 82, passed away on June 2, 2024, at St. Antoine Residence. She was the



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 greatgrandchildren. 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 for guestbook and directions.

United States Postal Service. John was a veteran the of Vietnam War, serving his country proudly in the

United States Army. While serv-💐 ing in the Army, he was a

fireman, dealing with chemical warfare, and was honorably discharged on November 9, 1969, with the rank of Private First Class.

John enjoyed martial arts movies, was an avid reader and writer, and enjoyed researching various topics including health, politics, and current events. He was a wealth of knowledge and also enjoyed going for walks.

He is survived by his daughter Holly A. St. Jean and her partner Tyrone Ball, Sr. of Pawtucket, and his son Joseph Hetu and his late wife Kathy of Delaware; and his step-daughter Nicole Drury and her husband Thomas of Riverside. He was the grandfather of Joseph Hetu, Jr. of Delaware. He was the brother of Steven O'Connor and his wife Susan of Attleboro, Clara Perry and her late husband Rick of Pawtucket, and the late James O'Connor, Jr. He also leaves many nieces and nephews.

His funeral, to which relatives and friends are most kindly in vited to attend, will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, beginning with a time for visitation from 9:00 to 11:00 AM in the Sperry & McHoul Funeral Home, 15 Grove Street, North Attleboro, with a funeral service commencing promptly at 11:00 AM in the funeral home. Interment with full military honors will follow in Rumford Ceme tery, East Providence.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy in John's name may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project by mailing a check to P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, Kansas 66675-8516, or online at

Arrest

Continued from page A1

the pace and bolting for the Blackstone River.

Balestier-Sanchez jumped in and tried swimming across the Blackstone, police say, but he was pushed back by the current and climbed up the bank about 200 feet downriver. Officers caught up with him near Sheehan Printing, on the north side of the Court Street Bridge. Officers Daniel something before he was taken into custody. They later found \$676 in dripping-wet cash, which was later returned to Balestier-Sanchez.

He was charged with obstructing police.

As officers were taking Perez-Rivera into custody, they had a run-in with Wanda Iveliz Garcia, one of several people who were allegedly taunting police officers by yelling and jeering as they were arresting Perez-Rivera.

"Wanda was screaming and yelling at officers saw him running behind a during the whole interactent and attempt to conceal tion," Glod's report says.

Police seemed willing to overlook the behavior until they were wrapping up their visit and got a look at their cruisers. Three of them were smeared with bright red lipstick. Suspicion fell on Garcia and police later found a mashedup tube of lipstick in her purse that they say was a match for the pigment on the cruisers.

Garcia, 43, of 176 Sayles St., was charged with disorderly conduct. The address she gave is that of the Woonsocket Homeless Shelter, accord-

Police say there are 5-10 tents in the encampment, with 15-20 people living in them at any given time. A similar number of individuals are described in police reports as "transients," meaning they may gather there but aren't necessarily homeless.

The police say the encampment is a magnet for crime - including complaints of open-air drug abuse and assaults.

Indeed, when police returned to the homeless camp on June 2 it was to investigate a report that someone had been threat- not want to talk to them, org. To sign an online guestened with a gun. When police said.

they arrived, Perez-Rivera allegedly ran from them, prompting his second arrest in three days.

When officers asked him why he ran, Perez-Sanchez said he was afraid of police. They found no firearm or contraband of any kind in his possession. But he told officers he had a cigarette lighter that looked like a gun. He denied threatening anyone with it and was not charged with any assault-related offense. The individual who reported the incident to dispatch did

Glod and Omar Diedhiou



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ing to the assessor's database.

Continued from page A1

Hall really never pondered

teaching as a career while

growing up in Coventry.

He graduated from Coven-

try High School in 1999,

then took some time off

before choosing to attend

the New England Institute

of Technology in 2005 at

age 25. He later earned a

Bachelor's in Digital Re-

landed a job in the admis-

sions department at Roger

Williams University, and

colleagues used to tell him

that he should consider

chasing a career in edu-

cation because "I was so

good with kids," he said.

"My entire background up

to working at Roger Wil-

liams was working in the

technical world, though I

Not long after, Hall

cording Arts in 2009.

though,

won a \$2,000 prize.

Remarkably,

Hall

was also involved in youth development. That was in 2012-14."

In August 2014, he began teaching at The Greene School in West Greenwich and loved it; he was there for five years, then shifted over to Davies and has spent the last five there.

He refused to take credit for starting the Social Justice Club.

"That's an offshoot of what used to be the Diversity Club, which allowed people to express themselves and their thoughts on diverse ideas" he said. "We had a strong group of seniors who went on to graduate, and the club started to dwindle; that club was started by Akash Shah, but he had to step away as he took new responsibilities. He's now teaching chemistry and physics.

"When it started to fade, there weren't many

takers on it, but we kind of rebranded it as the Social Justice Club, and we have fun. I'm the advisor, I guess, but I have plenty of help from Dina Louis and Schelene Plante.

"The purpose of the club? We just try to give these kids a chance to understand that they can have a voice and be heard. We give them the opportunity to process thoughts that they're having around social justice issues that particular day. We talk about all sorts of things and figure out how to do research and how to clarify our thoughts and opinions.

"We make sure we're getting good resources and engaging in the world around us.'

When asked if he's involved with other activities on campus, Hall said he likes to see what other clubs are up to, and that includes sports.

"I always show up to whatever sporting event is going on; I try to get to at least one event for every team we have per season," he said. "The whole idea is that we are a school of choice; people decide they want to come here, and that gives us a little bit more of a challenge in that we're not a built-in community, like you have at Tolman or Shea or Central Falls or Lincoln.

"We don't have any community buildings, like 'Davies Town Hall.' a

www.woundedwarriorproject. book, please visit www.sperry mchoul.com.

Those public high schools have their own built-in communities. It's a little more work we have to do to build and maintain our community, so that's really my focus and what I want to accomplish with our kids. That comes from teacher and administration support."

According to Hall, now that he's the District Teacher of the Year, he will join other such winners around the state at workshops and other events and glean ideas how to better their schools; thy will bring that information back to their educators to disseminate and enact.

"From what I understand, we'll be focused on discussing professional development based on teachers' leadership, what that looks like and feels like," he said. "We'll discuss tricks and figure some stuff out, but that's all I know so far. I'm excited to learn more about what a district teacher of the year does."

When asked what his dad said to him when he accepted such a prestigious laurel, Hall grinned,

'You know, he's not much of a talker, and I don't remember exactly what he said, but it was something along the lines of, 'Well, we must have done something right.' Obviously, he referred to him and my mom Georgeana, who died a few years ago.

"I think he was happy."



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