

**SPANISH IMPORT IS TOP PLAYER**  
on Daily News All-County soccer team. B1



**CHRISTMAS EVENTS TO BEGIN EARLY**  
with tree-lighting ceremony scheduled for Monday. A3



**ALSO INSIDE**  
2009 gift guide  
USA WEEKEND  
Color Comics

# The Newport Daily News

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Saturday and Sunday  
November 28 and 29, 2009

WEEKEND EDITION

## How GREEN is your home?

Newport mayor puts her house to the test with an energy audit



Energy specialist Eileen Barrett sizes up Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano's Malbone Road home.



Jacqueline Marque ♦ Daily News staff photos

Eileen Barrett, a residential energy specialist for RISE Engineering, shows Newport Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano a catalog of energy-efficient lighting during a recent energy audit of the mayor's house.

The mayor helps call attention to a project that makes free energy audits available to homeowners on Aquidneck and Conanicut islands.

By Sean Flynn  
Daily News staff

**N**ewport Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano recently opened her home on Malbone Road to a semi-public energy audit as part of National Grid's Energy Action pilot project for Aquidneck and Conanicut islands.

Napolitano was a little hesitant at first and ran into some resistance from her husband, Jack. "You were just on the radio talking about your credit, now you're going to have the press go through the house?" Napolitano said her husband asked.

"It's all about being transparent as a public official," she said she responded, smiling. National Grid is offering free energy audits, a \$600 value, to all residents of Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth and Jamestown through December 2010, and is making efforts to persuade as many households as possible to sign up.

"We'd like at least 860 households to participate in the free energy audits over the next 13 months," said D. Ellen Pfeiffer, the Energy Action program manager. There are 28,000 residential accounts on Aquidneck and Conanicut islands, she said, but only about 120 audits were conducted in 2008.

The Napolitanos live in a two-story, 4,300-square-foot Victorian home built in 1864, so it seemed ripe for energy savings. There is a large cupola with older windows above the roof that seemed likely to be releasing heat.

Eileen A. Barrett, a residential energy specialist with RISE Engineering of Cranston, conducted the audit. RISE is one of several subcontractors

### MORE INFO

Call RISE Engineering at (800) 633-7947 to schedule a free in-home energy audit. After viewing your home and talking with you in person, an expert will assess your current energy use and develop customized recommendations. Information about National Grid's other energy efficiency programs and how to participate can be found at [www.powerofaction.com](http://www.powerofaction.com).

GREEN A6

### TIVERTON

## Little League official steals, repays \$13.8K

By Marcia Pobeznik  
Daily News correspondent

**'She was such a nice person, but she got involved in gambling and then all hell broke loose.'**

CLAUDIA LINHARES

Tiverton Little League president

The former treasurer of Tiverton Little League has repaid the more than \$13,000 she embezzled from the league's bank account.

Little League officials went to police nearly a year ago to report that thousands of dollars were missing from the organization's bank account, and the league's volunteer treasurer, who had held the position for 12 years, was not answering their calls or e-mails.

Joyce Mello, 37, of Tiverton paid \$13,800 in restitution and her case was closed as of Nov. 4, said Michael J. Healey, spokesman for Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch.

Mello faced possible charges of unlawful appropriation of more than \$1,000 and larceny of more than \$500. But the Little League was able to get its money returned without pressing charges.

Because she has no criminal record, Mello was eligible for a program for first time, non-violent offenders that allows them to make restitution and to perform community service or participate in counseling. The attorney general's Diversion Program was established in 1976 and handles between 300 and 400 cases a year.

"It's for people who mess up, admit they mess up, and do make good on whatever wrong they've done," Healey said. Participants complete the program without a criminal record, he said.

Mello had a year to repay the missing money, but did so in a little more than seven months. In

addition to paying back the \$13,800, Mello also paid the bill for the upkeep of the league's database, Little League President Claudia Linhares said.

"It still hurts to think about it. She did so much for the league," Linhares said of Mello. "She was such a nice person, but she got involved in gambling and then all hell broke loose."

