



Dave Hansen | Staff photos

A large crowd at St. Mary's Church in Newport hears Edward 'Ted' H. Furey speak Tuesday night on the life and legacy of the church's renowned architect, Patrick C. Keely. A native of Ireland, Keely designed 700 ecclesiastical buildings during the 1800s.

Design of genius

Expert explains legacy of St. Mary's architect in New England and beyond

By Sean Flynn
Staff writer

NEWPORT — Not only did architect Patrick C. Keely design St. Mary's Church on Spring Street beginning in 1847, he would build an estimated 700 ecclesiastical structures in the eastern U.S., nearly 600 of them churches, before he died at the age of 80 in 1896.

Edward "Ted" H. Furey, founder of the Keely Society and historical curator of Keely's monumental masterpiece, the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, spoke Tuesday night to an audience at the nearly full St. Mary's Church about Keely's work and the history of St. Mary's.

He was the fourth speaker in the 2015-2016 Michael F. Crowley Lecture Series sponsored by the Museum of Newport Irish History.

Even knowledgeable longtime parishioners of St. Mary's such as Ann Arnold, the coordinator of the lecture series and a museum board member, said they learned a lot from Furey about the church and how it has changed through the decades.

For example, many people assumed the Stations of the Cross carved from stone from Cannes, France, were original to the church. However, Furey examined old photos of the interior and determined there were terracotta stations based on a design by Franz Mayer of Munich on the walls previously.

"I believe it was in the 1930s that the parish upgraded to the Cannes stone stations," Furey said.

The Rev. Kris von Maluski, pastor of St. Mary's, asked Furey several questions about church features — including stained-glass windows, the choir balcony and the front doors — to determine what was original and

what had been changed.

What amazed many of the listeners, though, was Keely's productivity. During Keely's lifetime, the Freeman's Journal in Brooklyn, N.Y., determined he had designed nearly 700 "religious edifices" that included schools, colleges and other parish buildings. Furey said Keely's 1896 New York Times obituary said he built 700 churches.

"What gave him the inspiration and ability to build all these churches?" asked Ted Wrobel of Newport.

"He just had an incredible talent for design," Furey said. "It's like Mozart. He immediately grasped the field and it worked."

Keely was born in Thurles, Ireland, and his father, a draftsman and builder, introduced him to architecture and construction, Furey said. Keely's father and older brother worked on the building of St. Patrick's College in Thurles when Patrick Keely was 11 years old, but little is recorded of his architectural design education. Keely came to U.S. in 1842, when he was 26 years old. He was a master carver and some of his carvings can be seen in the churches he designed.

Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Brooklyn, N.Y., was Keely's first church and was completed in 1848, Furey said. Given his limited budget and time, the church was considered an extraordinary edifice and he was hailed as a genius artist. The design and construction of the church led to numerous requests for Keely to design more churches for the exploding Irish immigrant population in the Northeast.

When construction of Fort Adams

DESIGN A5



Edward H. Furey of Enfield, Conn., founder and president of the Keely Society, discusses the Patrick C. Keely legacy on Tuesday at St. Mary's Church in Newport.

MIDDLETOWN

Schools to seek 4% hike

By Matt Sheley
Staff writer

The Middletown School Committee is seeking a 4 percent budget increase for fiscal 2017.

Saying there was nowhere else to cut, and citing declining state aid, the committee voted unanimously Tuesday night to request the maximum allowed under the state tax-increase cap.

The proposed \$39.37 million budget will be submitted to the town administration for review and an overall budget proposal will be presented to the Town Council in early April. Public hearings during which residents and property owners can comment on the proposed budget are planned for May 18 and May 25 at 6 p.m. at Town Hall.

"This budget has been the most difficult one to prepare in my 18 years as superintendent," Superintendent Rosemarie K. Kraeger said. "We have spent months and months struggling to fit our students' needs into an unrealistic, predetermined budget number, a number that continues to compromise and erode our educational system and the real needs of the children of Middletown."

Entering the fiscal 2017 budget cycle, council members asked every department — including the schools — to keep their budget requests to 2 percent or less.

But earlier this month, the school board announced it might try to go to the 4 percent cap.

Although school officials said the true needs of the district far exceed even that amount, they would not be able to make a case in court to go over the cap because the Town Council historically has approved increases in school spending.

The council last year approved a \$68 million budget for fiscal 2016, a total that included \$37.86 million in education and capital improvement program funding.

School leaders said cuts made over the past four years have had an adverse effect on teaching and learning.

School officials said the only proposed staff additions for fiscal 2017 are one librarian, far less than the two or three that are needed, along with reading and math specialists and an additional guidance counselor.

The School Department also is seeking to put a \$10 million bond issue to make repairs at each of the schools before voters on Election Day, Nov. 8. That total does not factor into the tax cap.

