

SHOWERS
High 52, with rain
increasing tonight.
Forecast, A12

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THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

Foxwoods dealers vote to unionize

The vote, the first of its kind, is expected to have a ripple effect on casinos owned by Indian tribes nationwide.

BY PAT EATON-ROBB
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARTFORD, Conn. — Dealers at the Foxwoods Resort Casino have voted to unionize, a move Connecticut's attorney general says could have a "seismic" impact at Indian casinos across the nation.

The dealers at the tribal casino in southeastern Connecticut voted 1,289 to 852 in favor of joining the United Auto Workers, which represents about 6,000 gambling workers in Atlantic City, N.J., Detroit and Newport.

"It's a significant step forward for [gambling] employees who work on tribal lands," said Elizabeth Bunn, the secretary-treasurer of the UAW. "I think it will embolden workers at other tribal casinos."

Greyhound racing opponents seek a ban for the third time in Mass. **Page A8**

Yesterday's vote was held after the National Labor Relations Board rejected a motion by the casino's owners, the Mashantucket Pequot, to delay the process while the board reviews the ruling by regional NLRB officials that found the dealers had the right to unionize.

The regional office had rejected the Mashantucket's argument that tribal employment law has jurisdiction in the matter.

"We are disappointed with the preliminary tally, however, these results will not be official until all legal issues, including jurisdiction, are resolved," said John O'Brien, the casino's president. "We continue to believe as we have from the very beginning that the Labor Board lacked jurisdiction and that any election should have been governed by tribal laws."

Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, who had argued in favor of the right to unionize at the casino, predicted the vote will be

SEE **CASINO, A8**

U.N. envoy to report on Burma

His fact-finding visit to the embattled Southeast Asian country will also be the subject of an address at Brown University.

BY KAREN LEE ZINER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — The people of Burma live largely in the absence of basic human rights. Yet last month's pro-democracy demonstrations, met by a government crackdown, are "a sign that society is alive and attentive," says the United Nations' human-rights envoy to Burma, who recently returned from a fact-finding mission to the country.

Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, the U.N. special rapporteur for human rights, said he is hopeful that crisis in Burma (called Myanmar by the country's ruling generals) will open the door to change, but he stressed that no change can happen without the involvement of all political parties.

The international visibility that the crackdown created, including widely disseminated images of troops opening fire on monks and students, "will be very difficult to forget," said Pinheiro, the Cogut visiting professor at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies.

SEE **BURMA, A4**

PATS ARE STILL PEERLESS

Asante Samuel snares the first of two interceptions — this one, on the Eagles' first drive of the game, he ran back for a touchdown — in the New England Patriots' hard-fought victory over the Philadelphia Eagles last night in Foxboro. The Patriots remain the NFL's only undefeated team. **See Sports, B1. For a slide show of last night's game, go to projosports.com.**

Teen's death linked to heart condition



COURTESY OF BILL COULTER
Patrick Coulter, 14, collapsed Friday at the Dunkin' Donuts Center.

Patrick Coulter, 14, collapsed at the conclusion of a church Revival Night at the Dunkin' Donuts Center.

BY JOE McDONALD
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — The Coventry teenager who collapsed and died in the Dunkin' Donuts Center after a Providence Bruins hockey game Friday night apparently suffered cardiac arrest stemming from a condition that had been diagnosed years ago, his father said yesterday.

Patrick Coulter, 14, "was a good kid who just had a bad heart," Bill Coulter

said.

Patrick, a ninth grader at Coventry High School, was among several hundred members of church youth groups throughout the region who were attending the church Revival Night held annually at the arena. After the Bruins' game against the Portland Pirates, there was concert music and a speaker, and then a raffle.

Shortly before midnight, the crowd was waiting expectantly in the stands for the announcement of the winner of the grand prize, a Nintendo Wii video-game system. The winner was Patrick, his father said, and the boy jumped up and down excitedly before rushing down to

the ice to claim his prize.

Then he collapsed, falling into the penalty box, whose glass shield had been removed for the post-game events.

Emergency medical technicians on duty in the arena used an automatic external defibrillator "but were not able to bring him back," Bill Coulter said. "He did not have a heartbeat and they weren't able to establish one."

At age 6 or 7, Patrick was diagnosed with ventricular tachycardia, which can produce episodes of overly rapid heartbeat, his father said. "It's induced by stress and the push of adrenaline that

SEE **PATRICK, A8**

THE LONG DRIVE HOME: NO CRUSH, NO FUSS

Motorists returning to this area from Thanksgiving excursions report no significant holiday-related traffic delays.

BY PHILIP MARCELO
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Barely 5 miles into a 180-mile trip back to Providence from Long Island, N.Y., yesterday, traffic on the eight-lane Long Island Expressway heading west into Manhattan slowed to a 10-mph crawl.

It was 12:30 p.m., and I had to be at work by 3. I was certain I would be very late.

Although I had been warned about this very scenario just days ago, and urged to leave sooner — to prepare for the worst — I had not. Now I was stuck in traffic just three exits from where I had started.

But that bit of traffic would be the worst of it. The slowdown lasted five more miles, until the Cross Island Parkway interchange, setting me back a total of half an hour.

Route 95 north, once I reached it, was filled with more cars than usual for a weekend, but traffic moved at a steady clip. I would end up an hour late for work. Not terrible, considering how the trip started.

Others heading back to New England from states west and south were met with the same pleasant surprise.

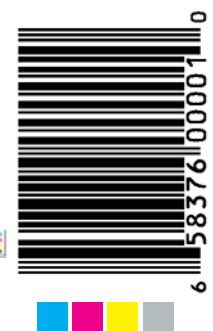
"You would expect it to be awful, but it was really OK," Barbara Carlson, of Carver, Mass., said as she browsed the tourism brochures at the Rhode Island Welcome Center in Richmond (on Route 95 north between exits 2 and 3) yesterday afternoon.

SEE **DRIVE, A6**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

Janette Eddinger and her son, Frank, of Pawtucket, take a break at the Rhode Island Welcome Center on Route 95 in Richmond on the way home from a holiday visit to Bridgeport, Conn.



INSIDE TODAY

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SYRIA JOINS MIDEAST TALK

With assurances that Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights will be among the agenda items, Syria joins Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arab League participants in agreeing to attend the Middle East peace meeting that begins tonight in Washington. **A2**

TOO-PRECIOUS GOLD

With gold selling for nearly \$800 an ounce — a level not seen since 1980 — jewelers are bracing for a dent in sales this holiday season. **A10**

WHY DO WE CRY AT THE MOVIES?



What turns on the faucets — a truly moving movie or the psychological baggage we haul in with us? Is it empathy, or you-are-so-busted guilt? A few authors peer into the psyche of the moviegoer. **D1**