

## • LETTERS •

**Tribute to the Naval War College students**

Bravo for the beautiful "Thanks for the memories" letter that LCOL Penny Heiniger, USAF, recent graduate of the Naval War College, wrote in the June 15 edition of the Jamestown Press in which she so eloquently described her family's many wonderful experiences this past year while living in Jamestown.

During the past year, Jamestown has been blessed with the vibrant presence of a handful of war college students like Penny Heiniger, and their respective families, who were very active participants in all aspects of our community life, including our churches, our schools, our sports and recreational programs, our markets, our shops, our restaurants, etc. Penny and the other war college students and their families are a special group of people. Typically, these students are mid-level or senior-level career military officers from our various armed services, as well as international students from our allied friends.

They enrich all of our lives by bringing character, patriotism, and a diversity of culture, experiences, and achievements from all over the world to our small community. While students, they undergo a rigorous academic year studying the history, the strategy, the tactics, the politics, and the ethics of modern warfare,

including a strong emphasis on "joint" (i.e., multi-service) warfare, as well as defense economics and decision-making. I know a little bit about the rigors of Penny's academic year because I too had the wonderful opportunity, albeit some 30 years ago, to be a student at that beautiful facility across the Newport Bridge that is so steeped with the proud traditions of our naval forefathers.

I am deeply privileged and honored to live in such a beautiful, enlightened island community by the seashore, a community that to many of us, including our Naval War College friends, is considered to be a slice of Heaven on Earth. I am also most grateful that our community provides such a warm welcome to the war college students and their families, and that we are thoughtful enough to acknowledge and pay tribute to their presence among us throughout the year.

My grateful thanks go to both Penny Heiniger and her family, who have so enriched our lives.

**John G. Shannon,  
Jamestown**

**Thanks for bridge-building lessons**

The Eighth Grade Team would like to thank the Rhode Island Turnpike & Bridge Authority for sponsoring the annual Breaking of the Bridges.

Peter Janaros, director of engineering for the bridge authority, and Robert

Haight from PB World of New York, came to speak about the structure and construction of the Pell Bridge. Through a PowerPoint presentation, students gained a new perspective of the bridge they cross to get to Newport.

Understanding the variables of designing and building bridges to fit the needs of the community sparked numerous questions, but Mr. Haight seem to inspire many students when he modeled the safety gear for traversing the suspension cables, a feat not for the faint of heart.

This is the fifth year that the Rhode Island Turnpike & Bridge Authority came to the school, and the grade 8 teachers and students truly appreciate its support, for the program has a great impact on our students for the bridge project and for connecting careers to academics.

**Thank you,  
Maureen McGuirl,  
Eighth-Grade Team,  
Lawn Avenue School**

**Privilege to serve as school head**

Last week, the Jamestown School Committee accepted my resignation as superintendent/principal.

On June 21, I was appointed to the position of superintendent of schools in nearby Narragansett. The timing of this announcement coincided with the end of school, making it a bit difficult to say good-bye to parents and community members. After four very

**Kindergarten graduation**

Jamestown School kindergarten students performed for their parents Monday during graduation ceremonies at the Lawn Avenue School.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

positive years here, I could not leave without expressing my thanks and gratitude for the strong collaborative efforts this town and school community is so well known for, and which benefited me and our school system so greatly during my tenure.

The decision to pursue a new professional opportunity came as a kind of natural result or next step to the year-long analysis that the School Committee entered into in the "Restructuring, Reorganization, Shared Services" Workshops. The combined position of principal/superintendent does not meet the needs of a 21st-century school system

and the committee has determined to separate the duties of principal and superintendent. I have long advocated for designated building leadership, and now that administrative restructuring will occur. The down side for me, however, is that the restructuring will result in the reduction of the superintendent part of the job, and I am not yet at the point in my career that I am ready to think about part-time work.

It was a privilege to serve as the principal-superintendent of this fine school district. I hope that I conveyed to you that pride and satisfaction in the way that I carried out my duties

and completed the work to the best of my ability. I really did love it here and will long remember and benefit from this experience, both professionally and personally.

I will be here in Jamestown until July 28. Lots of work needs to be done between now and then, and I am focused on doing just that so that both the transition and opening of school in September proceeds smoothly for the benefit of all staff, students, and families of Jamestown.

With my deepest appreciation,

**Katherine E. Sipala  
School Superintendent**

*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, June 22, 1906:**

The paymaster and clerk made their monthly visit to the fortifications in the vicinity Wednesday.

