

LOCAL&STATE

Newport businesses are on the move



Bellevue Nutrition opened in December. SAVANA DUNNING/DAILY NEWS PHOTO

Savana Dunning Newport Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Every week in Newport County, businesses open, close, move or expand to new locations. While not all of these establishments are brand new to the area, here are a few of the latest businesses to find a new home in Newport County.

Bellevue Nutrition

260 Bellevue Ave, Newport
Phone: 401-324-5562
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BellevueNutritionRI/>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bellevuenutrition/>

Tracy Coppola purchased retail space in Bellevue Gardens Shopping Center in the summer of 2020 to begin building out her nutrition business. Bellevue Nutrition opened in December as a protein shake and smoothie bar and offers weight and health coaching.

Coppola sells beverages and baked goods made in the store, using products from the health brand she works for as the base and then adding ingredients to create her own custom recipes. While she initially worked as a distributor for the brand out of her home, Coppola said she launched the brick-and-mortar store to meet customers face to face.

"A lot of the people in the neighborhood that have found me that can walk to me are super excited," Coppola said. "I've had the opportunity to spend some time talking to those customers and getting to know the people that actually live around here. People work around here, and the Salve students have start-

ed to find me so I have a pretty good following with them coming in, which has been great."

Island Dog Training

1015 Aquidneck Ave., Middletown
Phone: 401-569-5591
Email: k9jules08@gmail.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Dog-Trainer/Island-Canine-Academy-LLC-104218768018386/>
Website: <http://www.islandcanineacademy.com/>

Julia Carty is not new to Aquidneck Island. The dog trainer offered training services for a few years on the island before moving to North Carolina. When she returned to the island in 2020, Carty purchased a building to relaunch her dog training business, now called Island Canine Academy.

Island Canine Academy offers a day training program, private lessons, housebreaking and puppy training, board-to-train and leash behavior management. Carty said she wants Aquidneck Island residents to know she worked on the island before and is back in business in Middletown.

"I know hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of dogs on the island because I've been doing this for 22 years," Carty said. "Just that I left and I came back, I think that's important that people know that."

Shore Creative

11 Bowler Lane, Newport
Phone: 401-249-2950

Email: hello@shore-creative.com
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/shorecreativdesign>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/shorecreative>

Having worked in Innovate Newport and other office spaces across the island for a few years, Shore Creative design recently purchased a building in Newport to accommodate its expanding workforce.

Owner Jenn Shore said her business has done design and illustration work for brands like Wayfinder Hotel and is currently working with Hammetts Hotel on its website.

The design team focuses on brand identity for small businesses and offers web design, graphic design, illustration and consulting services, as well as some physical products like candles, shirts and paper goods. Now with its own space on Bowler Lane, Shore said she's excited to make the office her own and eventually will host client consultations in the space.

"This property in particular allowed me to have custom furniture made and like really design the space to be something that feels exactly kind of like what our brand portrays," Shore said. "Businesses are starting to understand that branding as an investment is something that ends up paying off in spades for them. I think we're seeing a lot more small businesses allocate some of their budget for branding because they're realizing how important it is to have a cohesive visual identity across platforms like their website or on social media."

RI seeks bidders to run pot lottery

Tom Mooney The Providence Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

PROVIDENCE — Rhode Island is looking for an experienced person or a firm to create and run a lottery in May to decide who operates six proposed new medical marijuana dispensaries.

On Friday the state posted online a request for proposals to "design and develop the methodology for the random selection process," that would be held, in public, around May 14.

"The firm or individual will be primarily responsible for securing all equipment, technology, or other necessary mediums to run the process."

Lotteries have been used in other jurisdictions around the country to decide who wins the often lucrative licenses, but the practice hasn't been universally endorsed here.

Several local marijuana business owners have said operating licenses should be based on merit, with those companies with proven track-records better positioned to run new dispensaries than newcomers.

But Gov. Gina Raimondo has said she wanted a lottery to avoid political favoritism entering the selection process.

In December, 28 marijuana companies, many with marijuana-growing affiliations in other states — submitted applications in the hopes of qualifying for the lottery and then winning a license to run one of the new regional dispensaries.

Raimondo and her administration pushed for more dispensaries to meet the skyrocketing use of medical marijuana — and to spread them out around the state to improve access and price competition.

The state currently has three dispensaries — in Providence, Warwick and Portsmouth — which have been allowed to grow their own marijuana since they opened in 2013 and 2014.

The new dispensaries were proposed as retail stores only, though the regulations include the possibility of that provision changing if regulators determine there is a need, and perhaps, if the General Assembly approves recreational use of the drug.

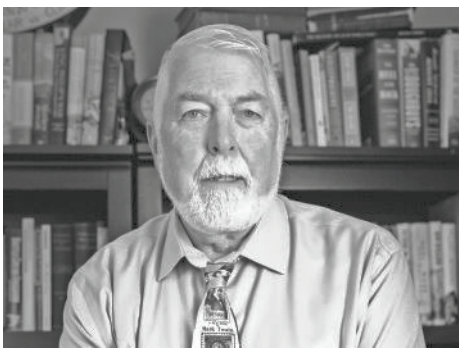
If, and until then, the new dispensaries would be supplied by the state's roughly 60 licensed cultivators, who already grow marijuana for the existing medical-only dispensaries.

Bidders to run the lottery must show their experience "developing and administering similar random selection drawings" and provide three references. And they cannot have any affiliations with existing dispensary businesses.

Bids for the lottery work are scheduled to be opened on March 24.

According to Friday's RFP, the Department of Business Regulation, specifically its Office of Cannabis Regulation, is still reviewing the qualifications of dispensary applicants to enter the lottery.

Blackstone Canal the focus of Irish history lecture



Chuck Arning, public historian, will present a talk at the 19th Annual Michael F. Crowley Lecture Series

SUBMITTED PHOTO

From staff reports Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Museum of Newport Irish History announces the fourth talk in its 19th Annual Michael F. Crowley Lecture Series, to be presented virtually on Tuesday, March 16 at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

Chuck Arning, an award-winning public historian with nearly 25 years' experience as an interpretive ranger with the National Park Service, will present a talk entitled: "How Hard Would it be to Dig a Ditch Anyway? — How the Irish Saved the Blackstone Canal."

Rhode Islanders were excited about

building the Blackstone Canal and saw it as a major employment opportunity. However, canal construction proved more difficult than originally thought and Rhode Islanders in 1824 struggled to build it. The project was in dire straits, so a call went out to the battle-tested Erie Canal builders, who happened to be Irish.

Arning's talk will examine why the Irish came to build the early canals of America. He will focus on how the Irish saved the Blackstone Canal, an important economic engine of its day that stretched from the exploding seaport of Providence, to the rural landscape of

Central Massachusetts, terminating in the village of Worcester. He will also discuss what happened after the canal project was completed.

The lecture is free of charge and open to all, but reservations are required to receive the Zoom login information.

To reserve, please visit the "Lectures" page at newportirishhistory.org, where you may also access a complete lecture overview and speaker bio, plus videotapes of past lectures. For additional information, please contact Ann Arnold at newportirishhistory@gmail.com or (401) 841-5493.