

• EDITORIAL •

Don't forget winter leisure at the library

When you find it is just too cold to go outside and play, the Jamestown Philomenian Library offers a wide selection of activities for the armchair enthusiasts among us.

Of course there are many, many books to read at the library. And there are more books arriving every week. However, the library also boasts a great collection of videos and DVDs, audio books, and music CDs. There are also a number of current magazines and newspapers available so that you can keep up with the news. Computers are available to keep you connected to the world.

There are a variety of programs available at the library, too. The library offers many programs for children and teens. The Friends of the Jamestown Library also host a number of interesting events, including the Foreign Film Series, which gets underway tonight with the screening of a Norwegian movie.

So if you are looking for something to do, stop by the Jamestown library. There's always something there that will titillate your intellect.



State funds for first responders

State Senator Teresa Paiva Weed and Representative Bruce Long present Jamestown's fire department and emergency medical services with legislative grants in the amount of \$6,500. Accepting the check was Fire Chief Jim Bryer (left) and JEMS Director Clem Napolitano (right).

What kind of nation do we want?

I spent a good portion of my life teaching American history to high school kids and took great pride in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the principles upon which this nation was founded, but I am now frightened for my country. A quick glance at the news reveals just how far we have strayed from "American" values and beliefs.

Recent news stories focus on controversial

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questions such as "torturing" and maintaining secret prisons around the world. The government denies the practice of torture, but daily news reports indicate we most certainly do. The number of violations indicates that despite the government's denial, it is a common practice, and the only refutation is to parse words and argue that what we do does not constitute "true torture." What kind of nation condones, justifies, and allows torture?

The Senate finally spoke, and by an overwhelming margin (90-9)

passed a law condemning torture, but the president insisted he would veto any bill outlawing torture. Only when the polls turned against the president's position, did he abandon his veto threat. What kind of a president insists on protecting torture as a government practice?

In Cuba, the U.S. government is holding people for the rest of their lives with no charge, no legal representation, and in inhumane conditions. No one is told who these people are. We are told that Guantanamo holds "bad" peo-

ple, yet many have quietly been released and sent home. The U.S. government denies the mistreatment of these prisoners but refuses to give the Red Cross access to them. What kind of a country do we now live in?

An American citizen has been held for three and one half years in solitary confinement with no charges, no legal representation, and denied all constitutional rights. The original accusation of being a "dirty bomber" has been dropped because the evidence against him was extracted from a witness through torture, and was proven baseless. The witness has disap-

peared, and it is thought he is being held by the U.S. in a secret prison somewhere. Meanwhile, all the original accusations against the citizen have been dropped, yet he is still held in violation of everything American." What kind of a nation do we now live in?

The U.S. is the only major nation refusing to participate in an International Court that would bring war criminals to justice. Why would a great nation that espouses democracy refuse to support international justice? What kind of nation do we live in? Why would an American president be afraid of an International Court for

War Criminals? Does he fear for his own future?

What kind of nation illegally attacks a defenseless nation under false pretenses, after having starved that small nation for 10 years with the most brutal sanctions in the history of the world? When the former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was presented with the fact that 600,000 Iraqi children had died from brutal sanctions, and she was asked if she thought it was worth it, she said "yes." What kind of a nation condones the deaths of 600,000 children whose

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The news of 10 and 15 years ago is from the Jamestown Press. The news of 25, 50, 75, and 100 years ago from the Newport Daily News comes from the collection of the Newport Historical Society.

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, January 3, 1906:

Owing to the small number of pupils attending the North district school, the School Committee has deemed it advisable to discontinue the school during the remainder of the winter.

From the Newport Daily News, January 5, 1906:

Several of the children about town have the mumps, and others the whooping cough.

From the Newport Daily News, January 8, 1906:

Mr. Alton Head is in Fall River, where he went to get a flock of Rhode Island red fowls recently purchased by him.

