



SPORTS

Jamaica's Bolt thunders to record time in 100M dash. p.9



THE SUN

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WEATHER

Mostly sunny, humidity going up. High 81, Sunday: p.2

TODAY'S TIDES

(at Watch Hill) High: 9:25 a.m. Low: 3:41 p.m. High: 9:43 p.m.

WESTERLY, R.I. SUNDAY, August 17, 2008

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Ticks remain a threat even after their season

By Gloria Russell The Sun Staff

WESTERLY — Threats from an organism no bigger than the head of a pin can make your life miserable and may even be life-threatening, but you don't have to sit still while they do their worst, says Dr. Thomas N. Mather, professor of entomology and director of the University of Rhode Island Center for Vector-Borne Disease. Mather, who has conducted

research on ticks and disease prevention for more than two decades, said the key to defeating these troublemakers is to remember what your grandmother told you about an ounce of prevention being worth a pound of cure. There have been reports that the incidence of Lyme disease is rampant in Rhode Island, but Mather said "it's actually slowing down quite a bit. We had three weeks of really hot weather during July and that really put kind

of an abrupt stop [to tick attacks], but people are still going to be coming down with disease now because ticks were out earlier." Mather noted everything has a season and ticks have had theirs. But even though the season has almost passed, officials are still concerned. He maintained that it's not the time to be complacent, but rather time to make a preemptive strike to stave off next year's problem. The bad news is there are

717,614 Rhode Islanders currently at risk for encountering a deer tick right where they live. These blood-sucking arachnids transmit Lyme disease, babesiosis [a life-threatening, malaria-like disease] and anaplasmosis [characterized by anemia and by jaundice.] The good news is that one need only follow a few simple directions to take effective preventive measures. Much of that information can be obtained on the Web See Ticks, Page 5

BUOY BOOSTERS



SUSANNAH H. SNOWDEN / The Sun

Seaman Doug Duryea, a member of the buoy tender crew, works on the LED light atop a new, 26-foot tall buoy lashed to the deck of the Juniper.

Coast Guard ship keeps the Northeast's buoys in shape

By Emily Dupuis The Sun Staff

Like a toppled, miniature lighthouse, the 13,000-pound, red and white candy-striped buoy lies on the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Juniper's deck. The steel structure is a constant reminder of the day's task for the crew of the Juniper, one of the U.S. Coast Guard's 16 seagoing buoy tenders and one of three with a homeport at the naval station in Newport. On this Friday, there's more to the job than simply replacing the buoy, a moored navigational aid for mariners. The Juniper crew will switch a six-year-old buoy containing a rotation of incandescent light bulbs with a more energy effi-

cient, self-contained light emitting diode (LED) model. Lt. Cmdr. Rick Wester, commanding officer of the Juniper, said the U.S. Coast Guard had just approved the use of the 6-mile range LED lantern. The cutter is the first to position this kind of lighted buoy — an appropriate task for a ship with the motto "Leading the Way." \*\*\*\*\* Juniper sets out from State Pier in New London at about 8 on Friday morning. Reveille was two hours earlier for the eight officers and 42 crewmembers on board. The buoy tender backs off the pier and south into the Fishers

Island Sound under a slightly overcast sky. The clipper will travel 8 miles to the buoy off Fishers Island, then 32 miles before being placed on "special sea detail," meaning it will be within 1 mile of shore as it navigates into Newport. With Fishers Island in sight, Juniper's bridge crewmembers sound five short danger signals to a fishing boat headed into the 2,000-ton cutter's path. The boat fails to change course, violating navigational rules and prompting the cutter to make a 180-degree turn to avoid a potential collision. Detour aside, the ship reaches its first destination off the north-

west side of the island within an hour. The buoy location is pinpointed using a satellite receiver. The new, 21.4-foot-long buoy's red and white markings designate a safe water area, typically the entrance to a harbor, while the lettering, SE, stands for Silver Eel Pond. \*\*\*\*\* The Coast Guard has overseen the country's aids to navigation system since taking over for the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1939. In recent years, the Coast Guard has turned to LED technology. Wester said LEDs require less maintenance and power — two solar panels, compared to three on the old model — and are considered more reliable. See Juniper, Page 7

