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Thursday, April 13, 2006

Bridge demolition rescheduled for April 18

On Tuesday, April 18, the center span of the old Jamestown Bridge is expected to be exploded into Narragansett Bay sometime between 11 a.m. and noon.

The bridge's center span was originally scheduled to be demolished on April 11. The date of the explosion was moved because of poor weather last week.

The new Jamestown Bridge will be closed at 10 a.m. for up to four hours. The latest the bridge will be closed is 2 p.m. If all goes well, the bridge could be opened to traffic in less than the four hours scheduled for the event, according to the state Department of Transportation.

Local roads that will be closed on both sides of the Jamestown bridge have been clearly marked by 40 fixed and portable electronic message boards as well as signs indicating the times, detour routes, and boundaries of restricted areas.

Mandatory evacuation is in effect for any homes within the 1,500-foot clear-zone of the demolition site. Homeowners in the evacuation areas have been contacted directly and are aware of what is expected of them. During the evacuation period, displaced residents can visit the Jamestown library, where they can watch a live broadcast of the demolition.

On the morning of the event, motorists are urged to avoid driving in the clear-zone areas. Emergency vehicles, such as

See "Bridge" on page 9



New arrival

Heather Minto holds a lamb, one of Watson's Farm's newest residents. The farm will hold its annual spring sheep shearing day on Saturday, May 13. Photo by Andrea vonHohenleiten

Noise, dust, and detours will impact village this spring

By Donna K. Drago

Work will begin Monday, April 17, on a project to replace the municipal water main under Narragansett Avenue in the town's business district.

Public Works Director Steve Goslee said the work will result in the closing of entire street blocks during the project that is sched-

uled to continue until July 4.

The waterline replacement will be done by C.B. Utility Co., a Bristol firm that has done work on the sewer lines in the West Ferry neighborhood in the 1980s, Goslee said.

The company is under contract

See "Water main" on page 13

School says ball fields don't make the grade

By Donna K. Drago

Despite the fact that baseball season has already begun, the school superintendent shared her concerns about the quality of the Lawn Avenue ball fields after having been assured that they would be completed before opening day.

In a deal made last winter with the Town Council, the school offered to stop charging outside groups for the use of the Lawn school gym, if, in return the town committed to maintaining the ball fields that are north of the school.

The item was on the April 6 school panel agenda because the town administrator had asked the

school to fund \$3,000 for a new backstop on the baseball field.

Superintendent Kathy Sipala told the school board that she was prepared to ask them that night to approve the town's \$3,000 request and to take it from the school's reserve fund, but after conferring with parents and baseball officials, she said she was advised that the backstop was not of good quality.

Not only was the backstop an issue, Sipala said the fields have not been prepared, either.

"We made a deal," school board member William "Bucky"

See "Ball fields" on page 12

DEM report due on barn, landfill by end of month

By Sam Bari

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser told the Town Council Monday night meeting that the state Department of Environmental Management should present its 50 percent completion plan for the highway barn by the end of April.

Although the DEM said the plans would be ready earlier, the additional testing of surrounding wells delayed the process.

Due to human error, one well was reported to have tested for levels of cobalt that were 26 times higher than acceptable amounts. The lab determined that the error occurred because a decimal point was put in the wrong place when a technician hand transferred data in the GZA laboratory. GeoEnvironmental GZA of Norton,

Mass., is the engineering firm contracted by the town for the closure of the former landfill. Part of GZA's job was to test the wells surrounding the north end landfill area, the proposed site of the new town highway barn.

After the error was announced, and a retesting took place, Councilor Barbara Szepatowski called for an independent laboratory for future testing of the wells. The other council members as well as Keiser agreed that a separate lab was a good idea. Keiser discussed the matter with GZA, which agreed to use an outside testing laboratory for further work. Monday night Szepatowski told Keiser that she wanted to see the invoices from GZA to make

See "DEM report" on page 14

Ask any firefighter — there's nothing like a new truck!

By Donna K. Drago

After four years of budgeting and planning for it, the Jamestown Fire Department finally has their newest member of the fleet — a shiny, red Engine 1.

Captain LeRoy Richardson and Deputy Chief Howie Tighe, who was captain of the old Engine 1 before becoming a chief last spring, spent many hours designing the set of specs they put out to bid for the new truck. Former Chief Bob Bryer oversaw the design of the new engine, the two firefighters noted.

The new Engine 1 cost the town \$373,000, Tighe said, noting that the town budgeted money in each of the last four years to pay for it. A company called E-One out of Ocala, Fla., won the bid to

build Engine 1 for the fire department.

They expect Engine 1 to serve the town for about 30 years, Tighe and Richardson said, noting it was "longer than we'll be here."

E-One has a facility in Attleboro, Mass., Tighe said, adding that for the first three years of the truck, all routine maintenance, "like oil changes," will be handled at the nearby facility.

The truck had to be a specific size "to fit into the bay" of the fire station, and they wanted a compressed-air foam system, or CAFS, to increase the department's firefighting capabilities. The inside of the cab, which seats

See "Engine One" on page 15



Members of the company of the new Engine One, delivered last week, include Captain LeRoy Richardson, Lieutenant Scott Rafferty, Pres Froberg, Mike Pinksaw Sr., Bill Marsh Jr., Vinny Vessella, and Dan O'Neil. Missing from photo are Alan Weaver, Dave Gladding Jr., and Alex DeMolles. Photo by Jeff McDonough