

**PORTSMOUTH
COMES UP SHORT**
in fourth-quarter
comeback attempt. B1



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TERROR PLOTS**
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The Newport Daily News

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WEEKEND EDITION

Fixing up a city landmark

A \$1.2 million steeple restoration project at Channing Memorial Church is on track to be completed by Oct. 31.

By Sean Flynn
Daily News staff

NEWPORT — The three masons rebuilding the spire of Channing Memorial Church this week had the best seats in town, with sweeping vistas of Newport Harbor, Easton Bay, Middletown and Jamestown below them. Block Island could be seen on the horizon.

Brian Villa of Niantic, Conn., Alan Todd of Stafford Springs, Conn., and Robert Devoll of Palm Harbor, Fla., sat on benches set up on the scaffolding 130 feet above the ground. It feels much higher as the church is located atop Historic Hill and its steeple tip is the highest point in the city, towering above the Perry Mill, the Newport Yachting Center and other downtown landmarks.

The masons' brick handiwork soon will be covered with an 8-foot-tall copper finial.

"It will be shining gold," said Holly Grosvenor, an architect with Newport Collaborative Architects who is representing the church on the construction team.

The new finial will be a replica of the old one. And while it will look like gold when it is unveiled, it eventually will turn green like other copper structures exposed to the elements.

The steeple of the historic church, built in 1881, was seriously deteriorated, forcing the church to raise nearly \$1.2 million to restore and rebuild it. The church bells are in the Netherlands being restored and returned.

The congregation has known of problems with the steeple since about 2000, when neighbors reported hearing clangs in the middle of the night. That was the sound of bricks falling from within the steeple and striking the bells, said the Rev. Amy Bowden Freedman. The steeple design is basically a cone of brick holding up a cone of stone, but water had gotten to the brick cone. The freezing and thawing of the water caused the bricks to crack. In recent years, the steeple was wrapped in steel cable to keep it together.

"The condition of the interior brick was so poor, we could pull it apart by hand," said Joseph Barrieau, supervisor with the Joseph Gnazzo Co. of Union, Conn., the general contractor for the construction and restoration project.

The firm has extensive experience with the restoration of historic structures, including the Arlington Street Church in Boston, which was led by William Ellery Channing. The Newport native was a founder of the Unitarian Church. He was born in 1780, so the cornerstone of the

LANDMARK A6

'The condition of the interior brick was so poor, we could pull it apart by hand.'

Joseph Barrieau, at right, supervisor with the Joseph Gnazzo Co.



Masons from Joseph Gnazzo Co., from left, Robert Devoll, Brian Villa and Alan Todd set stones recently at the top of the spire of Channing Memorial Church in Newport.



David Hansen ♦ Daily News staff photos

Staging surrounds the steeple of Channing Memorial Church, which was built in 1881, on Pelham Street in Newport. The steeple is being restored with the help of funding from the federal Save America's Treasures and other donors. Below, Joseph Barrieau, a supervisor with the Joseph Gnazzo Co., stands inside the steeple, and, at right, stones from the top section of the steeple were numbered to help with the restoration project.



Re-tuned bells will be project's final touch

By Sean Flynn
Daily News staff

When construction of the Channing Memorial Church steeple is finished, a company will arrive to re-install the historic nine bells that were removed in May.

Chime Master Systems of Lancaster, Ohio, is constructing a new steel support structure for the cast bronze bells that weigh from about

600 pounds apiece to about a ton.

The nine-bell carillon is one of only six such sets that exist in the country, said Christine Laudon, of the church's property committee. The bronze bells were cast by William Blake & Co. of Boston, a successor firm to the copper company operated by Paul Revere and his descendants.

Chime Master sent the nine bells to Royal Eijsbouts of Asten, Netherlands, a firm that has much experience with the restoration and fine-tuning of bells, Laudon said. The firm has a computerized database of information on thousands of tuned and un-tuned bells it has analyzed in the past.

"One of the recently developed technologies enables Royal Eijsbouts to make tuning simulations

BELLS A6

Union to vote on deal

A tentative agreement reached Friday would avoid layoffs and help the state close a \$68 million budget deficit.

By Ray Henry
Associated Press

NORTH PROVIDENCE — The largest state employees union decided Friday to let its workers vote on a tentative deal that would result in lost pay but protect jobs, a decision that could end an impasse with the governor, union officials said.