Agencies see increase in demand for food

By Leslie Rovetti The Sun Staff

STONINGTON — As consumers feel the pinch of higher prices for food, gasoline and other staples, local social service agencies are feeling the pinch of increased demand for their help. Both Stonington's Department of Human Services and the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center have experienced an influx of people struggling to put food on their tables. "Clearly, the rising cost of food, gasoline, heating oil have all impacted our families' abilities to afford basic supplies," said Beth-Ann Stewart, director of Human Services. Stewart said that when she compared the number of clients helped in July 2007 with July 2008, she saw a 48 percent increase, from 345 households in July 2007 to 510 in July 2008. These are only identified clients, she said, and does not include those who are helped anonymously. "We're feeling it," she said of the increased demand. To help families cope with the high cost of food, Stewart expanded the town's free summer lunch program for children to include free breakfasts, too. Although she didn't have the exact figures, she guessed that the grant-funded program feeds about 65 children for breakfast and 100 for lunch each program day. "It's definitely an increase from last year," she said. Stewart said that when people come See Hunger, Page 5

'Clearly, the rising cost of food, gasoline, heating oil have all impacted our families' abilities to afford basic supplies.'

Beth-Ann Stewart, director of Human Services

Prof's work on display during DNC

By Eric Tucker The Associated Press

PROVIDENCE — When Democrats convene in Denver for their national political convention later this month, Charlie Cannon will have a prime platform to discuss a favorite topic: the environment. His new exhibit on creative "green" initiatives from around the world will be displayed just a short walk from

the convention site. It's included in a citywide collection of interactive art projects, known as Dialog:City, which is timed to coincide with the Democrats' gathering. The display, "Partly Sunny: Designs to Change the Forecast," highlights roughly three dozen projects that Cannon says are innovative, but can also show people how to reduce their own energy use. Among them: a bike-sharing program in Paris and a

Netherlands nightclub that generates electricity from dancing patrons. Cannon, a designer, architect and adjunct professor at the Rhode Island School of Design, developed the project with a team of students. He said he wanted people to learn about international projects that are having success, amid all the gloomy predictions about climate change. "Depending on how you look See RISD, Page 6



RISD professor Charlie Cannon stands in front of panels from his exhibit, "Partly Sunny: Designs to Change the Forecast" that will be shown in Denver during the Democratic National Convention. ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Table with 3 columns: Advice, Calendar, Business, Celebrations, Classified, Crossword, Editorial, Entertainment, Living, Local, Nation/World, Obituaries, Sports, Seniors.

inside

Community Calendar section with 'BUSINESS' (Making 'Waves') and 'LIVING' (Milky way) items.

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# ★ Juniper

from page 1

Buoys are not the sole business of the Juniper, so Wester said switching out the incandescent lights with LEDs allows the clipper crew to shift from a two- to three-year maintenance cycle.

This saves time for the Juniper crew, responsible for 230 buoys, 180 of which contain lights, in the seas between Cape Cod and New York. At most, the crew has replaced eight buoys in one day, said Wester, a 1993 Coast Guard Academy graduate. The New Hampshire native previously served two years on the buoy tender Walnut, one of the ships sent to Iraq following the invasion in the spring of 2003.

Having replaced about 75 percent of its 4-mile range buoys with LEDs, the crew is now able to devote 40 to 50 percent of its hours to buoy tender work, compared with a previous 70 percent of its hours, he said.

"The challenge of juggling the (buoy) mission and maintaining what they call multi-mission readiness — it's a fun challenge," Wester said. "Buoy tendering, we do enough buoys where we're at a pretty high state of readiness for that."

The Juniper also serves as an oil skimmer and an ice-breaker and conducts search and rescue, law enforcement and homeland security operations.

Commissioned in 1996, the cutter was designed to replace the second Juniper, a 180-foot buoy tender that dated to World War II. The first Juniper was commissioned in 1903.

