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Town nets \$14k in equipment auction

By Dotti Farrington

The recent auction of outdated and inefficient town equipment succeeded as a moneymaker, as a beautification project, and especially as a morale booster for town workers, according to Town Councilman William Kelly, who spearheaded the undertaking. "It was a win-win situation in many ways," he said. "I'm so pleased."

The auction brought in nearly \$14,000 directly, and the town is continuing to negotiate the sale of at least one more large piece of equipment.

Kelly says the auction total should also reflect the trade-in savings that totaled \$23,500 toward the purchase of six new major pieces of equipment.

Kelly listed his observations at council meetings late last month and this past Monday. He emphasized the impact on town employees because they now are taking pride in using new, reliable equipment that replaced the items that were often breaking down, frus-

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In the holiday spirit

Annie McIntyre, "Rudolph," and Joan Goldstein were among the riders on the Polar Express Trolley, which departed hourly last weekend from East Ferry.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

Movie studio gives \$5k to town, \$2k to school

By Dotti Farrington

After shooting a feature movie in Jamestown since September, Disney filmmakers have offered a \$5,000 donation to the town in lieu of a hosting fee. The money is to be used at the town's discretion. Town Administrator Bruce Keiser told the Town Council Monday.

"We are all grateful for the donation," he said, although he noted that he was still "getting guidance" about usual fee or donation arrangements from other communities that host professional moviemakers. Keiser noted that the filmmakers donated

\$2,000 to the town school department in return for using the Melrose Avenue School as a location for filming some scenes.

Keiser also reported that the filmmakers have asked to have exclusive use of East Ferry, including all parking, from Monday through Wednesday, Dec. 18-20. He said businesses at or near East Ferry have agreed to the arrangements even though it occurs during the commercially busy holiday season. He said that that police patrols would be scheduled to help with traffic and parking control during

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School Committee seeks lunch vendor at tonight's workshop

By Donna K. Drago

In preparation for a special meeting tonight, the School Committee put the finishing touches on a list of requirements for prospective food vendors at its Dec. 7 meeting.

The committee decided some months ago that it wanted to improve the quality of the lunches offered to children at the school

and is asking interested vendors to show up tonight to respond to their requirements, ask questions, and tour the schools' kitchen facilities. This meeting is a "pre-bid conference," said School Committee Chairwoman Cathy Kaiser. She said that information and questions from potential vendors will help the school board fine tune its

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Town purchases new equipment for the highway department

By Donna K. Drago

Christmas came early to employees of the town Highway Department.

Four brand-new vehicles: a utility-body truck, a backhoe, a pay loader and a brush hog have arrived on the island in recent days.

Highway Superintendent Kevin Deacon said he and his crew were very happy to have the new equipment to use, not just because they're shiny and state-of-the-art, but because they increase productivity and get more work done.

Town Councilman Bill Kelly said the new equipment "signals a new philosophy in Jamestown." He added, "This department doesn't deserve to work with hand-me-downs and old broken stuff anymore."

Kelly said having to constantly battle with end-of-life equipment "is demoralizing" to the workers and "costs the town money" in lost time on the road.

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser said the town financed \$550,000 over five years to buy the new equipment, which also includes a street sweeper that arrived a couple of months ago, and two dump trucks, which are still on order. In all, the equipment cost \$636,066, \$80,000 of which was a set-aside from capital funds in the

annual budget.

At 3.96 percent interest, the annual finance charges of about \$12,000 will be less than the cost to keep old equipment on the road, Keiser said.

Deacon added that before the street sweeper was replaced, the town spent about \$12,000 over the course of just two years to keep that one vehicle in service.

The new equipment will be used on the "front lines" of town maintenance and cleanup projects and that older equipment can now be used as "reserves" as needed, Deacon said.

The utility-body truck replaces an old pickup used years ago by the town animal control officer. Ramon Ibarlucea, who does building maintenance for the town, said the new \$65,231 utility truck is a big improvement and even has a crane on the back to lift heavy objects.

"This thing can do everything," Deacon added.

Price tags on the new equipment include \$105,625 for the John Deere pay loader, \$85,282 for the John Deere backhoe, \$93,230 for the New Holland brush hog, and the dump trucks will cost \$85,082 and \$75,116, Keiser said, adding that the numbers were net after trade-in amounts.



Shiny new trucks

Kevin Deacon, Ramon Ibarlucea, Councilman Bill Kelly, Brian Dutra, Town Administrator Bruce Keiser, Andrew Munafo, and Joe Ford took shipment of four brand-new pieces of equipment to be used by the Highway Department. Photo by Donna Drago