Linhares said she knew something was wrong when bills for the upkeep of the Little League database went unpaid and Mello stopped answering e-mails and phone calls. Last December, Linhares contacted other members of the Little League board of directors and shared her concerns. They held an emergency meeting and decided to go to the police, but it took a month to sort through boxes of paperwork, receipts and bank statements to come up with an estimate of how much money was missing.

"She had made checks out to herself," Linhares said. "The money disappeared over four to five years."

The missing money would have been in the league's reserve account.

"We should have had \$15,000,

OFFICIAL A6

## Meeting with gay group softens Carcieri's stance on domestic partnerships

By Ray Henry  
Associated Press

PROVIDENCE — Gov. Donald L. Carcieri is a staunch social conservative who headlined a fundraiser for an anti-gay marriage group and says same-sex couples have no civil right to marriage.

So it surprised even some of Carcieri's toughest critics when the Republican sat down this month for a tense but polite meeting with six members of Queer Action of Rhode Island, the state's newest gay rights group. When he emerged, Carcieri announced he would consider supporting a domestic partnership system similar to one recently expanded by voters in Washington state.

His suggestion was an early victory for Queer Action, which wants to lobby for gay marriage and stronger hate crime laws while taking its message to opponents such as Carcieri who are accustomed to a normally sedate Statehouse. Its tactics have included Internet campaigns, protests and the sit-down with the governor.

"If you cut off communication, then people aren't going to be held accountable," said Susan



Heroux

Heroux, a Queer Action founder who was at the meeting. "And we want politicians to be held accountable to all the people, including gay

people's lives." Heroux's group, which counts more than 200 members on its Facebook Web site, organized this summer to protest the corporate sponsorship of a celebration held by the Rhode Island chapter of National Organization for Marriage, an anti-gay marriage group. It successfully pressured Canadian coffee shop chain Tim Hortons and Blount Fine Foods to withdraw their sponsorship and then held a protest outside the event.

"We wanted everyone to see us, we felt that was really important," Heroux said. "And that's a part of the idea behind Queer Action — it's about visibility."

Among its next goals are increasing pressure on congressional leaders who oppose the federal recognition of gay couples and seeking meetings with House

GAY A6

## Bell ringers take credit

Salvation Army marches out 'plastic kettles'

Associated Press

There could be less jingle in the Salvation Army's hallmark red kettles this season. The charity is testing kettles that take debit and credit cards.

The growth of so-called "plastic kettles" comes as fewer shoppers carry cash. Bell ringers who stand outside stores during the holiday season say that more and more shoppers are shaking their heads and smiling as they pass by, apologizing for not having spare change or cash to drop in the red kettles.

Last year, the Salvation Army tested the credit machines in two cities, Dallas and Colorado Springs, Colo. This

year the plastic kettles will be tested in 30 cities.

In Colorado Springs, fundraising last year went up \$64,000 from the year before, an 11 percent increase. About \$5,000 of the increase was from donors using credit or debit cards at the kettles.

"It used to be people would spend their money at the store counters, walk out and drop their change in the kettles. They don't shop that way anymore," said Maj. Don Gilger, coordinator of the Salvation Army of El Paso County. "We all realize that people are carrying less cash than they did 10 years ago."

The kettles that take credit don't look any different. But next to the metal red

CREDIT A6



Associated Press

Salvation Army bandmaster Matt Sims talks a donor through a credit card transaction recently in Richmond, Va.

### Hungry little suckers

While most bats eat insects or fruit, there are at least three types of vampire bats that subsist entirely on fresh blood from warm-blooded prey, such as fowl, cattle, horses, swine and, occasionally, humans.