An agreement with Council 94 was critical to Gov. Donald L. Carcieri's plan to help close a \$68 million budget shortfall because it's the largest union and others in state government tend to follow the group's lead. On Wednesday, leaders of Council 94 rejected an initial deal with Carcieri in the hope of negotiating a better deal.

"The governor said there's two chances of that happening: slim to none," Council 94 President J. Michael Downey said, explaining why the union reversed course.

After Council 94 rejected the deal Wednesday, Carcieri announced he was done negotiating and would lay off workers in any union that did not ratify the agreement by Oct. 2. Carcieri sent his executive director of human resources, Stephen Johnston, to answer questions Friday from union leaders during a closed-door meeting.

"I am pleased that the presidents of Council 94 have made the decision to allow their members a chance to vote on this agreement," Carcieri said in a written statement. "It is my goal to keep people working, and this agreement will give state employees job security."

Downey said he hoped voting would conclude next week but said the process may take longer. It's unclear whether union workers will support the agreement. Last year, the members voted down a deal requiring them to skip a pay raise

UNION A6

NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

Organizers say they need to raise \$150K

By James J. Gillis
Daily News staff

NEWPORT — The Newport International Film Festival needs about \$150,000 if it's going to survive.

Mitchell Massey, the festival's treasurer, said the board of directors is courting possible donors, focusing on people with high incomes and a passion for the arts. "Right now we've had some interesting conversations," Massey said Friday. "It's a tough time for fundraising, from corporations and from private citizens, in this economy."

Several employees have yet to be paid from the 2008 festival, which ended in early June. Scott Norwood of Boston, who worked as a film inspector, filed a small claims suit in court earlier this month seeking the maximum \$2,500.

He said he is owed \$3,000 total. "I fully expect to win but I do not expect to collect on the judgment," Norwood said.

In 2008, the festival ended up \$100,000 in the hole. But \$150,000 in fundraising, including a \$90,000 anonymous donation, ensured a 2010 festival.

Massey said he is unsure of the total

FESTIVAL A6

Did you know?

Seeing is believing

Greyhounds have the best eyesight of all breeds of dogs.



Foot note

25 percent of the bones in the human body are located in the feet.



Advice	C7	Movies	C4
Business	C9	Obituaries	A4
Classifieds	B5	Opinion	A7
Comics	C6	Religion	C8
Community	C1	Sports	B1
Local & State	A3	Weather	A6



Landmark

Continued from A1

Channing Memorial Church was laid on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

A statue of Channing, arms upraised, faces the church entrance from Touro Park, on the opposite side of Pelham Street.

Christine Laudon, who leads the church's property committee with David Pedrick, said she likes to think Channing is watching over the project and giving his blessing.

The construction workers began demolishing the top 52 feet of the steeple in June, but not before photographing each section of the structure, numbering every stone and then cataloging them. The inventory was kept so the steeple could be painstakingly reconstructed. The lower 78 feet of brick was sound enough that the workers could re-point the exterior stonework and secure it to the inner brick core. The top section of the steeple, more than a third of it, was reconstructed with 8-inch thick concrete blocks, set on top of a new concrete ring support beam.

Because the new concrete cone is thicker than the original brick, the backs of each of the stones had to be cut to make them fit, Barrieau said. The resulting flat backs of the stones also made them easier to secure to the interior concrete base. Each stone is anchored to the concrete blocks with stainless steel ties.

"We wanted a good bond between the stone and concrete blocks," Barrieau said.

The company bought a chop saw with a 3-foot diameter blade to cut the stones. The saw was powered with a generator, and water was fed constantly to the blade to cool it and to lubricate the cutting. It was a noisy operation.

"I'm glad the cutting is all over," Barrieau said.

"The neighbors have been really patient," Laudon said. "They have been wonderful."

The contractors had to solve a series of problems as they rebuilt the tower. "The biggest challenge was keeping the vertical corners of the steeple straight and true," Barrieau said. The workers used a laser beam shot up through the interior of the steeple to measure from the laser markings and keep the tower plumb. The base of one of the sides of the steeple was 8 inches wider when measured from the center. That gave the original tower a tilt to the west and a lack of symmetry. Now, the tower is straight.

