

DINING OUT: 2 cool Southern joints
where the menus really sizzle

How to throw
a holiday bash

SMALLER AND SCRAPPIER:
the *ProJo*'s plan to survive

Rhode Island

MONTHLY

The inspiring
people who
moved the
state forward
in 2016

RHODE ISLANDERS of the YEAR

Dr. Hank Wietsma,
veterinarian at
Pets in Need, and Ruby.

DECEMBER 2016 \$4.99





EDEN AND ROSS MCCURDY

LOTS OF FAMILIES DO FUN THINGS OVER April vacation, but most of them don't involve making aviation history.

But Ross McCurdy has always set his sights high. The science teacher at Ponaganset High School in Gloucester grew up aspiring to be a fighter pilot. At the same time, he always wanted to do good things for the environment.

Fascinated by a friend who was working on developing a fuel-cell powered, two-passenger airplane at Worcester Polytech more than a decade ago, McCurdy decided he wanted to combine his interests in aviation and renewable energy.

In 2008, the former Russian linguist for the United States Air Force got his pilot's license. Then, inspired by early aviators like Charles Lindbergh and his 1927 flight from New York to Paris, McCurdy and three students drove to California and back in a biodiesel-powered pickup truck.

"Our goal was to make it on pure biodiesel, without refueling along the way," McCurdy says. They made it with forty gallons to spare. The trip inspired him || CONTINUED ON PAGE 148

Ross and Aeden McCurdy

11 CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57

to make the journey again — this time, in a biofuelled plane.

But first, McCurdy had to line up a plane and some biofuel. Most small planes have piston engines that run on leaded fuel, which is bad for the environment.

"To do this project, I either needed a jet or I needed a diesel airplane, which is very rare," McCurdy says. "But I was able to find one."

He joined the Paramus Flying Club in New Jersey, which has a small plane with an SMA aviation diesel engine. That model is 30 to 40 percent more efficient and designed to run on jet fuel. In 2013, he practiced flying the plane from Rhode Island to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, where the Wright Brothers made their historic flight.

But the hardest thing about an aviation biofuel project is that there's very little of the fuel out there. "It's tricky for a regular guy getting aviation biofuel," McCurdy says. "Hopefully that will change in the future, which is what I'm working on."

Only a handful of companies make bio-

fuel. More are developing it, but they're typically working with the airlines and the military, "big guys buying millions of gallons of fuel." (United Airlines and Alaska Airlines are among the commercial airlines using biofuel.)

Though he was flying a small plane, McCurdy got some major assistance from the big guys. The Air Force supplied the biofuel in exchange for McCurdy keeping 5,000 miles worth of operational data on biodiesel performance in a diesel engine. The biofuel for the trip was made from the tiny, oil-rich seeds of the camolina, a three-foot-tall grassy plant that grows in northern climates. McCurdy also organized a GoFundMe campaign and received sponsorships from Rhode Island businesses and help from his students, who navigated regulations and lifted heavy drums of biofuel.

"We had to go through a bunch of hoops, and then we poured it in and hit the skies," McCurdy says.

On April 16 — aviator Wilbur Wright's birthday — McCurdy and his then-twelve-year-old son, Aeden, took off in the single-engine Cessna 182 from North Central State Airport in Smithfield. Aeden helped with

the fuel and the flight plan, and also flew the plane at times. Other pilot friends joined the duo for different legs of the journey.

McCurdy had planned out the airports ahead of time, where biofuel and aviation enthusiasts awaited them. They typically traveled during the day, and their second stop was Moraine Air Park, which is outside of Dayton, Ohio, and houses vintage airplanes.

Another highlight was flying over the Hollywood Hills sign into Santa Monica airport. They encountered some rough weather outside Dallas, which "made it exciting," McCurdy says.

After ten days, father and son landed back in Smithfield, having used less than 600 gallons of fuel and completing the first transcontinental flight using aviation biofuel.

This fall, Aeden started eighth grade at Gallagher Middle School in Smithfield. His dad is already planning the next big adventure: an around-the-world bioflight. But McCurdy is waiting for the FAA paperwork for an enhanced version of a biodiesel engine to be completed, so the trip won't likely happen for about another year.

It's an exciting time for renewable energy,

MarketPlace

Your guide to local goods, services and more!

FURNITURE REPAIR

CHAIR CANING RUSH, SPLINT, WEAVE,

by Dave Evilsizer

"THE HEN HOUSE"
15 BROOK ST.
BARRINGTON, R.I. 02806
(401) 433.1961



est. 1992

PET PRODUCTS & SERVICES



Invisible Fence Brand

Pet Containment Specialists!

800-225-0808

sales@moriartysif.com
www.moriartysifence.com

©2015 Moriarty's Fence Company. ©2015 Invisible Fence, Inc. Invisible Fence® and MicroLite® are registered trademarks of Invisible Fence, Inc. All rights reserved.

