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Foundation enhances options for students

By Donna K. Drago

If your Jamestown child is excited about learning new things and having fun while doing so, chances are they are the beneficiaries of the Jamestown Education Foundation.

Formed about two years ago, the foundation raises funds to provide enrichment and alternative educational opportunities to all children and teens on the island.

Betsy Gooding, a former School Committee member and a founder of the JEF, said that a big part of the foundation's mission is to be a conduit between children and the "rich resources" of the artisans, athletes, scientists and other members of the community who may have skills and knowledge to share.

Many of the JEF's programs are taught in the schools after hours. Others are taught at the library, and still others are taught on farms, sailboats, or on the island's beaches.

The programs are to benefit all children of Jamestown, Gooding said, noting that kids who attend private or parochial schools are also welcome to participate in JEF activities.

The creation of Jamestown's Teen Center was a significant effort on the part of JEF and several other community groups on the island, Gooding said.

"We were a very important

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At the beach

Tom Pasquale of Jamestown feeds the seagulls at the Mackerel Cove town beach. Photo by Vic Richardson

Council adopts noise ordinance

By Dotti Farrington

Town councilors voted 3-2 to adopt a noise ordinance even if it might cause havoc for Island Rubbish Service, the island's main contractor for refuse and recycling pickup.

Councilor Barbara Szeptowski told her colleagues that Island Rubbish officials told her that they already have changed their schedule as much as possible because of noise complaints. They are concerned that the new ordinance would be used against them further and could wreak havoc, Szeptowski said. She explained that Island Rubbish is limited in when it can collect rubbish by transfer station hours, as well as its own strategies to avoid school buses and commuter traffic.

Residents in various parts of town complain about collections as early as 3 or 4 a.m., and village residents have complained about collections from businesses at 7 a.m.

Assistant Town Solicitor Carolyn Mannis, who drafted the ordinance, said any changes or exemptions would bring challenges about the Constitutionality of the law. She said that it would be difficult to defend against such challenges, and the town would have to pay all costs of such a challenge if the town lost the case.

Mannis told the councilors that they could suspend or repeal the ordinance if it proved to be

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New town administrator takes oath of office

By Dotti Farrington

Town Councilors opened their meeting Monday with festive flourishes to mark the official introduction and swearing-in of new Town Administrator Bruce Keiser of South Kingstown. A brief reception, featuring coffee and pastries from Slice of Heaven, followed.

Before Keiser was welcomed, the councilors and state Representative Bruce Long (R-

Jamestown, Middletown) praised three town employees, Arlene Petit, Thomas Tighe, and William Donovan, for "splendid service."

Petit was declared Town Clerk of the Year some weeks ago by state land surveyors. Tighe was recognized for top service as interim town administrator twice within the past 18 months. Donovan was commended for taking over for Tighe as police chief while Tighe was acting

administrator.

Long presented Petit with a certificate saying, "You do great work. You and your staff and the entire town do great. I like the way Jamestown does it." The certificate from the state House of Representatives cited Petit and all town employees here for "duty, honesty, integrity and dedication." Petit previously had declined any praise not including the work of her staff, and all town

workers who contribute to the smooth operation of town offices.

Council President David Long commended Tighe for stepping in twice to run the town and "running it very smoothly." He praised Donovan for his operation of the police department, and for the extent he went to serve the town with such groups as the Wildlife Committee, which later in the meeting cited the professionalism

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Paiva Weed, Long expect difficult budget in 2006 General Assembly

By Donna K. Drago

During the legislative session that began Jan. 3, Jamestown's representatives in the state General Assembly will be introducing bills to help the town ensure a supply of clean drinking water, create a municipal court, provide education funding, stop LNG tankers from coming up the bay, and to stiffen drunk driving laws.

Sen. Teresa Paiva Weed (D-Jamestown, Newport) and Rep. Bruce Long (R-Jamestown, Middletown) are both veteran legislators, with Paiva Weed, at 14 years of service, also serving as the senate majority leader.

Long is the longest-serving representative to the House, having been elected in 1980. He currently serves as the deputy minority whip.

Paiva Weed and Long both stressed that 2006 would deliver one of the most difficult budget years in recent memory.

One of the issues on Paiva Weed's agenda is coming up with legislation that would force the state Department of Environmental Management to "look at the cumulative effects" of how a septic system on one lot would impact abutting properties.

Long, who is working with Paiva Weed on this legislation, said that the DEM currently takes an isolated look



Teresa Paiva Weed



Bruce Long

at each individual property, but does not consider the impact on adjacent lots.

"This is about clean drinking water," Long said. Paiva Weed said that the issue is one of her "top priorities," and will have an effect on development around the state.

Long said that at the same time he is pushing for the cumulative effects of septic systems legislation, he is also fighting against a regulation, proposed by the DEM, that would allow that regulatory agency to expedite the approval of certain septic system designs.

The proposed DEM regulation would allow developers

to pay an extra fee to get permits moved more quickly through the system.

"This sends a horrible message," Long said, adding, "You can pay extra to get better service" from a state agency.

He said he has written letters to the governor, attended public hearings, and will try to get this proposed legislation defeated.

"We want to slow down development, especially in the Shores," Long noted.

Another issue that the two are joining forces on is making drunk-driving laws more stringent.

Paiva Weed said that she would like to see the charge of refusing the Breathalyzer test become a criminal act, in addition to a drunk-driving charge.

Paiva Weed is suggesting that the charge be levied on top of a second arrest for drunk driving.

Long said that 85 percent of Rhode Islanders who are stopped for drunk driving refuse to take the chemical breath test. "It's nuts!" he said, adding, "We need to require that."

On education issues, Paiva Weed said that she will continue to work on helping schools alleviate the costs

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