Barrieau said Russ Burt, the project supervisor, embraced the challenge of straightening the tower, which added to the difficulty of cutting and re-setting the stones.

"Russ was the mastermind behind squaring up the whole spire," Laudon said. "He's an extremely efficient problem solver."

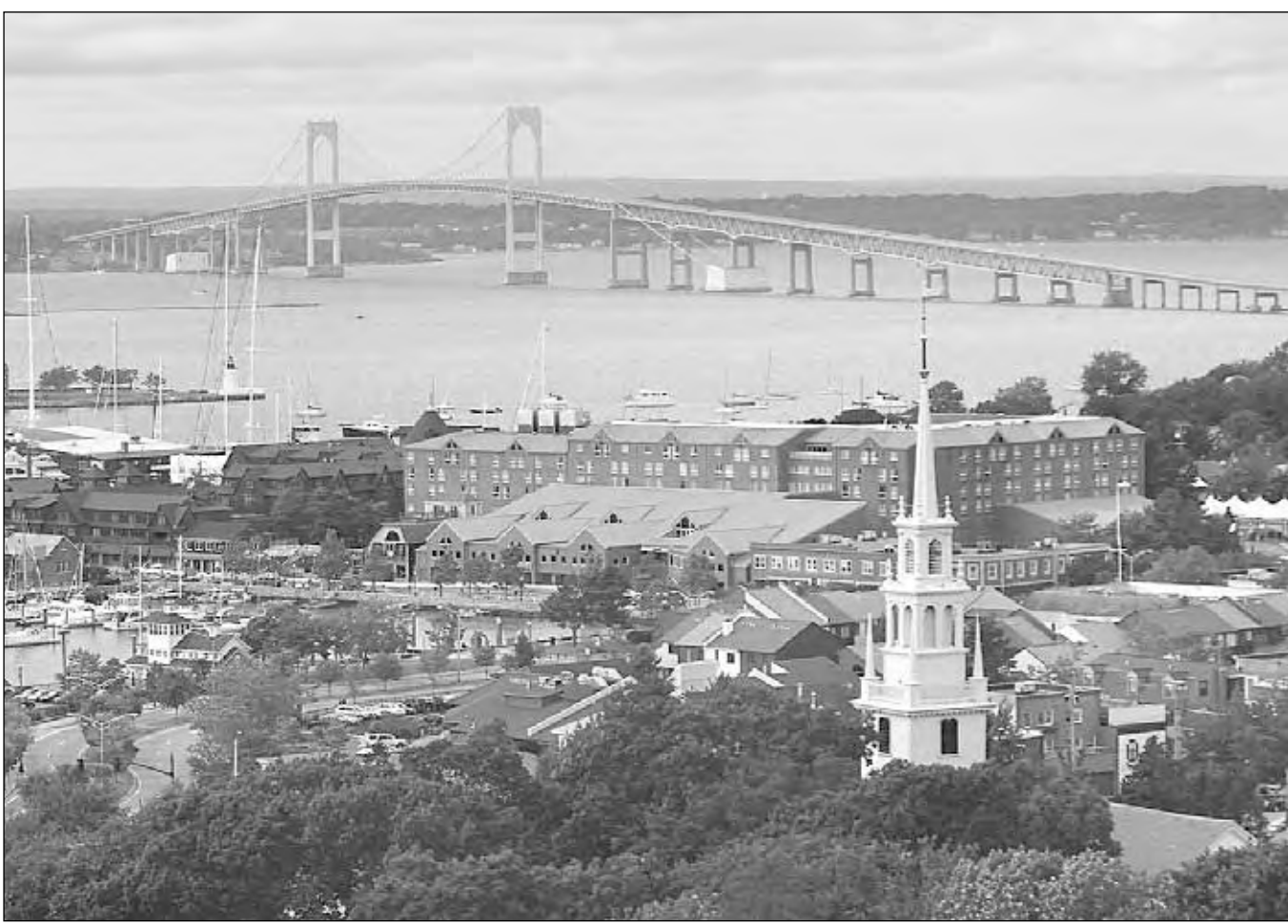
There were other surprises during the project. The final was estimated to be about 4 feet tall when viewed from the ground, Grosvenor said. When the scaffolding was put up and the final was measured, it was 8 feet tall.

