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## Turtle rescue

John Williamson feared this large snapping turtle would be crushed by a passing motorist, so he hoisted the giant back into the pond off Intrepid Lane using a snow shovel.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

## Engineer takes town officials to task for firing his firm

By Dotti Farrington

Lazlo Siegmund, president of Siegmund and Associates of Providence and a former Jamestown resident, presented copies of a letter to the Town Council Monday in which he reviewed the arbitration case recently settled in his favor. Other than identify himself, he did not speak at the council meeting. The councilors did not discuss the issue in public session and did not have litigation as a topic for its scheduled executive session that night.

In the letter, Siegmund criticized the town for its handling of the four-year-old case. A state-

ment last week by Town Administrator Bruce Keiser defined the arbitration decision as a "draw." Siegmund said all the town's claims were denied and that the decision "completely exonerates my firm." He also recounted evolution of the arbitration case, the decision, and his complaints about town officials.

The American Arbitration Association issued its decision on April 6. The town did not release the decision, but Keiser wrote a statement about it for publication last week.

Siegmund said the dispute arose in late 2003 while his firm was overseeing \$7.24 million in

sewer work for the town. He said the town administrator then, Maryanne Crawford, tried to replace his firm with Vollmer Associates LLP of Boston. SAI, Siegmund's firm, was accused of design and management errors and failure to deliver the completed project by December 2003.

Siegmund said that after some discussions the contract was terminated by "mutual consent" and financial negotiations were started. Talks narrowed the dispute to less than \$10,000, and then the town decided to end negotiations, he said. Told it would not be paid, SAI filed for arbitration for \$50,000. The town "retaliated," Siegmund said, with a \$1.1 million countersuit.

Siegmund said termination of his firm's contract "was used as a convenient way to hire Vollmer." The Vollmer contracts were awarded without following mandated procedures, and he said the case was portrayed as the means of getting SAI to pay for increases in engineering fees, Siegmund said. Totalling more than \$500,000, the contracts with Vollmer were the subject of some controversy among councilors in 2004-05.

Siegmund said the town's claims were amended to \$1.5 million on claims that improper SAI work on sewer pipeline infiltration work had to be repeated.

## Bridge salvage continues



Members of Cashman Equipment Corp. lifted segments of the old Jamestown Bridge out of the bay last Friday.

Photo by Joe Logan

See "Siegmund" on page 15

## Council hears plans for Ft. Getty

By Dotti Farrington

The Town Council Monday authorized the Fort Getty Master Plan Committee to continue its work on what was described that night as a 10-year self-supporting plan of development using annual camping income of about \$300,000, suggesting a possible total spending of \$3 million.

The committee would like to be named the permanent oversight committee for the 51-year-old facility. It has been working three years on year-to-year authorizations. This week's council action did not assign a time frame for committee continuation.

The committee, reporting through its Chairwoman Mary Meagher, did not specify an estimated cost of its 10-year project. She acknowledged that a very tentative estimate has been dis-

cussed but suggested that an accurate projection was not yet available.

Last year, officials reported that the Fort Getty Campgrounds had grossed \$2.6 million during the previous decade and netted \$1.8 million, spending the difference of less than a million on grounds maintenance and including only \$115,000 in capital costs.

Meagher reported Monday that fees last year, with increased rates, grossed just about \$300,000, without adding any amenities for campers. She said the campgrounds need electrical and water hookup improvements as well as other work.

She described the landscape plan prepared by landscape architect Donald Sharp of Wickford for \$30,000, as authorized last year

See "Fort Getty" on page 11

## Bridge explodes Tuesday

By Sam Bari

Weather permitting, the possible combined detonation date for dropping the deck trusses and supporting piers of the old Jamestown Bridge is Tuesday, May 16, shortly after 10 a.m., according to the state Department of Transportation.

The controlled explosives in the second major detonation will remove approximately 1,600 feet of the two deck trusses stretching 800 feet on either side of the gap left from the removal of the center bridge span. If all goes as planned, the top 50 feet of the central supporting piers will be detonated at the same time.

Cashman Equipment Company of Boston, the general contractor in charge of the project, will make the decision whether or not to go ahead with the combined blast 24 hours before hand. Cashman's decision will be based on the progress and timetable of DemTech, Inc. of DuBois, Wyo., the demolition company subcontracted to plant and detonate the explosives, said DOT Director James R. Capaldi.

The new bridge will be closed for up to four hours starting at 10 a.m. on the day of the event.

## Judge refuses to discharge Swain's debt to in-laws

Arthur N. Votolato Jr., U.S. Bankruptcy District Judge in Providence, on May 4 entered a default judgment against David Swain, Jamestown businessman and former town councilor.

The judge said that his order means that Swain cannot gain discharge of the February R.I. Superior Court judgment that awarded \$4.8 million, including interest and penalties, to Richard and Lisa Tyre, also of Jamestown, the parents of Shelley Tyre, the late wife of Swain. The Superior Court civil verdict by a jury said that Swain was responsible for the drowning death of his wife in 1999.

Bankruptcy law provides that debtors who commit "willful and

malicious injury" to another person or his or her property remain responsible for any related debts.

A criminal investigation of the death of Shelley Tyre is being undertaken by authorities in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, where the death occurred.

Swain is also awaiting action on his appeal of the Superior Court verdict, as well as settlement of the probating of his wife's estate, on hold because of the Superior Court activity. Swain accessed and spent more than half of the nearly \$1 million estate before the hold was applied via a lien on the \$631,000 property at 79 North Main Rd. that his wife owned and he operates as Ocean State Scuba, a dive shop.