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The state

Lawyer: Keep ex-hospital CEO free on bail

PROVIDENCE (AP) — A former Providence hospital executive convicted of corruption has asked a judge to allow him to remain free on bail while he appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court.

But federal prosecutors are asking Robert Urciuoli, the former president and CEO of Roger Williams Medical Center, to report to prison immediately now that an appeals court has rejected his appeal.

Urciuoli was convicted of fraud and conspiracy in 2008 for buying the influence of a state senator. The 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals this week upheld the convictions.

His lawyer, Martin Weinberg, says he plans to appeal to the Supreme Court, which recently narrowed the scope of the federal fraud statute used to prosecute Urciuoli.

U.S. Senate OKs flood aid for R.I.

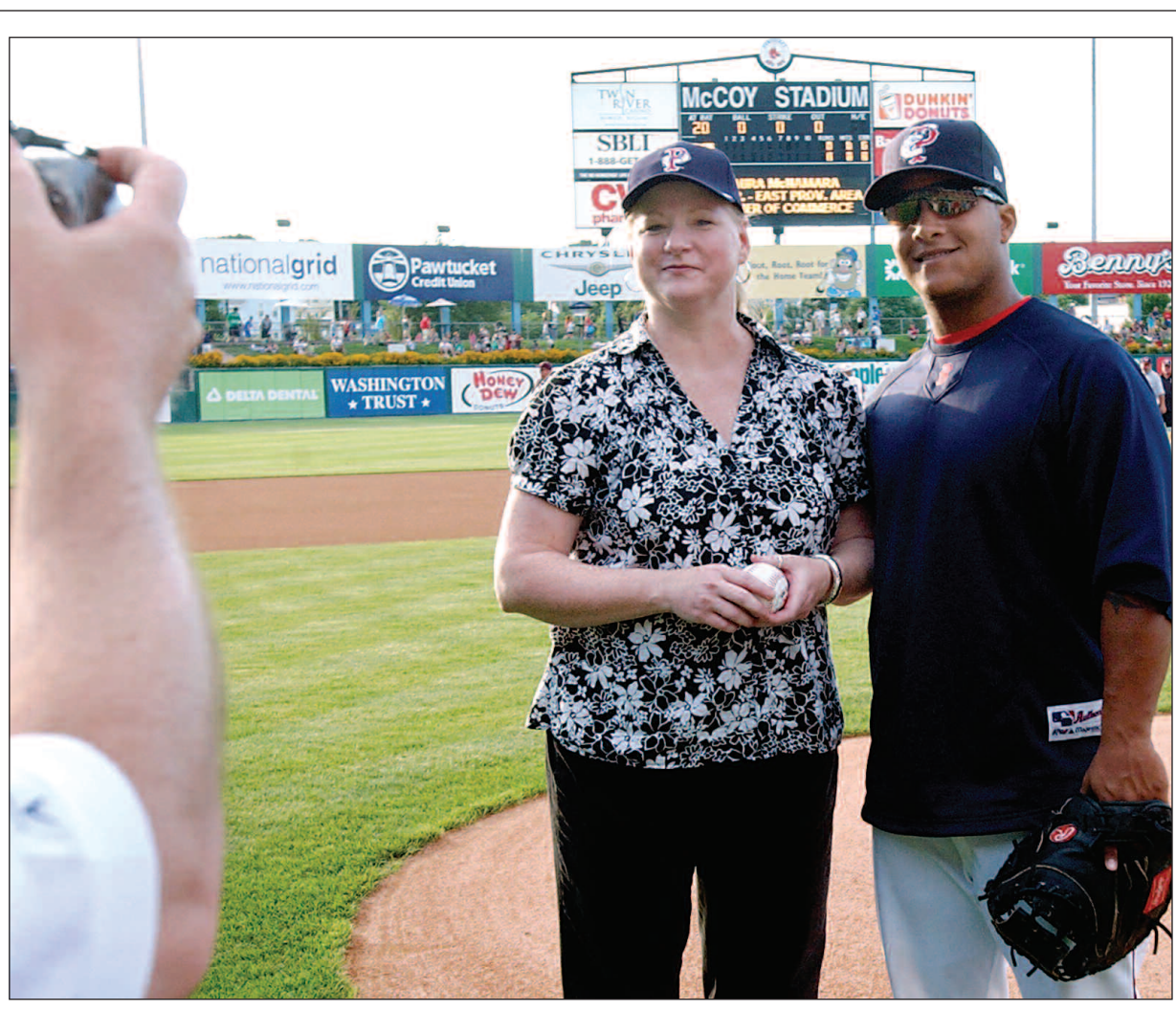
PROVIDENCE (AP) — The U.S. Senate has passed an emergency spending bill that would provide about \$150 million in aid to Rhode Island and other states hit by severe floods this year.

The Senate on Thursday approved the \$58.8 billion emergency war funding and disaster relief bill. It must still pass the U.S. House of Representatives.

