

Weather

Mostly sunny
Forecast, B8

The Providence Journal

Home Delivery
401.277.7600

THURSDAY, September 20, 2012 | providencejournal.com

CRIME

Agents seize \$1 million in bogus goods

Items include thousands of knock-off professional sports jerseys; former owner of Warwick sports card store charged



JOURNAL/MARY MURPHY

A counterfeit Gronkowski jersey, among hundreds confiscated in the raid, is packed in a box. **Video at providencejournal.com**

By **KAREN LEE ZINER** and **THOMAS MORGAN**
JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

PROVIDENCE — Federal agents raided a Warwick house Wednesday, arresting the owner and seizing thousands of knock-off professional sports jerseys allegedly smuggled from China, along with a large volume of beauty products that were also possibly counterfeit, officials said.

The sports jerseys had an estimated street value of \$1 million.

Norman Cipriano Jr., 40, a convicted felon whose criminal history dates to the 1990s, appeared Wednesday afternoon before U.S. Special Magistrate Judge Lincoln D. Al-

SEE **RAID, A11**

CAMPAIGN 2012

Incumbent wins by single vote

Board of Elections denies manual recount sought by Rep. San Bento's Democratic primary challenger

By **PHILIP MARCELO**
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — State Rep. William San Bento Jr. has been officially declared the winner of his Sept. 11 primary race, edging out Carlos E. Tobon by a single vote, after the Democratic challenger's request for a manual recount was denied by the state Board of Elections on Wednesday.

The long-serving Pawtucket Democrat won the race for the House District 58 seat, 544 to 543, in what officials said was one of the closest races in Rhode Island's modern election history.

"I'm ecstatic. It turned out the way I wanted it to. It was a close race, but I guess there are people that still want me



Tobon



San Bento

Watch the Board of Elections recount hearing at providencejournal.com

back," San Bento said.

A deputy majority leader first elected in 1992, he is expected to assume the seat as there is no challenger in the Nov. 6 general election.

On Monday, officials con-

SEE **RECOUNT, A2**

Persistence pays off for newly minted lawmaker

After four previous losses, Marvin Abney prevails in Democratic primary over political veteran

By **KATHERINE GREGG**
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

Marvin Abney has been on the Newport ballot five times since 2001. His first time out, the native Texan ran for a seat on the School Committee; the next three times, the City Council. No dice.

And the way he tells it, he

might have sat out this election had his 29-year-old son Christian, a U.S. Army captain headed back to the Middle East for a second tour of duty, not said to him: "If I can leave in a few hours to go to Afghanistan to fight in a war, you can walk the streets of Newport and Middletown and ask people to vote for you to help change our society."

"And he said, 'How about that, Dad?' And I thought:

SEE **ABNEY, A11**

CENTRAL FALLS | MAYORAL INVESTIGATION

"[Mayor Moreau] violated his oath to the people of Central Falls."

Peter F. Neronha, U.S. Attorney for Rhode Island



Moreau

Mayor to plead guilty to fraud

Moreau resigns post before charges filed



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL/JOHN FREIDAH

U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha announces the guilty pleas Wednesday. At left are State Police Detective Kenneth Bounaiuto, U.S. Attorney Terrence P. Donnelly, Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin, and State Police Col. Steven G. O'Donnell.

He faces federal charges of steering work to a contractor friend in exchange for gratuities

By **W. ZACHARY MALINOWSKI**
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER



JOURNAL FILES/BOB BREIDENBACH

This house at 1 Fales St. in Central Falls was one of many boarded up by contractor Michael G. Bouthillette.

PROVIDENCE — Long-serving Central Falls Mayor Charles D. Moreau, a controversial Democrat known for his bombastic and bullying style, has agreed to plead guilty to taking illegal gratuities from a contractor friend who boarded up hundreds of vacant buildings in the state's poorest city.

Moreau, 48, resigned as mayor at noon Wednesday, about an hour before charg-

For video from Wednesday's press conference, go to providencejournal.com

es were filed in U.S. District Court. His lawyer, former House Speaker William J. Murphy, dropped off the resignation letter at 10:01 a.m. at the secretary of state's office.

SEE **MOREAU, A10**

Probe raises questions of Moreau's residency

State police reviewing private investigator's finding that former mayor's vehicle was often sighted at wife's home in Lincoln

By **W. ZACHARY MALINOWSKI**
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

CENTRAL FALLS — Charles D. Moreau is no longer mayor. But one question continues to dog him: has he been living in Lincoln with his wife and two

young children while claiming he resides in Central Falls with his campaign treasurer and her husband?

An unnamed city resident hired a private investigator twice this summer to conduct surveillance of the long-sit-

ting mayor to determine whether he was living at his declared address of 150 Jenks Ave., or at the home owned by his wife at 1906 Old Louisquisset Pike in Lincoln.

Over the course of 23½ hours in June, August and September, the Cranston-based investigator,

SEE **RESIDENCE, A10**

CRIME

Wild chase ends with officers hurt, shots fired

Sean Sparfven, 30, crashes his tow truck into his own house while trying to flee

By **AMANDA MILKOVITS**
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — A state police investigation into a tow-truck driver suspected of stealing cars turned into chaos Wednesday afternoon — with five officers injured, the driver's sister hurt in a police shooting, and several

cruisers smashed in a wild pursuit.

Sean Sparfven, 30, was captured after he crashed his tow truck into his own house in the Olneyville neighborhood. He is expected to be arraigned in Dis-

SEE **CHASE, A2**

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL/FRIEDA SQUIRES

Velma Sparfven, mother of Renee and Sean Sparfven, screams at the police Wednesday afternoon. See video at providencejournal.com.

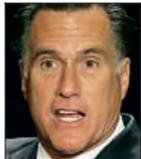


Inside today

© 2012 Published daily since 1829

Ask Amy	D10	Lotteries	C2
Bridge	D10	Money & Markets	B2
Classified	C7	Obituaries	B5
Comics	D12	People	B1
Crossword	D10	Rhode Island	A4
Editorial	B6	Sports	C1
Go!	D1	Television	D11
Legal ads	A11	U.S. & World	B1

PolitiFact.com

Obama. PolitiFact National examines those claims. **A8-9**

Mitt Romney says that 47 percent of Americans pay no federal income tax and that people in that group largely support President



RHODE ISLAND R.I.'s Teacher of the Year

Jessica Waters, of Cumberland, a former high school dropout who now teaches at Beacon Charter High School in Woonsocket, is selected as Rhode Island's 2013 Teacher of the Year. **A4**

The Providence Journal SUMMERTIME FUND



A total of \$325 has been donated this week. See the total donations on Page A10