CLEANING SERVICES

A Clean Environment – One Office at a Time!



Customized
Cleaning Services.
A division of C.C.
Business Corporation.
Fully Bonded & Insured.

Marcellus Sharpe
President

265 Admiral Street
Providence, RI 02908

P: 401.274.5082
F: 401.274.0027

msharpe@ccbussinescorp.com
www.ccbussinescorp.com

PERSONAL SERVICES

LDP

Children's Etiquette for Today
Protocol for Teens
Young Adult Savvy
The Interview Process
Imaging for Women

All sessions are one on one

401-541-9110

Visit Our Website at:
www.ldp07.com

ADVERTISING

Advertise your products or
services here and reach more than
166,000 monthly readers
Call 649-4888 for more information

KAYLANNI'S Providing multiple
CLEANING SERVICE cleaning services

Houses • Apartments • Offices, etc.

401-688-1223 CINDY
cygarcia1005@gmail.com

he says. But you don't have to fly your own plane to use it. You can use biodiesel to heat your house if you've got oil heat, or in your car as long as you have a biodiesel engine.

"They're even taking trash and converting that into fuel," McCurdy says. "There's going to be a lot more options on the horizon for aviation biofuel."

Maternova

|| CONTINUED FROM PAGE 61

in Pawtucket. Now based in Miami, the heart of where the Zika virus has spread in the United States, Gold designed a line of clothing for women that would both protect them from insects and be fashionable.

"We wanted to create something that women would be happy to wear," Cote says. "We wanted it to look like regular clothing, and not like a beekeeper's outfit."

The idea grew out of a Zika innovation hackathon at Mass General Hospital and won \$19,000 in startup funding from Grand Challenges Canada to launch the project. The project was also chosen by Republic, a crowd investing platform that allows anyone to be an angel investor in the wake of changes

to rules by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission.

They've raised more than \$39,000 and are testing 200 insect-repellent T-shirts with pregnant women in El Salvador.

Gold has designed four pieces for the collection: a dress that can be let out to accommodate a growing belly, two scarves that can be worn by a woman or draped over a baby's crib, a pair of leggings and a cardigan/jacket. Each is imbued with nanotechnology that contains insect repellent approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, is made out of soft jersey material and is washable.

And while Wirth and Cote say the clothing is effective in warding off the mosquitos that carry the Zika virus, it also repels more than forty other types of insects. That expands the range of possibility of its use to people who want to protect themselves against other insect-borne illnesses, such as Lyme disease and malaria.

Wirth and Cote want to make sure that not just NGOs and hospitals have access to the protective clothing, but private citizens as well. They're starting manufacturing in the coming months. Wirth says they've

gotten positive reactions from Latin America to South Africa to a mother-in-law wanting to buy something for her pregnant daughter-in-law to "can you please sell these at Walmart in Puerto Rico?"

"Which we would love to do, if we can do it," Cote says. maternova.com

Pets in Need

|| CONTINUED FROM PAGE 62

Each day brings a different cool story, Wietsma says. A couple of months ago, they saw a four-month-old kitten with a fractured humerus, a difficult bone to repair. "So I was able to call and send the images to a board-certified surgeon and he said, 'I'll come and do it.' He came and he was able to surgically repair it with pin implants. Some of these orthopedic surgeries are not the typical things that the average vet does," he says.

Wietsma has also completed several complex surgeries for the clinic, including removing bladder stones from a dog.

But most importantly, Pets in Need is helping return animals to the people who love them. **B**

Get everything
you need to know
this week from
Rhode Island Monthly
in your inbox
every Thursday

Rhode Island
MONTHLY

the 401
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS WEEK FROM RHODE ISLAND MONTHLY
News | Food & Drink | Home & Style | Events

Sign up for
the 401 at
RIMonthly.com

6 Places to Go Apple Picking in RI
Get into the spirit of fall with a trip to one of these farms around the state (and pick up some cider doughnuts to take home). [Read more.](#)

THE Best Food Events



"Our greatest asset
is the wisdom gained
over decades of
invaluable experience
serving clients."

Donald J. Sowa, CFP®, AIF®
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

- Retirement & Financial Planning
- Fee-Based Asset Management
- Investment Guidance

EXPERIENCED. INDEPENDENT.
TRUSTED.



SOWA
FINANCIAL
GROUP, INC.

14 Breakneck Hill Road Ste 202
Lincoln, RI 02865
401.434.8090
SOWAFINANCIAL.COM

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member FINRA/SIPC. Sowa Financial Group is a Registered Investment Advisor. Advisory services and fixed insurance products and services offered by Sowa Financial Group are separate and unrelated to Commonwealth.