The spring flooding in Rhode Island prompted President Barack Obama to declare the state a disaster area. Communities declared as disaster areas are required to match 25 percent of federal aid to qualify for it.

But the bill approved Thursday reduces the match to 10 percent, which would save the state millions.

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STRIKE-ING A POSE
During the pregame ceremonies before the PawSox game against the Toledo Mud Hens at McCoy Stadium Tuesday night, East Providence Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Laura McNamara poses for a picture with PawSox catcher Juan Apodaca, who later autographed the ball she is holding in celebration of the East Providence Area Chamber of Commerce's 113th birthday. This is the fourth consecutive year that the Chamber has chosen to celebrate its birthday with the Pawtucket Red Sox at their barbecue tent.

Photo/Butch Adams

Lincoln teachers accept wage freeze

By JON BAKER

LINCOLN — During a Friday afternoon private meeting held in Cumberland, the Lincoln Teachers Association voted to accept a wage freeze — without a contract extension — for the 2010-11 school year, one the School Committee previously had demanded.

LTA President Mary Ann McComiskey stated immediately after the session that it was a paper ballot vote, and a "small majority" opted for the freeze.

"It certainly wasn't unanimous, as the meeting lasted two-and-a-half hours; the teachers didn't push for the contract extension because many felt it more important to ensure adequate staffing at every school in Lincoln," McComiskey stated. "We hope the School Committee and the communi-

ty considers this a gesture of good will, and an ongoing commitment of the teachers to the students in our town.

"I just got off the phone with (School Committee Chair Elizabeth) Betty Robson to verbally inform her of the vote," she added. "Our union representatives will be meeting with the School Committee on Monday," before its regularly-scheduled open session at 4 p.m. inside the middle school auditorium.

On July 8, Robson announced the committee would recall six teachers, but also had rejected the LTA's concessions. Those included the yielding of the three-percent raise written into its current contract, which would save the district approximately \$677,000; and also waiving half of its compensation for professional/orientation days (before schools open to students in late August), preserving another

\$65,000.

That total amounted to \$742,000, though both provisions were based on the savings being devoted solely to teacher callbacks.

McComiskey indicated the union had received word recently that the committee would restore more teachers to their duties at the committee's meeting Monday.

"We're hopeful this (vote) means all teachers will be called back; with the amount of concessions we made, we're thinking it would be at least an additional eight," she noted. "But we're always hopeful the School Committee and the community will recall even more."

The general membership gathering Friday came to be when several teachers issued a request for another meeting — with a vote.

See TEACHERS, Page A-3

Memorial Hospital added to detainee death suit

By ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press Writer

PROVIDENCE (AP) — The family of a Chinese immigration detainee who died in the custody of a privately operated Rhode Island jail added eight new defendants, including a hospital and emergency room doctor, to a federal lawsuit alleging abuse and medical neglect.

The family of Hiu Lui "Jason" Ng on Friday sued the Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island and a doctor who they say failed to diagnose him with the advanced liver cancer from which he died less than two weeks later.

Ng, a 34-year-old Chinese computer engineer who lived in New York City, spent the last month of his life at the Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility, a privately operated jail in Central Falls, for overstaying his visa.

U.S. Immigration and Customs

Enforcement, which had contracted with the jail to house immigration detainees there, pulled all its detainees from Wyatt after Ng's death and terminated its agreement with the facility.

The federal agency said in a report that Ng was abused and neglected by the facility's guards, who taunted him, accused him of faking illness, denied him access to a wheelchair and dragged him down a hallway as he screamed in pain. His cancer was not diagnosed until right before his death. He died Aug. 5, 2008, at Rhode Island Hospital.

"The addition of more Wyatt staff as defendants demonstrates just how widespread the misbehavior at the facility was. Jason's treatment cannot be attributed to merely a rogue officer or two," a lawyer for Ng's family, Robert McConnell, said in a written statement.

The lawsuit says Ng was taken to

Memorial Hospital on July 26, 2008, but was denied an MRI by Marcia Robitaille, an emergency room doctor, because it was a Saturday. He was discharged with an incorrect diagnosis of sciatica, or acute pain and weakness along the lower back, and was never brought back to the hospital for an MRI, according to the lawsuit.

A spokeswoman for the hospital in Pawtucket had no immediate comment.

The new version of the lawsuit, initially filed in February 2009 on the family's behalf by the state branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, also names as defendants two nurses at Wyatt, three correctional officers accused of dragging Ng into a van to be taken to Connecticut and a Wyatt doctor accused of providing inadequate care.

Roughly 20 other defendants are

named in the suit, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Wyatt staff members.

A lawyer for the corporation that operates Wyatt declined to comment Friday.

Ng, his parents and his sister entered the United States in 1992 on a visitor visa and later applied for asylum. Federal immigration authorities in 2000 sent a notice for an immigration hearing to the wrong address and Ng, unaware that such a hearing had been scheduled, was ordered deported in 2001 after failing to show up in court.

He was arrested in July 2007 after arriving in immigration court for an interview, and was held in the custody of various detention centers — including Wyatt — until his death the following year.

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