



## **MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Gov. McKee, Lt. Gov. Matos to Join Charlestown Seafood Festival to Pay Tribute to the Late Chris DiPaola**

***Radio Personality, Longtime Voice of Festival Passed Away Suddenly in October  
2022***

**CHARLESTOWN, RI (Aug 3, 2023)** – When [The 38th Annual Charlestown Seafood Festival](#) kicks off this year, it will be missing a very familiar sound - the energetic and infectious voice of radio personality Chris DiPaola, who passed away suddenly last October.

This year, the Charlestown Seafood Festival will kick off the annual three-day event with a tribute to DiPaola's years of dedication to the festival and the community at-large. Rhode Island Governor Daniel McKee and Lt. Governor Sabina Matos are among the dignitaries scheduled to attend the special ceremony at 3 p.m. on August 4.

Over the years, DiPaola - the owner of local radio stations WBLQ, WWRI and The Buzz - became the difacto voice of the Charlestown Seafood Festival, broadcasting live and also doing

all of the onsite announcements for nearly 25 years. When WBLQ and WWRI begin their live broadcasts Friday, it will be the first time in decades without DiPaola.

“Chris was larger than life and an incredible asset to our community. I not only had the pleasure of working with him during the festival, but he also sat on the Charlestown Chamber Board of Directors with me for many years, serving as secretary,” said Heather Paliotta, Executive Director of the [Charlestown Chamber of Commerce](#) and Director of the Charlestown Seafood Festival. “As a colleague and friend, Chris was always there. So, it’s only fitting that we kick off this year’s festival with a tribute to him.”

DiPaola served on multiple local boards and committees, including the Westerly Chamber of Commerce, Charlestown Chamber of Commerce, and the Rotary Club where he served two terms as President. He also broadcast live at multiple local events throughout the community every year.

“He was a supporter of anything and everything local,” said Kimberly J. Poland, whose company, [Poland Media Group](#), helped organize the tribute. “I have worked with Chris on many events and over the years he became a very dear friend. While he can’t be replaced, Poland Media Group is truly honored to play a role in remembering his incredible legacy.”

During the ceremony, Gov. McKee and Lt. Gov. Matos will each speak and present Memorial Citations in his honor. Paliotta will also present a memorial plaque to Chris’ wife, Laina DiPaola, and his parents, Tom and Nadine DiPaola.

“Chris DiPaola was not just the voice of the Charlestown Seafood Festival, he was a champion for all of Southern Rhode Island, and he is certainly missed by all who were fortunate enough to meet him and get to know him,” Governor McKee said. “It is an honor to be a part of this year’s Seafood Festival and to remember Chris and the lasting legacy he left on countless Rhode Islanders.”

“Chris dedicated his life to keeping his listeners informed, engaged, and entertained,” said Lt. Governor Matos. “While this first Seafood Festival without him is a bittersweet occasion, it is

also proof of his enduring legacy. I'm proud to join his family and the community in honoring his memory.”

The 38th Annual Charlestown Seafood Festival will take place at Ninigret Park on August 4, 5, and 6, 2023 with gates opening at noon on Friday, August 4.



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#### **About The Charlestown Chamber of Commerce**

[The Charlestown Chamber of Commerce](#) is a not-for-profit organization comprised of several hundred businesses, non-profit and associate members. The chamber's mission is to facilitate and ensure the success and growth of our business community and its members through business networking and the promotion of regional tourism. The chamber is dedicated to the cultural, historical, environmental, recreational, and civic well-being of the beautiful coastal communities in and around Charlestown, Rhode Island. For more information, please log onto: <https://www.charlestownrichamber.com>.

#### **About The Charlestown Seafood Festival**

[The Charlestown Seafood Festival](#) - named a "Top 100 Event in North America" and listed as one of 10 Best Summer Seafood Festivals in the Northeast - is held annually at Charlestown's Ninigret Park in Rhode Island. The Seafood Festival is the biggest fundraiser for the Charlestown Chamber of Commerce.

*The funds raised by The Charlestown Seafood Festival are vital to the Chamber's mission to support local businesses and boost tourism.*

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