

GLOOM
Occasional showers today,
with highs in the mid 40s;
overcast tonight.
Forecast, F10

The Providence Journal

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WEDNESDAY
APRIL 18, 2007
50¢
\$2.40 per week by carrier

SHOOTINGS AT VIRGINIA TECH

Troubled student blamed in killings

Passionate life lost in massacre

Daniel O'Neil, from Lincoln, was pursuing a graduate degree at Virginia Tech.

BY TOM MOONEY
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

As the gunman set about Monday morning slaughtering one student, one professor after another, and the hours-long terror unfolding on the Virginia Tech campus flared across television screens, friends of Daniel O'Neil tried to reach their fellow graduate of Lincoln High School.



O'NEIL

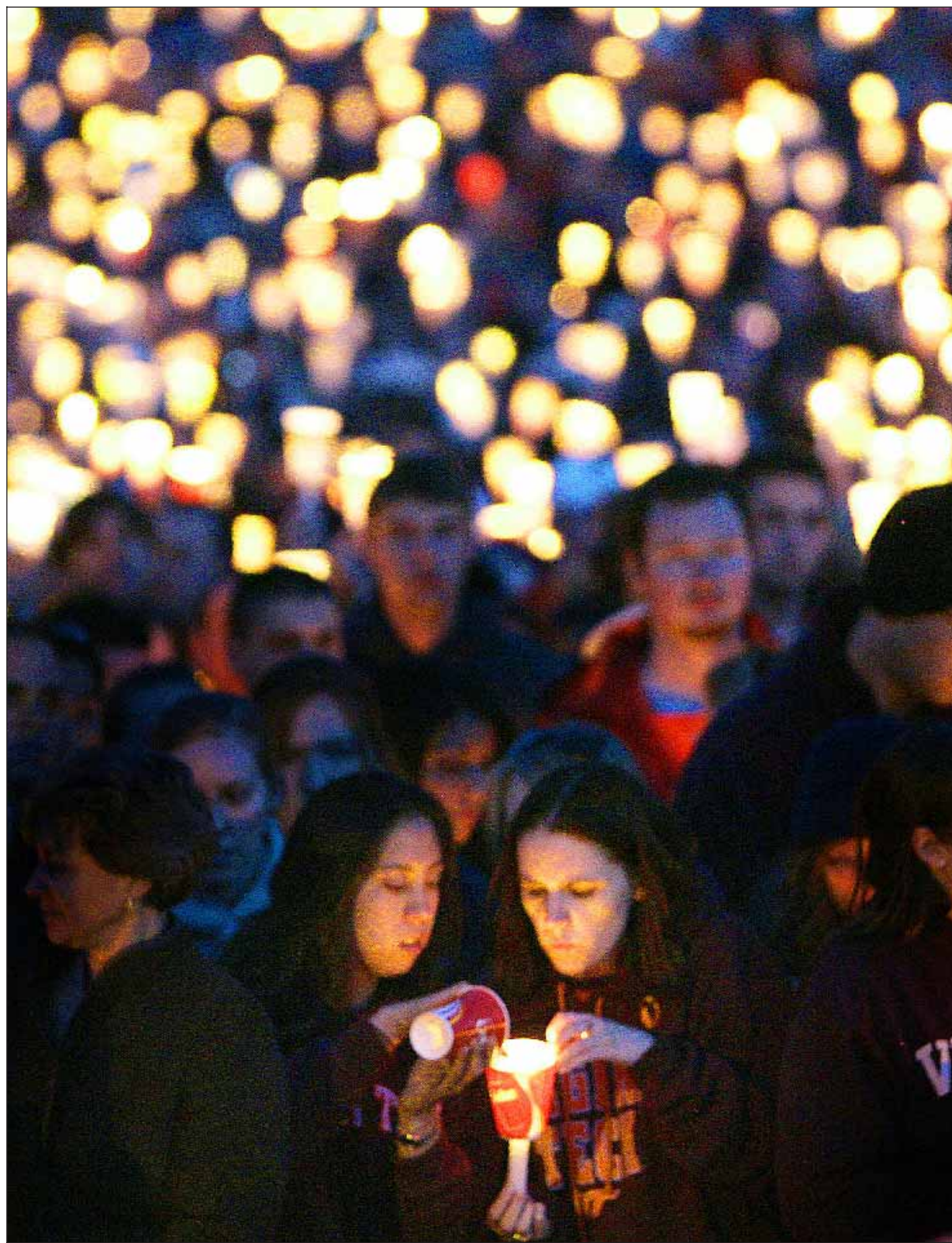
Adie Buchinsky, attending graduate school in Washington, D.C., left a message on O'Neil's telephone: "I know this is probably paranoid because I know it happened in a dorm and you don't live in a dorm, but it would be nice to hear your voice."

Then Buchinsky spoke to Amanda Burbank, a mutual friend of O'Neil's. She told her that while the killer had started in a dorm, CNN was reporting that he had moved to Norris Hall, the engineering building where O'Neil attended classes for his graduate degree in ground water hydrology.

As the hours wore on and the death toll climbed, no one heard from Dan O'Neil, the talented guitar player and songwriter, the National Honor Society student who when asked in his 2002 high school yearbook about his life ambition joked in typical style: "Never Stop Watching Disney."

"We were all calling back and forth all day," Buchinsky said. "By 9 p.m., we knew he had been shot but they still hadn't identified him" as one of the fatal victims.

SEE O'NEIL, A4



Students and town residents gather last night at Drill Field at Virginia Tech. The candlelight vigil was held to honor those who were slain in Monday's massacre.