More strawberries have been grown on the island this year than ever before. In spite of the poor ripening weather, the berries are large and of a good quality and the crop heavy enough to supply the local market and a surplus, which is sent to Newport.

**From the Newport Daily News, June 23, 1906:**

The regular summer practice of collecting ferry tickets before boarding the boat went into effect yesterday.

A herd of cows for Mr. Seth Pierce has arrived from Providence, Mr. Pierce has cleared the swamp land which he purchased last fall on the south side of Narragansett avenue near the West ferry, and will convert it into pasture land.

A class of seven graduated from the grammar school with appropriate exercises.

The Welsbach Lighting Company has installed four boulevard lights on Narragansett avenue, for exhibition of the town committee, who have the matter of street lighting under consideration.

**75 years ago****From the Newport Daily News, June 21, 1931:**

The dance given by the Jamestown Post, American Legion, at the town beach Saturday evening was well attended. Music was furnished by a local orchestra.

The teachers of the Thomas H. Clarke and Carr schools held a farewell beach party at Beavertail Saturday evening.

The Y.M.C.A. Seaside camp at Conanicut Park has opened for the season.

**From the Newport Daily News, June 22, 1931:**

An audience which nearly filled the Palace Theatre to capacity attended the graduation exercises of the Thomas H. Clarke school last evening. Promptly at 7:30 the curtain rose, and a charming setting was revealed. The graduating class,



numbering 21, seated in a semicircle with four of the young men graduates at either end and the young girls in the center. The latter were attired in pretty white gowns each bearing an arm bouquet of bright red roses. Dark curtains on the rear and on the sides, with the class motto "Hodie Non Cras (Today Not Tomorrow), in lavender and silver letters, the class colors, displayed above the stage was very effective . . . The diplomas were then presented. (The names of the graduates are listed.)

**50 years ago****From the Newport Daily News, June 16, 1956:**

Jamestown has established a \$41 tax rate for the coming year. This is believed to be the highest in Rhode Island and a \$10 increase over this year's figure. . . . The rate was determined after a four hour meeting of the assessors.

A class of 28 graduates of the Jamestown Elementary School held their exercises at the school last night.

**From the Newport Daily News, June 18, 1956:**

Repairs to the damaged north ferry slip in Jamestown were completed over the weekend and the boats started using it at once, the Jamestown Ferry Authority announced today.

**From the Newport Daily News, June 19, 1956:**

The Jamestown Recreation Center was closed Saturday for lack of operating funds. . . . At the May 5 financial town meeting the proposed recreation budget of \$8,925 was slashed to \$2,975 for one third of the year.

**From the Newport Daily News, June 20, 1956:**

The Jamestown Town Council, at a special meeting last night, voted to request state permission to exceed the legal tax limit the

coming year.

**25 years ago****From the Newport Daily News, June 19, 1981:**

Life guards went on duty today at Mackerel Cove Town Beach. There will be two guards on duty weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and three on weekends until Labor day.

A new 18-cent postage stamp with the picture of Joseph Wharton, (1826-1909), a former Jamestown summer resident, went on sale today. The stamp commemorates the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania.

**From the Newport Daily News, June 22, 1981:**

The Jamestown Shore Association will discuss the width of the proposed new Jamestown Bridge when it meets Wednesday night at 8. . . . The proposed bridge would be about 77 feet wide, nearly 30 feet wider than the Newport Bridge, which measures 48 feet wide.

Revenues for the Newport Bridge this year have been increased about \$400,000, offsetting an increase in expenses of about \$100,000. . . . It has taken in \$4.3 million in an 11-month period through last month, as opposed to \$3.9 million a year ago.

**15 years ago****From the Jamestown Press, June 20, 1991:**

The Jamestown Village Association is asking its members to endorse a new cross-island highway plan that would keep Eldred Avenue as it currently is for use by local traffic only.

The summer exhibit of the Jamestown Historical Society, which opened this week at the Jamestown Museum, features the construction of the Jamestown bridges, both new and old.

**10 years ago****From the Jamestown Press, June 20, 1996:**

Town officials are asking residents on the municipal water system to voluntarily conserve water. . . . (It was reported) that North Pond reservoir was now eight inches below peak capacity and that water use was up 12.7 percent over last year. Voluntary water conservation is the first step in the town's water conservation plan.

The Jamestown fireworks display is closer to reality as many community members and organizations have donated to the fund.