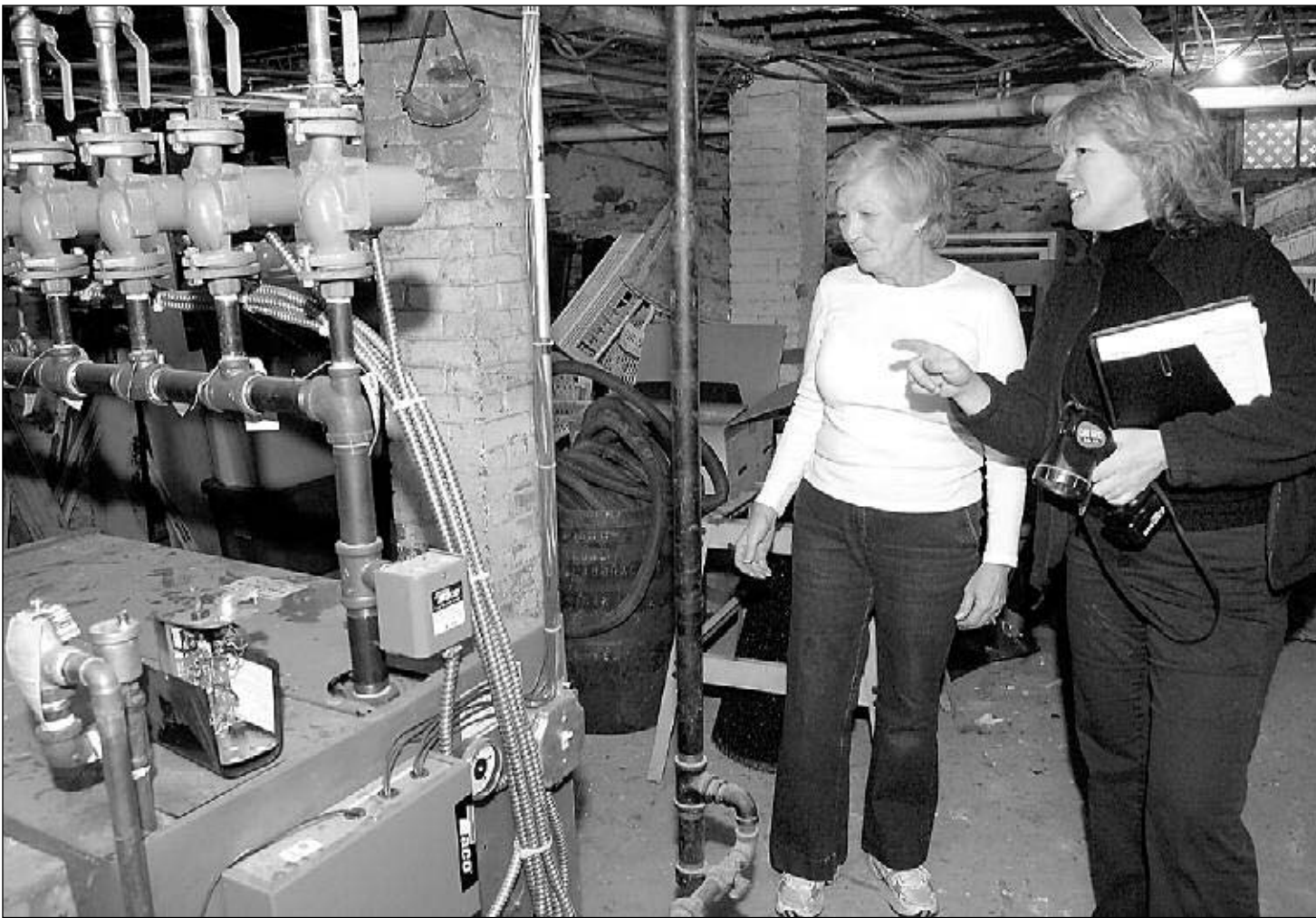
Advice	B7	Movies	C3
Business	C6	Obituaries	A4
Classifieds	B5	Opinion	A7
Comics	C4	Religion	C9
Community	C1	Sports	B1
Local & State	A3	Weather	A6



Did YOU know?

### Giving life

If you began donating blood at age 17 and donated every 56 days until you reached 76, you would have given 48 gallons.



Jacqueline Marquardt ♦ Daily News Staff

RISE residential energy specialist Eileen Barrett, right, inspects the recently installed boiler in the basement of Newport Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano's home during a recent energy audit.

## Green

Continued from A1

working with National Grid on energy-efficiency initiatives. Pfeiffer, David Graves, the company's media relations representative, a reporter and a photographer accompanied Barrett.

It turned out the Napolitanos already have done a lot of work to increase energy efficiency.

A new heating system with six zones was installed just last year at a cost of \$26,000.