The entrance to the bay presented a busy scene during the forenoon. Numerous tows of barges delayed by the storm were passing out, while others were arriving. It was noted that several of the barges were of the box pattern, having not even a rudder to steer with.

The winter here thus far could hardly be finer. Almost daily some player has been on the golf grounds, while Saturday one farmer was reported as plowing. The poultry men report a plentiful supply of fresh eggs as the result of the fine weather.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, January 1, 1931:

The New Year's eve dance sponsored by the Conanicut Grange was held in the grange hall last evening and was quite largely attended, many young people coming from Newport and Congdon's orchestra of Newport furnishing music.

From the Newport Daily News, January 3, 1931:

The second in the series of games in the newly organized basket ball league of Jamestown was played last night in the Holy Ghost Society hall before a capacity crowd.

From the Newport Daily News, January 8, 1931:

The machinery at the graphite mine at the north end of the island was removed yesterday and shipped to Boston.



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

Week of January 5

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, January 4, 1956:

Lt. Thomas J. McHugh, state police fire marshal, and Merton C. Hull, Jamestown fire chief, accompanied by Police Chief Harold E. Shippee, Town Councilman John C. Rembijas, School Superintendent A.J. Miller, and William Glen, school custodian, have made a complete inspection of the new school building at Lawn and Watson avenues in Jamestown.

From the Newport Daily News, January 6, 1956:

Five mute swans, unusual visitors which attracted the attention of several observers, were sighted this morning on Sheffield Pond in Jamestown. The big birds were placidly feeding and ignored amateur photographers who tried for vantage shots. Although swans have been seen in Jamestown, they are infrequent visitors and do not nest there, as far as is known. Today's tourists may have come from Bonnet Shores in Narragansett, south of the Jamestown bridge.

From the Newport Daily News, January 7, 1956:

Approximately 75 adults and children attended the opening of Ye Old Yacht Club in Jamestown last night. . . . Dr. Alfred B. Gobeille, president of the Town Council, spoke briefly and commended (James) Burroughs for restoring the old yacht club building which was partially destroyed by Hurricane Carol.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, January 2, 1981:

One-hundred eighty-one Penguins took the New Year's Day plunge at Mackerel Cove Thursday noon for the benefit of the R.I. Special Olympics. The crowd, the biggest ever at the fifth annual event, was estimated at 2,500. More than \$1,500 was raised in

pledges.

From the Newport Daily News, January 5, 1981:

The Jamestown Lions contributed \$125 to the Perkins Institute for the Blind project. Money will go to transporting blind children from the school in Boston to their homes in Rhode Island on weekends.

From the Newport Daily News, January 7, 1981:

The Jamestown Theater's first subscription series will open on Jan. 17 at 8 p.m., when the R.I. Shakespeare Theatre presents "A London Music Hall."

Adult exercise class, sponsored by the recreation department, will begin tonight at 7 at the Jamestown School gym.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, January 4, 1991:

The school budget may see a "double digit" increase for 1991-92 due to the opening of the new school building and jumps in personnel-related expenses such as health insurance. Last week, the School Committee asked administrators to cut the proposed \$4.3 million budget by \$52,000. But the remaining \$3.8 million for 1991-92 is still nearly 13 percent higher than the current budget.

The year ended on a sound financial note for the Jamestown Harbor Management Commission, which completed its first full season of operation within budget.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, January 5, 1996:

At 42 degrees, the water at Mackerel Cove was a bit chilly. But that did not slow down some 400 to 500 revelers who celebrated the arrival of 1996 New Year's Day by participating in the 20th annual Penguin Plunge.

Crew members of the Russian fish-processing ship anchored in the West Passage south of the Jamestown Bridge got a boatload of presents delivered to them over the holidays, not by Santa Claus but by a couple of Jamestowners. At the request of the Sergy Vasilisin's captain, Town Council President Fred Pease and local attorney John Murphy ferried groceries bought at McQuade's market with the captain's money out to the ship.

Sixty bird species were spotted in the 11th annual Conanicut Island Christmas Bird Count held Dec. 30.