

REMEMBERING THE STATION FIRE



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / CONNIE GROSCH

After five years, as memorials on the Station nightclub site weather and fade, above, plans are unveiled yesterday to establish what some characterize as a living memorial, to be called the Station Fire Memorial Park, below.

Vision: A 'healing' park

Hundreds gather at the nightclub site on the fifth anniversary of the disastrous blaze.

BY KAREN LEE ZINER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

WEST WARWICK — At the site where flame and smoke stole 100 lives five years ago, there may eventually be a sculpture garden, a meandering path, and a 100-string wind harp set into an entry bridge.

And where a night of horror ended in ash and dust at the Station nightclub on Feb. 20, 2003, a stream fed by a "ripple pool" will add a contemplative note to individual commemorative gardens, a courtyard and a timber-framed "meeting house."

During a fifth-anniversary memorial service attended by several hundred people yesterday, The Station Fire Memorial Foundation unveiled a design for a permanent memorial park at the site. The design, selected after a nationwide search, is the work of two Rhode Islanders, architect Stephen Greenleaf and designer Tom Viall, general manager of RI.gov.

SEE STATION, A4



projo.com Extra: For our continuing special report on the Station fire and its aftermath, go to projo.com/stationfire

Kosovo severs its ties with Serbia

But Belgrade quickly rejects its former province's declaration of independence as Washington and Moscow spar over the troubled region's uncertain future.

BY TRACY WILKINSON
LOS ANGELES TIMES

PRISTINA, Kosovo — In a move that inflamed tensions in this volatile region, the ethnic Albanian government of Kosovo yesterday proclaimed the province independent from Serbia, forming a new and very troubled country in Europe.

Serbia called the declaration illegal and its ally Russia denounced it, saying it threatened to touch off a new conflict in the Balkans. The United States, the biggest sponsor of independence for Kosovo, is expected to recognize the new state quickly, as will some European nations.

The declaration of independence was met by wild celebrations in Kosovo, violent protests in Serbia and a hastily called meeting of the U.N. Security Council, which failed to take any action.

The secession of Kosovo marks the latest chapter in the blood-soaked dissolution of what was once Yugoslavia. Kosovo joins five former republics that, beginning in 1991 with Slovenia, have withdrawn from Belgrade's reign and become sovereign states, often through devastating warfare.

Here in the frigid, snow-dusted streets of Pristina, Kosovo's capital, jubilant ethnic Albanians celebrated. All day long and into the night, they marched shoulder to shoulder down Mother Teresa Boulevard, many wrapped in the red-and-black flags of neighboring Albania as fireworks exploded across the sky.

"This is a great day, the best day in our lives," gushed Elmi Berisha, 37, a real-estate broker.

"Happy independence!" friends and acquaintances called out to one another amid hugs and kisses. Cars, their horns blaring, choked downtown Pristina, families danced, nationalist songs filled the air, and people partied in bars and restaurants offering

SEE KOSOVO, A6

An adult-style injury striking young athletes

And unlike their older counterparts, there is no easy treatment for a torn anterior cruciate ligament in growing children.

BY GINA KOLATA
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Last year, when Collin Link was 11 years old, he was tackled as he went in for a touchdown in pee-wee football.

"He didn't get up," his mother, Crystal Link, said. "He kept saying his knee hurt real bad." But Mrs. Link was not overly concerned, thinking it was just a sprain.

But the next morning when the family was getting ready to go to church near their home in The Woodlands, Texas, Collin said he could not walk. That Monday, a doctor told the Links what was wrong.

Collin had an injury that doctors used to think almost never occurred in children. He had torn the anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, in his left knee, the main ligament that stabilizes the joint.

The standard and effective treatment for such an injury in adults is surgery. But the operation poses a greater risk for children and adolescents who have not finished growing because it involves drilling into a growth plate, an area of still-developing tissue at the end of the leg bone.

Although there are no official numbers, orthopedists at leading medical centers estimate that several thousand children and young adolescents are

SEE ACL, A6

80 Afghans killed in bombing at dogfight

A foe of the Taliban who was attending the event — which remains popular in the country — may have been the target.

JOURNAL WIRE REPORTS

LAHORE, Pakistan — More than 80 people were killed yesterday morning in southern Afghanistan when a suicide bomber detonated explosives in a field full of men and boys watching dogfights near the city of Kandahar, police and government officials said.

The bombing, which also left at least 50 people injured, was the deadliest attack in the country since the Taliban were overthrown in 2001 and replaced by a civilian administration.

Officials said the death toll could

rise because many of the injuries were critical.

The bombing was the latest in a series of suicide attacks that have been attributed to the revived Taliban insurgency and its allies. In the past 18 months, bombers have attacked police and army buses, a group of legislators and schoolchildren outside a factory, and a five-star hotel in Kabul, the capital.

Several hundred people, including Afghan militia leaders, had

SEE AFGHANS, A6



AP / ALLAUDDIN KHAN

Vehicles belonging to Afghan police officers who had been assigned to provide protection at a dogfight in Kandahar, Afghanistan, sit destroyed by a terrorist bomb that killed 80 people watching the match. It was the largest single death toll since 2001.

INSIDE TODAY

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RECORD BEEF RECALL

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recalls 143 million pounds of frozen beef — the largest on record — produced at a California slaughterhouse that had been the subject of an animal-abuse investigation. **A2**

SECOND OPINION

A Superior Court judge wants lawyers from the attorney general's consumer protection unit to get involved in cases where Rhode Islanders, tempted by late-night TV ads, seek to trade in their future payments from personal-injury settlements for lump-sum payments. **C1**

SCHOOL'S OUT

Trying to find some fun activities for you and your children during school vacation week? We've got plenty of suggestions. **D1**

NEWMAN WINS DAYTONA

Ryan Newman edges out Kurt Busch to win the Daytona 500, giving team owner Roger Penske his first win in the 50th edition of NASCAR's biggest race. **B2**

