



The American elm at 41 Narragansett Ave. is one of the great trees of Jamestown. Photo by Sam Bari

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according to its current owners, it is home to an exotic collection of mature trees, such as the giant weeping beech and a redwood tree.

The Chinese chestnuts live to be over 50 years, so this one was probably planted later than its yard-mates, but it has an important history in the U.S. Most of the American chestnut trees died from blight which hit the United States in 1904, but Chinese chestnuts, like this one, were immune to the disease so were used to replace the dying breed.

6) THE ENGLISH OAK AT 71 HOWLAND AVENUE

This tree may not be a calendar girl, but it's an award winner in another way. It's reported to have the largest trunk — at over 171 inches, according to Town Forester Dave Nickerson — of any English oak in New England. That trunk comes in handy to hold its 78-foot height and 91-foot crown spread.

Obviously, the English oak isn't a native around here, but when ships came over from England in Colonial days, they used this species' acorns as packing material. That was irresistible to the local squirrels that spread them around the island. So now we have relatives right here on the island of the famous oaks of Sherwood Forest where Robin Hood and his Merrie Men lived.

an honored family, since American elms are the state trees of Massachusetts and North Dakota.

8) THE BUTTERNUT TREE AT 34 HOWLAND AVENUE.

Butternuts (or white walnuts) are pretty special trees to this nation. After all, it was butternut dye that disguised the Colonists during the Boston Tea Party. Pulitzer prize-winning poet Robert P.T. Coffin remembered this when he wrote,

We bent down to the bob-cat's crouch,

Took color from the butternut tree,

At Saratoga, Lexington,
We fought like Indians and went free.

Both Native Americans and settlers used the tree for medicine. It relieved rheumatism, arthritis, headaches, toothaches and dysentery. In some cases, it even seemed effective against tapeworm. And during the Revolution, products from this same tree were used to inoculate soldiers and civilians alike against the smallpox.

The species (which has been the victim of an epidemic in the last 30 years that has reduced its numbers by around 70 percent) has been our friend. It's provided us with medicine, dye, furniture and even candy! And it just keeps on giving, as in the case of this tree on Howland Avenue. Not long ago, the owner discovered a chain embedded in one of the tree's branches. Someone had slung it there years ago to hoist car engines while they were being repaired and eventually the tree just made it part of itself. Now that is devotion.

From Beavertail to the north end, Conanicut's trees surround us with history and beauty. In recognition of this, the town Tree Preservation and Protection Committee has put out a brochure called the "Tree Tour of Jamestown Rhode Island" which features several trees in the village. The brochures is available at the library. Following it is a great way to spend an afternoon!

7) THE AMERICAN ELM AT 41 NARRAGANSETT AVENUE.

Living on an island does have its advantages if you're a tree. This beautiful old Elm probably escaped the nationwide scourge of Dutch elm disease because it was isolated on Conanicut Island while other American elms fell in forests.

The first case of the disease which demolished them was spotted in Cleveland, Ohio in 1930 where it arrived in a shipment of imported tainted logs. It moved fast (in tree terms) and by 1932 it had spread as far east as New Jersey. By 1970, over 77 million trees were dead. This elm, though, lived to tell the tale. It comes from

JYC fall series race results

Race number three of the Jamestown Yacht Club Fall Series was held Sunday, Sept. 18. The following are the results:

A Class: 1. USA 41, ID35, T. Glackin; 2. Unplugged, Custom, S. Murray; 3. Wanda, Viper 830, A. Wadson; 4. Elan, First 36.7, J. Hammel; 5. OffBEAT, J/109, D. Hannah; 6. Jest, Quest 32, P. Hallowell; 7. In Theory, Kiwi 35, M. Kehew- M. Nannini; 8. Floating Point, Frers 40, P. Clayton.

B Class: 1. Fast Lane, J/24, H. & A. Lane; 2. Blues Eracer, J/22, L. Mariorenzi; 3. Luna, Albin Nova, C. Brown & S. Hakki; 4. Breezin, J/30, B. Underhill; 5. Footloose, Pearson Flyer, A. Yates; 8. Ghost, Express 27, M. De Angeli; 8. Rhapsody, J/30, Teno et al.

C Class: 1. Chairman Arafat, Pearson El., R. Bestoso; 2. Top Cat, Baltic 42, T. Lyons; 3. Scampi II, Scampi 30, D .K. Hansen; 4. Fall Line, Morgan 365, R. Boes; 5. Second Wind, Seid 29.9, S. Parfet; 6. Urubamba, Sabre 28, J. DiGiando; 7. Zittle, Catalina 25, M. Cox.

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LEGAL TIP

An exculpatory clause in a lift ticket did not bar a negligence claim filed by a skier against a ski resort after he was struck by an intoxicated snowboarder, a Pennsylvania appellate court has ruled.

The plaintiff, an experienced skier who realized that collisions are part of the sport of downhill skiing, was skiing down a trail one evening when he was struck violently from behind by a high school student on a snowboard. At the time of collision, the plaintiff and nearby witnesses smelled alcohol on the snowboarder's breath.

The court ruled the exculpatory clause protected the resort from the ordinary risks of skiing and not the acts of an intoxicated patron. The resort was negligent in allowing the intoxicated patron to snowboard.

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