"I have seen a tremendous improvement and a big difference in the bills," Napolitano said. "Before we had the work done, my heating bills were outrageous. You could hear the windows rattling. If we were comfortable in the kitchen, it was cold in the living room."

"Kudos to you for doing the heating system," Barrett said. "It's not always a popular investment. It's something you don't bring your friends down to see."

"Oh yes I do," Napolitano said.

Barrett found other areas where additional energy savings are possible. Most of the house's exterior, shingle-sided walls lack insulation. To have insulation blown into about 2,500 square feet of exterior walls would cost \$3,619, according to Barrett's analysis. RISE would conduct an infrared inspection during the work to make sure all the bays are filled.

Barrett calculated the energy savings would be \$619 a year, so the payback would take 5.8 years. However, under an incentive program, National Grid will pay 50 percent of the costs to install insulation, or up to \$1,500 for any homeowner.

The 2,138 square feet of basement ceiling in the Napolitanos' home also is not insulated. The installation of fiberglass insulation, held in place with spring wire, would cost \$4,276. With annual savings of \$326, the payback period would be 13.1 years. Barrett calculated the do-it-yourself cost of this project would be \$2,138, thus

**'(The heating system) is not always a popular investment. It's something you don't bring your friends down to see.'**

EILEEN BARRETT

residential energy specialist

reducing the payback period.

Because heat is being lost in different areas, for example, from the second-floor hallway under the cupola, Barrett recommended "home air leakage sealing," which could be achieved with caulks, foams, weather stripping and other products, she said. She calculated the cost of installation at \$1,320, and annual energy savings at \$189. The payback time would be seven years.

If a homeowner hires a contractor National Grid has approved to do the air sealing, the company will pay between 50 and 100 percent of the costs, depending on the energy reductions achieved. The company will pay up to \$750 for the sealing.

Those were the projects the Napolitanos "should undertake right now," according to the audit report sheet. Besides saving fuel and money, their home would reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 7,816 pounds a year, the report says.

National Grid is hoping to triple energy savings in this area by December 2010 through an energy efficiency campaign that includes many other recommendations and incentives for energy savings, Pfeiffer said. The recommendations are posted on [www.powerofaction.com](http://www.powerofaction.com). Residents may put in their ZIP code and review the different ways to save energy.

Napolitano said she has been having windows replaced as rooms are restored. Barrett recommended she continue that practice and hang insulating drapes around the older windows to decrease heat loss at night, when the drapes are closed.

During the free audits, households receive up to 12 compact fluorescent bulbs and energy-efficient showerheads. The flu-

orescent bulbs typically use up to 80 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs and have the same light quality. The energy savings could be even higher, Pfeiffer said, and the fluorescent bulbs last much longer.

Power strips can be used to turn off electronics such as televisions, computers, monitors and printers that remain plugged in.

"You think they are off, but they are still drawing energy," Pfeiffer said. "It's called phantom load."

National Grid also recommends getting rid of old energy-inefficient refrigerators and replacing them with Energy Star models. The company will take away the old refrigerator and give the owner a \$50 rebate on a new refrigerator. Rebates also are offered on energy-efficient washers, dryers, computers, computer monitors, televisions, room air cleaners and other appliances.

For homeowners who require heating system improvements, National Grid would provide up to a \$1,300 rebate for high-efficiency heating and hot water systems, Pfeiffer said. The rebate for the boiler is up to \$1,000; for the water heater, up to \$300.

If solar and geothermal systems are installed, homeowners can receive up to 30 percent back through the incentives.

National Grid will spend \$35.6 million on energy-efficient programs in 2010, Pfeiffer said. Customers are expected to save more than \$184 million in energy costs during the approximately 10 to 15 years that the electricity and natural gas measures to be funded in 2010 will be in place.

The annual megawatt-hour savings realized by electricity customers is expected to be enough to power about 14,900 homes for a year, according to National Grid calculations. Annual natural gas savings are expected to be enough to heat more than 1,200 homes for a year.

Send reporter Sean Flynn email at [Flynn@NewportRI.com](mailto:Flynn@NewportRI.com).

