

Police officer started out as a teacher

By Sam Bari

John Areson, 36, has been a Jamestown police officer since December 2003. Hired by now retired Lt. Paul Balzer, Areson attended the Rhode Island Police Academy in Lincoln, with fellow officer Derek Carlino.

Areson is a native Rhode Islander who has lived in Warwick all his life. He graduated from Warwick Veterans Memorial High School with his twin brother Jay, who is six minutes younger. After graduation, the twin brothers attended Tarkio College in Missouri on football scholarships. John returned to Rhode Island after two years and earned his bachelors' degree in criminal justice from Rhode Island College in Providence.

After graduation, Areson was hired by the Adult Correctional Institute in Cranston where he was the substance abuse counselor in the maximum-security section. He worked at the ACI for five years and furthered his education while he was there. Areson earned a masters' degree at Providence College as a state certified teacher in special education.

"I then got a job at Valley Community Schools," Areson said. "I taught all subjects to boys with behavioral problems. The classes

were small, which gave me an opportunity to give them the personal attention they needed. The idea was to get them to integrate back into the mainstream of the public school system."

He then decided he wanted to put his criminal justice skills to work and answered a newspaper ad for police officers in Jamestown. He was hired and sent to the police academy in December of 2003, and began work as an officer in 2004. Since, Areson has become the elderly affairs officer and a training officer for his colleagues in the department.

"I always wanted to be a policeman," Areson said. "I enjoy working in the community more than in the prison system, although that had its rewards. I think everything from helping the elderly to training other officers makes the job interesting. Every day is a different challenge. That's what makes me look forward to going to work in the morning, or whatever shift I happen to be working," he said.

He also said the department is staffed with well-trained people who are good to work with. "And that makes the job a lot easier," Areson added.

When he is off duty, Areson spends his time boating and fishing. "I love to sail," Areson said,

"and I play basketball at least three times a week.

"I spend a lot of time with my family," Areson said. "My parents have been married for more than 40 years. Most of us live in Rhode Island. Those who don't are scattered around New England. My older brother is a social studies teacher at Veterans Memorial, the same high school we all graduated from. My twin is a special education teacher at Johnston High School."

Officer John Areson is single and lives in Warwick.

This past weekend, Officer Areson's 17-year-old cousin, Rebecca Whitefield, tragically died in an automobile accident in Attleboro, Mass. The passenger riding with her was critically injured. Neither were wearing seatbelts.

Areson said Rebecca was a beautiful young girl with promise of a rewarding future. He reminds all drivers to always wear their seatbelts because there is so much to lose should an accident happen.

For the next couple of weeks, the "Click it or Ticket" program will be in effect, Areson said. He hopes everyone will take the intent of the program seriously, and remember to buckle up.



John Areson

Boys' lacrosse topples undefeated La Salle

By Stephanie Heelan Cotsonas

The North Kingstown High School boys' lacrosse team will head into the playoffs more confident than ever after coming off a win against the undefeated division leader La Salle Academy. The Rams suffered their first loss on the last day of the regular season as they fell to the Skippers 11-7.

North (10-3) ended their regular season with games against the top two teams in the division.

Bishop Hendricken (11-2) is the defending state champion and on May 13 North took on the Hawks for the second time after a loss earlier in the season. The second meeting with Hendricken was a battle to the end. After the Hawks scored only 30 seconds into the game, Jamestown Ben Nadeau retaliated with a goal to make it 1-1. The two teams went one for one as the score was tied up at 4-4 going into the second half. The Hawks took a 5-4 lead and then after two close shots on goal by the Skippers, islander Ben Schmidt had a much needed goal with an assist from Andy Paolucci to tie the score (5-5) with five minutes to go in the game.

After another Hendricken goal, Ben Sternberg tied up the score again only to have Hendricken retaliate to even the score at six apiece. Only a few seconds later Hendricken scored the final goal of the night to win the game 7-6. Islander Alex Seidler played great defense for the whole game as well as senior Dan Page. Ryan McDermott rounds out the Jamestown presence on the team.

Head Coach John Holmes is happy with both Nadeau and



Ben Nadeau, left, was instrumental in the success of the North Kingstown High School boys' lacrosse team this year.

Photo by Adrienne Downing

Schmidt and their contributions to the scoreboard. "They (Nadeau and Schmidt) are both doing a great job for us. Nadeau has done a great job on face offs, picking up ground balls, and scoring some goals for us when we need it. Ben Schmidt is doing very well and we need to have him score some goals because it takes some pressure off of Greg Fallon and Andy Paolucci a little bit."

On Monday North took on division leader La Salle (12-1) in Providence and avenged their earlier season loss. Confident prior to the game Holmes said "It should be a good game tonight. We are finally over a couple of injuries and that is a good thing. If we can play a solid four quarters, I think we will be in pretty good shape."

Schmidt scored one goal in

the La Salle game and said, "It was a great game. They (La Salle) were undefeated and it was their senior night. The last time we played them we lost in double overtime after we scored and it did not count."

In the quarterfinals set for tonight, North will have the home field advantage against sixth place Barrington. In the regular season North beat Barrington in both meetings. Holmes said, "We should do pretty well against them (Barrington) and if that is the case then we will be playing Hendricken on their field in the semis." North takes on Barrington tomorrow night at home starting 7 p.m.

The Lady Skippers' lacrosse team plays Portsmouth today at 3:30 p.m. in their quarterfinal game at North Kingstown.

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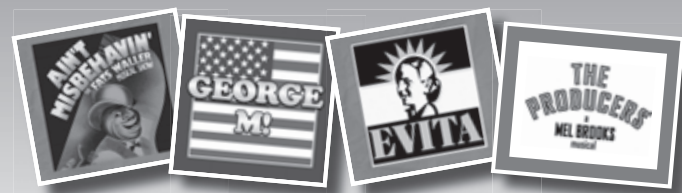


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