"We got up here and said, 'Oh my gosh, it's almost a story tall,'" she said.

Apollo Roofing & Sheet Metal of Providence is constructing the new finial.

"Everything is on time and on budget," Laudon said. The steeple should be completed by Oct. 31.

Barrieau said the company used a



David Hansen ♦ Daily News staff photos

Trinity Church's steeple, Long Wharf and the Pell Bridge are among the sights that can be seen from the top of the steeple at Channing Memorial Church on Pelham Street. Standing about 130 feet tall in Newport's Historic Hill neighborhood, the steeple is the highest point in the city.

'The neighbors have been really patient. They have been wonderful.'

CHRISTINE LAUDON

co-leader of Channing Memorial Church's property committee

"pull schedule" called the "Last Planner System" to keep the project on time and to ensure all the target tasks were done in a timely manner. New window frames were installed throughout the steeple. All the stones had to be transported to the ground with a small elevator machine fastened to the scaffolding. During reconstruction, the number on each stone had to be matched to its number in the photographs.

"We laid out the whole duration of the project and work in six-week increments," Barrieau said. "It's a grid that runs from May to December. Day-to-day, we make sure we get our tasks done. At the end of the week, we review everything. That way, we really control how well the project runs."

This is the first time the company used this scheduling process, he said.

"We're astonished how well it works," Barrieau said. "We've had a tremendous outcome."

Various donors made the project possible. The federal Save America's Treasures program provided a grant of \$440,000. The van Beuren Charitable Trust, the Alletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust, the Prince Charitable Trust and the Barrows Fund gave a total of \$350,000, Laudon said. Contributions from members of the congregation, friends and community supporters total more than \$400,000 so far, she said. Some fundraising remains to be done.

"The trusts have been very generous to us over the years," Laudon said.

Send reporter Sean Flynn e-mail at Flynn@NewportRI.com.



A section of the newly restored steeple at Channing Memorial Church is seen recently in Newport. 'The biggest challenge was keeping the vertical corners of the steeple straight and true,' said Joseph Barrieau, a construction supervisor.

Bells

Continued from A1

on bells that need to be re-tuned," the firm says on its Web site. "This way, one is able to exactly predict the amount of bronze that has to be taken from the bell to achieve the optimum tuning."

"The church raised the money to purchase a tenth bell," Laudon said. "That adds an octave and the range of pieces you can play. Each bell has five tones. The Dutch company is coordinating all 10 bells to work on the same scale."

There will be a sophisticated control system that involves moving a series of levers to ring the bells. The bells themselves don't move, only the clappers.

"We have parishioners willing to learn how to play them," Laudon said.

The last time the bells rang was at the 2001 wedding of the Rev. Amy Bowden Freedman, Channing's minister, Laudon said.

The congregation plans to express its appreciation to the community — for the patience of the neighbors and for the generosity of many donors — when the steeple project is completed.

"We'll throw a party in November, invite everyone and play the bells," Laudon said.

Send reporter Sean Flynn e-mail at Flynn@NewportRI.com.

Union

Continued from A1

and pay more for their health insurance.

The bargain could diffuse a standoff that started last month when Carcieri ordered a shutdown of state government to help close a budget deficit caused by one of the state's worst recessions in decades.

A collection of 10 state employee unions sued to block the shutdown plan. When the state Supreme Court temporarily halted Carcieri from closing down the government, the governor said the ruling left him no alternative but to lay off 1,000 state workers.

After negotiations, union leaders reached a deal two weeks ago that would require workers to lose 12 days of pay in the next two years and delay a scheduled 3 percent pay raise. They would receive extra vacation time and could reclaim some of that lost pay when they retire or leave their state jobs.

In return, Carcieri would promise not to shut down state government and would abandon his layoff plan.

That deal threatened to fall apart after Carcieri sought the ability to reassign workers to different jobs and offices, a proposal that prompted Council 94 to balk at voting on the agreement Wednesday.

Carcieri has said that he needs the flexibility to reorganize and consolidate state government as a dismal economy drives down the state's tax income. Union leaders fear workers could be subject to random job transfers and suffer a loss in job security.

Festival

Continued from A1

amount employees are owed. Their back pay would come from the \$150,000 raised, and the board of directors would need to raise that amount by the end of October in order to hold a festival in June, he said.

The board currently is functioning without a chairman.