AP / AMY SANCETTA

False lead sidetracked initial hunt

BY SHAILA DEWAN AND JOHN M. BRODER
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BLACKSBURG, Va. — The police identified Cho Seung-Hui, a 23-year-old student, as the killer of 32 people in the shooting rampage at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, releasing new details yesterday into the troubled mind of a young man whom few people on campus knew.



CHO

Federal investigators said Cho — a South Korean immigrant who Westernized his name and preferred to be known as Seung Cho — left behind a note that they described as a lengthy, rambling and bitter list of complaints focusing on moral laxity and double-dealing he found among what he viewed as wealthier and more privileged students on campus.

And new information emerged that may help explain a fateful two-hour delay by university officials in warning the campus of a gunman at large. According to search warrants and statements from the police, campus investigators had been busy pursuing what appears to have been a fruitless lead in the first of two shooting episodes Monday.

After two people, Emily Jane Hilscher, a freshman, and Ryan Clark, the resident adviser who lived next door in a dormitory, were shot dead, the campus police filed a search warrant for the home of Karl D. Thornhill, who was described in Internet memorials as Hilscher's boyfriend.

According to the warrant, Hilscher's roommate had told the police that Thornhill, a student at nearby Radford University, had guns at his townhouse. The roommate told the police that she had recently been at a shooting range with Thornhill, the affidavit said, leading the police to believe he may have been the gunman.

But as they were questioning Thornhill, reports came in of widespread shooting at Norris Hall on the campus, making it clear that Thornhill was not the killer they were seeking. He was not arrested, although he continues to be an important witness in the case, the police said.

Col. W. Steven Flaherty, the superintendent of the state police, said, "There was certainly no evidence or no reason to think that there was

SEE SHOOTINGS, A2

In R.I., college officials scrutinize their safety plans

"This has raised a whole new level of awareness," says a Community College of Rhode Island administrator.

BY AMANDA MILKOVITS AND JENNIFER JORDAN
JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

The candlelight vigils on college campuses across Rhode Island began at sundown Monday, just hours after the nation's deadliest mass shooting in history. The soul searching among col-

lege and university administrators was already under way.

They looked at the stricken faces of the Virginia Tech college president and the campus police chief, the grieving students rushing away from the grounds, and saw a reflection of their own nightmare. Here in Rhode Island,

they wondered, are we ready if the worst happens?

Administrators at all of the colleges and universities in Rhode Island said yesterday that they have emergency response plans to handle any kind of crisis, including a shooter, on their campuses. They said they have systems in place to contact students, faculty and staff — e-mails to campus accounts, automatic calls to campus

phones, postings on the school homepage, signs and staffers sent door-to-door — when they need to alert the entire campus population swiftly.

They have close ties with local police departments, which patrol the open campuses and may be granted access to the colleges' surveillance cameras during an incident.

SEE SECURITY, A3

Submarine takes unexpected dive

A Russian relic of the Cold War on display in Providence succumbs to recent stormy weather.

BY DANIEL BARBARISI
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — When a submarine goes under water, it's not normally cause for alarm. But when the Juliett 484 started sinking Monday afternoon, something was clearly wrong.

The Juliett 484, a Russian ballistic missile submarine and museum exhibit moored in shallow water in Providence Harbor, began to take on water during the storm that drenched the Northeast.

The stern of the boat is now under water, and the bow is arching out of the water at a 30-degree angle. The grounded submarine is listing to its port side in its berth at Collier Point Park.

Yesterday, a salvage expert from New Jersey

arrived from the company that helped to refloat the retired American sub Growler, berthed next to the Intrepid in New York Harbor.

Stephen Lappies of Donjon Marine went inside the Juliett and found that the back quarter of the sub, including the aft torpedo room and the aft control room, were largely filled with water.

There also was several feet of water in compartments closer to the center of the submarine. It'll be some combination of "pumping and patching" that gets the boat afloat, Lappies said.

It could be days before that begins, and could take some time to accomplish.

Frank Lennon, president of the Russian Sub Museum, said the organization would take its time in refloating Juliett 484, because the boat is

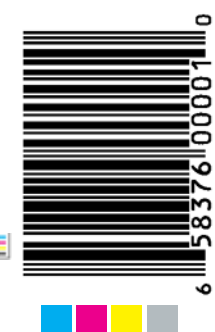
SEE SUB, B6

Along Maine coast, storm takes a heavy toll



Residents yesterday view the damage caused by the powerful storm that continues to linger over the Northeast. These two rental cottages in the Ferry Beach section of Saco, Maine, had their foundations washed away.

AP / ROBERT F. BUKATY



INSIDE TODAY

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7 SECTIONS

Ask Army	E8	Local News	C1
Bridge	E8	Lotteries	C4
Business	F1	Obituaries	D4
Classified	F7	People	E5
Comics	E9	projoCars	G1
Crossword	E8	Rhode Island	B1
Editorial	B4	Sports	C1
Food	E1	Television	E10
Legal ads	F4	What's Happening	E8
Lifebeat	E5		

CMYK

A1 MAIN 4/18

WASTED EFFORT BY DICE-K

Daisuke Matsuzaka strikes out 10 over six innings but the Red Sox lose to the Blue Jays, 2-1. **C1**



LAFFEY NOW AN AUTHOR

Former Cranston Mayor Stephen P. Laffey has written a book about his failed attempt to win the GOP's nomination to run for the U.S. Senate last year and what it may say about the Republican Party nationally. **B1**



COOKING FOR THE KENNEDYS

A new book by Neil Connolly is equally at home on a coffee table or in the kitchen as it describes what it was like being the personal chef for the matriarch of the Kennedy clan. **E1**