## Credit

Continued from A1

kettles are wireless card readers that resemble do-it-yourself readers at gas stations. The machines print two receipts, one for the donor and one to drop in the kettle. Salvation Army pays credit-processing fees same as any retailer.

But the plastic kettles take some getting used to. In Colorado Springs, volunteer bell ringer Dave Flack wasn't sure what to make of his first day ringing bells next to a credit machine. The 61-year-old keeps a three-ring-notebook full of Christmas carols handy to sing to shoppers outside the grocery store where he volunteers, but he needed to borrow a pen from the Salvation Army manager who showed him how to take donations using the machine.

Flack said he'd be willing to give it a shot.

"I've been doing this five years, and I hear people say they'd like to help but don't have any cash. I don't know if they'll use this or not," Flack said. "But the need is great, so whatever it takes, we'll try it."

Shoppers looked at the plastic kettle with interest. No one used it right away, but they liked the idea.

"This is great. I've never seen that before," said shopper Sara Trumbley, whose two small children dropped coins in the kettle. "A lot of times I'll walk by and think, 'I have no cash, that stinks.' People are going to be excited to see this."

The charity says its red kettles brought in more than \$130 million nationwide last year, an increase of 17 percent from 2007. Salvation Army officials aren't sure how much of the increase came from credit or debit donations.

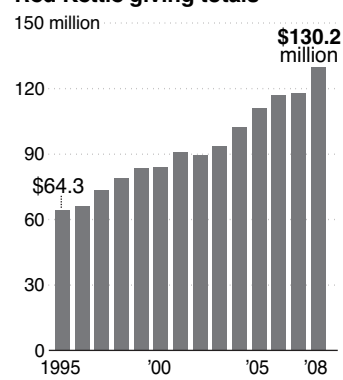
Anecdotal evidence indicates people who stop to make credit or debit donations make larger gifts, at least a few dollars. Maj. George Hood, spokesman for the Arlington, Va.-based charity, said that the donation sizes are similar to online donations, which average about \$75.

Denver-area bell ringers getting ready to try the new machines said the plastic kettles

## Change is good

The Salvation Army's holiday fundraising drive for change, cash and recently added debit and credit cards has steadily increased over the years.

Red Kettle giving totals



SOURCE: Salvation Army

AP

could make it safer to volunteer. The charity insists that red kettle thefts are rare, but volunteer bell ringers say robberies happen and that volunteers would be safer standing next to kettles with less cash.

"It's a lot cleaner process, a lot safer for everyone," said Hardway Boyed, who runs a drug and alcohol treatment program for the Salvation Army and volunteers as a bell ringer. A volunteer he works with was robbed three years ago outside a post office, and Boyed called the cashless donations "fantastic."

The charity says that the old-fashioned kettles aren't going anywhere, because shoppers and especially children enjoy dropping coins as they shop for the holidays. Even Salvation Army groups that are using the card machines say they're a small part of the overall fundraising effort.

"They're still a little cumbersome," Gilger said. "They work, and we're going to keep using them, but the technology isn't really there yet. Some people are a little leery of it, or don't want to stop that long to use the machine."

Maybe one day, Salvation Army officials say, the charity will come up with something even faster than dropping a coin.

"I would love it eventually if we had a little antenna on the kettles and you could walk by a just beam a donation from your phone," Gilger said.

## CORRECTIONS

The Newport Daily News seeks to be fair and accurate in reporting the news. If you believe we have published an error, please let us know. Call

the city editor at 849-3300, Ext. 254, send an e-mail to [CityDesk@NewportRI.com](mailto:CityDesk@NewportRI.com) or write us at 101 Malbone Road, Newport, RI 02840.

## Gay

Continued from A1

Speaker William Murphy and Senate President Teresa Paiva Weed, D-Newport, both of whom oppose gay marriage.

Heroux said she considers Murphy a bigger obstacle to gay marriage in Rhode Island than Carcieri. Unless a bill gets to Carcieri's desk, it doesn't matter whether he would veto it.

Heroux, 42, has long been involved in gay rights causes. She was a founder of Marriage Equality Rhode Island, the dominant voice in the state's gay marriage debate, and served as its chairwoman from the summer of 2008 until earlier this year.