Annette Leiderman Raisky of Newport, a veteran board member, replaced Alan Weiss of East Greenwich when his one-year term expired after the last festival. Raisky, who could not be reached for comment, resigned six weeks later.

Weiss, who is no longer involved with the festival, said he donated \$5,000 to the event a few weeks ago and left a fundraising blueprint when he stepped down in June.

"It seems to have devolved into chaos," he said by phone Friday. "And the thing is, there are a couple of people on the board who could bail it out themselves."

Massey said there are financial problems, largely tied to the recession: "I wouldn't say chaotic is the right term."

If there is a festival in 2010, it would be the 13th. Christine Schomer and Nancy Donahoe started the festival in 1998, and neither is involved today. Current executive director Jennifer Maizel McKiernan declined comment Friday, and it is unclear if she is among the unpaid.

In a press release in early September, the board announced plans to seek corporate and private donations but cautioned that bankruptcy and dissolution are possibilities if fundraising fails. "We're going to do everything in our power to have this festival go forward," Massey said.

Send reporter James J. Gillis e-mail at Gillis@NewportRI.com.

Biden visits storm victims

MARIETTA, Ga. (AP) — Vice President Joe Biden on Friday pledged the federal government would help Georgia recover from the severe weather that swept through the Southeast, even as rain and the threat of more flooding was forecast for the weekend.

Biden toured the metro Atlanta area by helicopter and saw portions of the city still under water from the deluge earlier this week. At least 11 deaths in Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee were blamed on the storms.

"It's not Katrina in its scope, by any stretch of the imagination, but the impact on their lives, on your lives, we understand it is Katrina," Biden said.

President Barack Obama was closely monitoring the situation from the G-20 economic summit in Pittsburgh, Biden said. After touring the devastation that washed out roads and highways, the vice president visited residents who have been staying at a Red Cross shelter in Cobb County.

Gov. Sonny Perdue announced Friday night that 10 more counties were added to the federal disaster declaration, bringing the number of counties eligible for federal aid to 14.

Latoya Smith, 28, was in her car when the storms hit, and the mother of five managed to get her children out just before rushing water swept it away.

CORRECTION

♦ Because of a reporting error, a man was misidentified in an item that appeared in the police and fire news Thursday.

Graig Neal, 23, of 14 Almy St., Floor 3, was arrested Wednesday night on a charge of acting disorderly by threatening a 22-year-old local woman. She told police that Neal left a series of threatening voice mails and text messages in recent weeks and showed up at her home early Wednesday morning, yelling and kicking the door.

Newport police arrested Neal about 8 p.m. on Ranger Road, where he agreed to meet officers, police said.

The Daily News regrets the error.

The Newport Daily News seeks to be fair and accurate in reporting the news. If you believe we have published an error, please let us know. Call the city editor at 849-3300, Ext. 254, send an e-mail to CityDesk@NewportRI.com or write us at 101 Malbone Road, Newport, RI 02840.

LOCAL WEATHER

COASTAL RHODE ISLAND

Today, sunny. High in the lower 60s. Tonight, partly cloudy in the evening, then mostly cloudy with a chance of rain after midnight. Low in the mid-50s. Chance of rain 40 percent.

MARINE

Today, northeast winds around 5 knots, becoming southeast in the afternoon. Tonight, southeast winds 5-10 knots. Waves 1-2 feet.

Sunday, southeast winds 10-15 knots with gusts up to 20 knots. Waves 2-3 feet. At the bay entrance, waves 4-6 feet in the afternoon.

Sunday night, west winds 5-10 knots. Gusts up to 20 knots in the evening. Waves 2-3 feet, and 4-6 feet at the bay entrance.

EXTENDED

Sunday, rain in the morning, then rain with a chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon. High in the upper 60s. Chance of rain 80 percent. Sunday night, mostly cloudy with a chance of showers in the evening. Low in the lower 60s.

TIDES

Sunday's sunrise 6:39 a.m., sunset 6:34 p.m. High tides: 2:55 a.m. 3:35 p.m. Low tide: 8:11 a.m., 10:08 p.m. Monday's sunrise 6:40 a.m., sunset 6:33 p.m. High tides: 3:57 a.m., 4:35 p.m. Low tides: 9:46 a.m., 10:48 p.m.

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