"Our Town Council has funded us yearly, but the net loss of the state aid does not make us whole, so we continue to make reduction after reduction," Kraeger said. "Contractual agreements have been fair over the years. We cannot make these types of reductions on the backs of our custodial staff, our teacher assistants, our clerical and our teachers. We have highly qualified, talented staff and we want to keep every one of them."

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Trees at bird sanctuary marked by vandalism

By Matt Sheley
Staff writer

MIDDLETOWN — The large orange arrows that mysteriously appeared on 11 trees in the Norman Bird Sanctuary during the weekend are not low-budget trail markers.

The spray-painted arrows are acts of vandalism and the subject of a police investigation, said Natasha Harrison, the sanctuary's executive director.

A staff member discovered the first arrow-marked tree while hiking Sunday evening on the Red Fox Trail, Harrison said. A subsequent search of the 325-acre wildlife refuge on Third Beach Road turned up 10 other orange arrows on different trails, all spray-painted on trees without permission, she said.

"They're pointed somewhere, but no one has an idea why they're here," Harrison said. "We're thinking it's from some running group or acting troupe or something like that."

"No one should think this is the right thing to do, no matter who they are. First off, it's private property, but second, it's a nature preserve and a lot of people have put in a lot of time and energy to make this place what it is and now that experience has been completely ruined."

This is the first time she has dealt with an incident of someone trespassing after hours and vandalizing the sanctuary, she said. None of the trees were marked with spray paint when the staff left Friday evening, she said.

"When people here have heard about it, they're pretty upset, and rightly so," Harrison

said. "We pride ourselves on the beauty of this place, inviting people to experience nature how it was intended and then there's a huge orange arrow on a tree? It kind of kills the whole thing."

She and the staff are trying to determine how best to remove the spray paint, Harrison said. The problem is most of the available options may harm — or potentially kill — the marked trees, she said.

Police Lt. Jason Ryan asked anyone with information about the incident to call Middletown police at 846-1144.

"It's not something we can just go out and clean up, nor should we have to," Harrison said. "Whoever did this didn't really think about what they were doing or the lasting impact it would have. That, or they didn't care."

TIVERTON

Search for new principal at high school is underway

By Marcia Pobzezniak
Correspondent

Tiverton Superintendent of Schools William J. Rearick said he expects a couple of dozen applicants for the high school principal job that will be advertised beginning this week, with resumes due by April 8.

But then one never knows, Rearick said, noting how things have changed in the educational field.

"Years ago there used to be a lot of people who wanted to be school administrators. Now, with all that's going on, it's a tough job, and a lot of people don't want to go down that road," Rearick said.

He spoke Tuesday night after the School Committee approved his request to begin advertising for a new principal

ALSO

♦ More Tiverton School Committee news. A5

to replace Steven Fezette, who will retire April 1 after 40 years in education, 13 of them as principal of the 600-student high school.

The committee also approved Rearick's recommendation to have Jack McKinnon, assistant principal since 2003, serve as the acting principal until a new principal is appointed. A late May appointment is the goal, Rearick said.

Filling the assistant principal job temporarily will be on the committee's April 12 agenda, Rearick said.

A search committee made up of 14 individuals, including a high school student who will be the only non-voting

member, will review applications and forward a list of three finalists to Rearick. The superintendent will interview the three finalists and recommend one to the School Committee for appointment.

The committee chairwoman will be Amy Donnelly-Roche, assistant superintendent of schools for curriculum and instruction. Members will include Director of Technology Al Notariani, two principals, two parents, the teacher union president or vice president, five teachers, one representative from the clerks and custodians and a student.

"This is the prime hiring season in the world of administrators," Rearick said of the spring.

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LOCAL&STATE

Goldman Sachs to invest \$10 million for R.I. businesses

The program will offer business education courses as well as loans for small enterprises.

By Matt O'Brien
Associated Press

PROVIDENCE — In a minor coup for the job creation agenda of Gov. Gina Raimondo, the investment banking firm Goldman Sachs and its philanthropic arm have pledged \$10 million to help small businesses grow in the state.

The Wall Street company's president and chief operating officer, Gary Cohn, appeared at a Providence bike shop Tuesday to announce the new initiative with Raimondo.

"We're really trying to get to the root cause of job creation," Cohn said.

Cohn said the Democratic governor visited the bank's headquarters last year and helped convince the company

to expand its "10,000 Small Businesses" initiative to the state. Rhode Island will be the 30th region to participate in the program since 2009 and the first to do so on a statewide rather than city-focused level.

Half of the \$10 million will go toward free business and management education courses that will be coordinated through the Community College of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island School of Design. The courses will begin this fall based on a curriculum created by Babson College in Massachusetts.

