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JOURNAL INVESTIGATION

THE \$243,000 FIREFIGHTER

Overtime pay played role in big payouts for many on the force in '16

By Mark Reynolds
Journal Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — The city paid three Providence fire captains more than \$200,000 each in 2016 and

paid a total of 220 firefighters more than \$100,000 apiece during the same period.

Fire rescue Capt. Vincent J. D'Ambra had the biggest payout, \$243,000, according to a Providence Journal

analysis of the Fire Department's payroll, apparently making him the highest-paid employee on the city's payroll.

A total of 29 firefighters brought home more than

\$150,000 in 2016, outpacing Mayor Jorge O. Elorza's \$131,300 salary.

The top three on the payroll, including fire rescue Capt. Zachariah Kenyon and fire Capt. Thomas L. Cassin

III, each collected more than \$203,000. The three fire captains' base pay was \$77,258 and \$77,545.

The firefighters' union

and Public Safety Commissioner Steven M. Paré disagree about the specific reasons for the huge paychecks but it's clear that the

SEE SALARIES, A7

CHILD ABDUCTION HEARING

Mom pleads not guilty in 31-year case

At time she fled to Texas with daughters, domestic violence wasn't treated as crime

By Jacqueline Tempera and Tom Mooney
Journal Staff Writers



E. Yates

using the name Liana Waldberg — who entered the courtroom in a black, knee-length dress, her handcuffs having been removed just outside the courtroom.

She stared directly at Magistrate Judge John F. McBurney III and never turned toward the gallery, where in the front row sat her cousin, a friend from long ago and two other supporters.

WARWICK — In 1985, when Elaine Yates ran off with her two young daughters days after her husband hit her in the face, domestic violence was rarely treated as a crime.

Thirty-one years later, as sheriffs on Wednesday escorted the 69-year-old woman into Superior Court to face a charge of child abduction, more than just time had changed. So, too, had the legal landscape.

Still, it was Yates — now

SEE MOM, A7

I-195 DEVELOPMENT

Plan for single tower clears its first hurdle

But panel stresses it will not consider developer's proposal for 3 buildings

By Kate Bramson
Journal Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — The I-195 Redevelopment District Commission voted 4-1 Wednesday to invite New York developer Jason Fane to submit a more detailed proposal for only one high-rise tower along the Providence River.

But its vote included three conditions The Fane Organization must meet if the plan goes forward. And the decision followed a lengthy preamble, typed and read by commission

Vice Chairman Robert C. Davis, urging the commission to weigh "key considerations."

After the meeting, Davis explained the vote: "It means that three towers are no longer under consideration — only a single tower."

Fane initially pitched an ambitious plan on Nov. 14 to build three high-rise residential towers on Parcel 42, an acre of former highway land between Dyer Street and the planned riverfront park

SEE TOWER, A7

With Trump and the Republicans holding the purse strings, stakes are high for RI

Where fed money goes in Rhode Island

By Katherine Gregg
Journal Political Writer

PROVIDENCE — Rhode Island has, at the very least, a \$12.5-billion stake in the spending decisions that will be made by the new Trump administration and the GOP-controlled Congress. And maybe much more.

These federal dollars pay the salaries of defense industry contractors from Westerly to Woonsocket. They build roads. They help pay hospital and nursing home bills. They pay for college-aid and high-level research into the causes and cures of countless life-cycle phenomenon, from childhood obesity to memory loss. They finance a third of the state budget. They've given Providence the wherewithal to hire 80 new firefighters, and buy 250 body-cams for the capital city police.

According to a government database, the money coming to Rhode Island from Washington D.C. in 2016 included:

- \$5.2 billion for federally subsidized housing for the old, the poor and the disabled; college-aid under Pell grants and dozens of other programs from rod-and-gun clubs to the Norman Bird Sanctuary.
- \$2.9 billion in grants to state government, a string of local police and fire departments and scores of nonprofits across Rhode Island.
- \$821.3 million in salaries paid to 10,650 civilian federal employees, including postal workers, in Rhode Island.
- \$437.4 million in federal contract payments.
- \$2.9 billion in grants to state government, a string of local police and fire departments and scores of nonprofits.
- \$5.2 billion for federally subsidized housing for the old, the poor and the disabled; college-aid under Pell grants and other

SEE MONEY, A11