In the past 12 years, Juniper has responded to the TWA Flight 800 and Egypt Air 990 crashes and was the first major Coast Guard cutter to arrive in New York City following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Wester said the ship is stationed biannually in New York City for two weeks as the evacuation vessel for the United Nations General Assembly.

In October, the crew traveled to Florida for about 40 days of interdiction control. The Juniper served as a holding platform for 86 Cuban migrants awaiting word from the U.S. State Department.

"The Coast Guard is multi-mission. This ship really, truly is multi-mission," Wester said.

\*\*\*\*\*

Off Fisher Island, Chief Keith Frost watches over the deck crew as they use boat hooks to pull the buoy toward the clipper's port side. A base line is looped around the top of the buoy to steady it and a crane on deck hooks and lifts the steel structure onto the deck. The 125-foot chain connecting the buoy to the sinker, or 5,000-pound concrete block, is locked into a saddle on deck.

The buoy's rusted hull carries about two years of sea growth — algae, seaweed, clams and mussels — and a strong, fishy odor, known to fester on hot, sunny days.

The men go to work scraping off the buildup. It's a messy job for the deck crewmembers, who wear navy blue coveralls and either white, blue or green helmets, designating them as supervisors, qualified riggers or unqualified riggers, respectively.

Seaman Terry Daignault, of Palos, Ill., has been on board for four months as an unqualified rigger and said its "pretty

dirty work" that requires strong communication for safety.

"You really don't know what you're going to scrape off," he said. He said they must climb inside even larger buoys to clean, a nasty task called "shooting the tube."

The crew inspects the chain — two to three times the depth of the water — and finds a segment too worn. The crane then pulls the sinker on board and the men replace the bottom 35 feet of chain with a new, 45-foot section using a blowtorch and mallets — a process known as "heat and beat."

About an hour later, the crane lowers the new buoy into the water with an ample splash. The buoy's whistle emits a deep, groaning sound.

Wester said the buoy that was removed would be delivered to a depot in South Weymouth, Mass. to be sandblasted and painted for reuse.

The Juniper remains steady during the roughly hour-long buoy replacement by utilizing a dynamic positioning system, although, on this day, the seas are calm and winds gentle.

\*\*\*\*\*

After the task is completed, the cutter heads east through the Race, an expanse known for strong currents that can reach 3 knots, then into the Block Island Sound and north through Narragansett Bay.

The crew gets to work hosing off the deck and completing repairs and cleaning throughout the clipper. In the bridge, the officers communicate by radio with nearby fishing boats, ferries, car carriers and other Coast Guard vessels.

Wester said jobs on buoy tenders are desired because they provide experience including inspecting and enforcing fisheries regulations, icebreaking and oil spill cleanups. U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduates comprise half the crew, while the others are prior enlisted personnel.

Ensign Katie Gareau, one of the women who make up 20 percent of the crew, said she graduated from the academy in 2007 and her top job choices were aboard buoy tenders.

Tasked with driving the ship while Chief Frost oversaw the buoy replacement, Gareau, of Cleveland, said she was especially interested in the cutter's Spilled Oil Recovery System (SORS) equipment.

"My dream job would be on a Strike team," said the environmental science major of the force charged with responding to that oil, chemical and pollution spills.

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Roughly six hours after pushing off from New London, the cutter approaches the Newport Naval Base.

The crewmembers — who come from as far as Maine and New Jersey — change into civilian clothes and leave for a weekend off. They'll be back Monday to report for gunnery exercises off Martha's Vineyard, followed by buoy work off New York City.

Wester said the work is rewarding: "When you work a buoy you definitely see the results. You get a better sense of accomplishment seeing the results of your work every day."

The buoy — looking cleaner, but still discolored and worn from its time at sea — remains on deck, a clear confirmation of that day's work.



**Captain Rick Wester**, left, commanding officer of the Coast Guard cutter Juniper, oversees the activities on the vessel, which repairs buoys, responds to oil spills and incidents, and takes part in law enforcement operations. Buoy tender work takes up about half of their hours these days. Seaman Doug Duryea, above, shouts to a fellow crewmember as they lash an old, rusty buoy to the deck.

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