"It's a really rigorous program," Cohn said. "It's sort of a condensed MBA program."

The other \$5 million will be used to make loans to small businesses through intermediary BDC Capital, a Massachusetts-based business lending and investment firm with offices in Providence.

Small businesses are eligible if

they have annual revenues of at least \$100,000, two or more full-time workers and have been around for at least two years. The program also targets businesses in economically disadvantaged areas.

Raimondo said the bank's initiative complements a new \$5.5 million state program that helps finance small businesses with limited access to capital.

Raimondo, Cohn, Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza and Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., convened at the NBX Bikes shop in Providence on Tuesday morning to launch the Goldman Sachs initiative. Matt Bodziony, owner of the 34-employee bicycle business that also has branches in Narragansett, Warwick and East Providence, said he plans to apply.

"If we can double their employment and double their job creation, we've had enormous impact," Cohn said. "That's really how you grow economies."



Associated Press

Goldman Sachs President and CEO Gary Cohn speaks Tuesday at the NBX Bikes shop in Providence. Looking on, from left, are Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza, Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., Gov. Gina Raimondo and Matt Bodziony, owner of NBX Bikes.



Dave Hansen | Staff photographer

The interior of St. Mary's Church in Newport, dedicated in 1852, includes stained-glass windows and stone carvings depicting the Stations of the Cross.

Design

Continued from A3

began in 1824 and continued for the next 37 years, Irish masons, stonecutters and laborers were recruited for the project. There were up to 400 laborers at the site during some periods.

The large lot at the corner of Barney and Mount Vernon streets, now vacant except for a cemetery, was the site of a small schoolhouse built in 1809 that was purchased by the Diocese of Boston in 1828 and became the first Catholic church in Newport.

St. Mary's Parish is the oldest Catholic parish in the state, Arnold said.

The mostly Irish parishioners quickly outgrew the building on Barney Street, tore it down and erected a wooden Gothic-style church at the site in 1837. A little more than a decade later, in 1847, they purchased a site on Spring Street and built Keely's impressive

new stone church, dedicated as St. Mary's Church in 1852.

In Providence, he designed St. Joseph's Church at 86 Hope St. in 1851, and the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul at 30 Fenner St. in 1873.

Keely had offices in both Brooklyn and Providence, Furey said.

In Fall River, Mass., there are three Keely churches: St. Mary's Cathedral, at 327 Second St., designed in 1852; St. Joseph's Church, at 1355 North Main St., completed in 1880, and St. Patrick's Church, at 1588 South Main St., completed in 1881.

Just in New England, the list of Keely's churches goes on and on, including multiple churches in Boston.

The Rev. James Fitton, appointed pastor of St. Mary's Church in Newport in 1844, later would call Keely the "Prince of American Catholic Architects."

Furey spent time talking about the loss of many of

Keely's churches, some demolished to make way for other buildings and others destroyed by fire. Some churches were redeveloped for other purposes.

From one location in Boston, Furey said, one can see seven Keely churches in South Boston and the South End. Four of them are now condominium complexes and one church is closed, he said. Only two of them are still operating churches, he said.

"The Keely churches are treasures that need to be preserved," he said.

St. Mary's Church is known nationally and internationally as the site where Jacqueline Bouvier of Newport and Virginia married then-Sen. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts on Sept. 12, 1953, Furey said. The church is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

"I think this church will always be here," Furey said.

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MEETING MINUTES

MIDDLETOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

When: Tuesday night.

Where: Oliphant administration building, 26 Oliphant Lane.

Present: All.

Action: Learned the Town Council earlier in the week was supportive of putting a \$10 million bond on the Nov. 8 ballot to pay for repairs to each of the town's schools, including roof, window and safety upgrades. "Every school is touched by this in one way or another," Superintendent Rosemarie

K. Kraeger said. "It will not impact the tax rate."

◆ Learned the School Department will retain the February break in the 2016-17 school year, although the final calendar was not set Tuesday. Kraeger said the calendar would be discussed over the next few weeks with other school districts to make sure they were aligned again for the next school year.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 12, at 5:30 p.m. at Oliphant.

TIVERTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

When: Tuesday night.

Where: Tiverton High School, 100 North Brayton Road.

Absent: Deborah A. Pallasch.

Action: Approved a request by Tiverton High School English teacher Liz Cottrell, also a graduate of the school, to form a committee to plan the school's 50th anniversary celebration for the fall.

◆ Accepted the donation of a \$3,000 weight machine for Tiverton Middle School. Principal Laurie Dias-Mitchell said the donor has more equipment that he is willing to donate to the school.

◆ Accepted the resignation of high school field hockey coach Ellie Byrne.

Of note: The committee will decide this summer, after the budget for the next fiscal year is known, whether to have late buses next year.