She married her wife two years ago in Provincetown, Mass., since they cannot get married in their home state. The couple have a 14-year-old daughter.

The drive toward gay marriage has lost ground in Rhode Island even as every other New England state besides Maine has adopted it. A gay marriage bill has been introduced in the General Assembly every year since 1997, but it has never received a floor vote.

It seems unlikely the state judi-

ciary will legalize gay unions as happened in Massachusetts. In 2007, the Rhode Island Supreme Court ruled a lesbian couple married in Massachusetts could not get divorced in their home state of Rhode Island because state lawmakers have never recognized marriage as anything but a union between a man and a woman.

Marriage Equality Rhode Island is unwilling to debate anything short of gay marriage because it believes alternatives like domestic partnership and civil unions create a second-class system for gay couples. Heroux is also unwilling to settle for any system short of full marriage, but she is willing to debate others' protections.

"Marriage equality is the end goal," she said. "But if it's going to take a few years to get to that and there's something incremental that will help people right now, that's great."

Critics are looking to pounce on any split in the gay rights movement, whether big or small.

"Obviously, from my position, divisions are a good thing," said Christopher Plante, executive director of the National Organization For Marriage Rhode Island. "Anytime your energy is

divided strategically, that's a problem."

The failure of one of those incremental bills provided Queer Action an opportunity to confront Carcieri.

Members of Queer Action had earlier scheduled a meeting with the governor to express their anger at his headlining a fundraiser for the Massachusetts Family Institute, which opposes gay marriage.

Shortly before their sit-down, Carcieri vetoed legislation permitting gay couples to plan the funerals of their late partners.

As a result, Heroux brought a man who had struggled for weeks to reclaim the body of his late partner from the state medical examiner's office because they could not get married. Heroux also brought her mother, who spoke about what she considers hurtful rhetoric from anti-gay marriage groups, and a gay woman married in Massachusetts who cannot get divorced after her spouse left her.

"After an hour and 15 minutes of talking to gay people about their stories, he changed his tone radically," Heroux said. "He came out with much more understanding."

requiring two signatures on a check, to prevent a similar problem in the future, Linhares said. "Now we have so many safety nets," she said. "It's so much more paperwork, but you live and learn."

Send correspondent Marcia Pobeznik e-mail at [Pobeznik@NewportRI.com](mailto:Pobeznik@NewportRI.com).

## LOCAL WEATHER

### COASTAL RHODE ISLAND

Today, cloudy, windy with a chance of morning showers. Clearing in the afternoon. High near 48. Tonight, clear, windy. Low around 37.

### MARINE

Today, west wind 20-25 knots with gusts to 35 knots. Waves 2-3 feet. Tonight, west wind 15-20 knots. Gusts to 30 knots. Waves 2-3 feet.

Sunday, west wind 10-15 knots. Waves 1-2 feet. Sunday night, southwest wind 5-10 knots. Waves 1 foot or less. Monday, southwest wind 15-20 knots. Waves around 2 feet. Monday night, northwest wind 15-20 knots with gusts to 25 knots. Waves around 2 feet.

### EXTENDED

Sunday, sunny. High near 48. Sunday night, mostly cloudy. Low around 43.

Monday, cloudy and breezy with a chance of showers. High near 55. Monday night, mostly cloudy with a chance of showers. Low around 33.

### TIDES

Sunday's sunrise 6:51 a.m., sunset 4:18 p.m. High tides: 4:43 a.m. 5:12 p.m. Low tides: 11 a.m., 10:42 p.m.

Monday's sunrise 6:52 a.m., sunset 4:17 p.m. High tides: 5:32 a.m., 6 p.m. Low tides: 11:45 a.m., 11:25 p.m.

## Official

Continued from A1

but we had \$285," Linhares said.

The loss did not affect the league because it was between seasons. "We just kind of tightened up our belt and didn't buy anything until registration money and sponsor money started

coming in" in late winter and early spring, Linhares said.

The league posted a message on its Web site last January alerting parents that police were investigating "the misuse of some funds," but despite "this regrettable circumstance," the Little League was prepared for the 2009 season.

Changes have been made, like

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