◆ Superintendent of Schools William J. Rearick urged committee members and parents to attend tonight's meeting at Middletown High School to hear from the state Department of Education about graduation requirements. There will be opportunity for comment, in light of ever-changing requirements. Rearick said the federal government requires every state to have a graduation assessment with a 95 percent participation rate.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 7 p.m., high school library.

NEWPORT IRISH HERITAGE MONTH

The 39th annual Newport Irish Heritage Month will be celebrated with events throughout the month of March. Highlights follow. For more information and updates, visit www.aohnewport.org.

TODAY

GUIDED TOUR OF FORT ADAMS – Fort Adams State Park, 84 Fort Adams Drive, Newport, noon and 2 p.m. Historic fort constructed with Irish labor between 1824-1857. One-hour tours offered daily, weather permitting. \$12 adults; \$6 children. (Mention Irish Heritage Month for \$2 discounts). 841-0707 or www.fortadams.org.

THURSDAY

READING OF "THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN" – The Edward King House, 35 King St., Newport, 7 p.m. Reading of the dark comedy written by Irish playwright Martin McDonagh, presented by The Newport Celtic Players. Reservations not required, but space is limited. Not recommended for children. 846-7426 or www.edwardkinghouse.org.

FRIDAY

GUIDED TOUR OF FORT ADAMS – Fort Adams State Park, 84 Fort Adams Drive, Newport, noon and 2 p.m. \$12 adults; \$6 children. (Mention Irish Heritage Month for \$2 discounts). 841-0707 or www.fortadams.org.

CALENDAR

TODAY

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION – Middletown High School, 130 Valley Road, Middletown, 6-7:30 p.m. The state Department of Education will hold an East Bay Community Conversation on the diploma system and statewide graduation requirements. Free. 222-4600.

SPEAKER SERIES – Jamestown Philomenian Library, 26 North Road, 7 p.m. "Strategic Advantage: Why You Should Care About Cybersecurity," featuring speaker Francesca Spidalleri, as a part of the Jamestown Speaker Series. Free. 423-7280.

THURSDAY

LOCAL FILM SCREENING – The Jamestown Philomenian Library, 26 North Road, Jamestown, 6:30 p.m. "Woven in Time: The Narragansett Salt Pond Preserve," by local filmmaker Mark Levitt. Free. 423-7280 or www.jamestownphilomenianlibrary.org.

DECEPTION SEMINAR – The Learning Center of Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist, 135 Pelham St., Newport, 7 p.m. "The Art of Deception" presented by Dr. Eric Shaw, professor of operations at the Naval War College. \$5 suggested donation may be paid at the door. 846-0643 or www.channingchurch.org.

GREAT DECISIONS SEMINARS

– The Portofino/Ramada Conference Center, 425 East Main Road, Middletown, 7-8:15 p.m. "Gulf Security in the New Middle East," featuring professor Heidi Lane, as a part of the Newport Council for International Visitors annual Great Decisions series. Free. 848-9427 or visit www.newportciv.org.

FRIDAY

SCOTTISH DANCE – Conanicut Senior Center/Grange, 6 West St., Jamestown, 7 p.m. The Jamestown Royal Scottish Country Dance group will host its next dance, taught and prompted by BJ Whitehouse and his wife, Christine Ariel. \$5 for individuals and \$10 per family. 423-1574.

EASTER EGG HUNT – Freebody Park, Newport, 8 p.m. The Newport Recreation Department will host a Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt for children ages 8-10. Participants must bring their own flashlight (D cell size or smaller) and a bag or basket. The hunt will be held rain or shine. Free. 845-5800.

SATURDAY

EASTER EGG HUNT – Touro Park, Newport, 10 a.m. The Newport Recreation Department will host an Easter Egg Hunt for children ages 3-7. Participants should bring their own baskets. Free. 845-5800.

MYSTERY AUTHOR – Newport Public Library, 300 Spring St., Newport, 2-3 p.m. Mystery

MUNICIPAL MEETINGS MIDDLETOWN

TODAY

Board of Canvassers, 10 a.m., Town Hall.

Personnel Board, 4:30 p.m., Town Hall.

NEWPORT

TODAY

City Council, 6:30 p.m., Pell Elementary School, cafetorium.

TIVERTON

THURSDAY

Budget Committee, 7 p.m., Town Hall.

author Michael Sears will read from his novel "Saving Jason" with a book signing to follow. Free. 847-8720 or www.newportlibraryri.org.

TUESDAY

BOOK DISCUSSION – Portsmouth Free Public Library, 2658 East Main Road, Portsmouth, 6:30 p.m. "The Carnival at Bray" by Jessie Ann Foley. Free. 683-9457, Ext. 104.

William Connell, M.D.

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