

Safe bike, walk routes to school are aim of local study

By Michaela Kennedy

A new grassroots effort has spun into action to create and encourage safe bicycle riding and walking on the island. The group of volunteers, called Rolling Agenda, is working to define and fund a study of best land use for the Jamestown school grounds and perimeter.

Town Planner Lisa Bryer said this week that Rolling Agenda has brought together smaller special interest groups and integrated all goals for best land use. Town funding and support for the study is slated for discussion at the on Feb. 12 Town Council meeting.

"The state just hired a new Safe Routes to School Coordinator, who is making standards based on federal guidelines," Bryer said. The SRTS coordinator has already made a site visit to the island and reviewed policies and procedures for setting up a local study with

funding, she added.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, the SRTS program was created as part of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, a Legacy for Users Act (SAFETEA-LU). Federal funds up to \$612 million between 2005 and 2009 support the movement, and each state administers the federal aid money through its department of transportation.

Carol Nelson-Lee noted that the idea of doing a best land-use study that focused on safe biking and walking started with a conversation between a group of parents. "Wouldn't it be cool if the kids could ride their bikes to their sports practices," she said. Nelson-Lee also noted that the school grounds and perimeter study would include the rectangle

of land from Arnold Street, Melrose, Lawn and Watson avenues "where the schools, playing fields and forests are."

The study is not cheap, and fund-raising efforts with a target of \$30,000 are underway. BankNewport has stepped forward and pledged \$5,000 toward the project, Bryer said.

In addition to providing safe routes for children walking and biking to school, goals of the project include improved fields for gym classes and sport teams, and a playground for Lawn Avenue School. Rolling Agenda hopes that better car and bus flow, and more parking around the school buildings will improve the morning and afternoon school commute for parents, children, and school staff, Nelson-Lee noted.

The group has organized several bike and walk to school days and conducted traffic audits, Nelson-Lee pointed out.

Rolling Agenda is working together with leaders from the Jamestown Soccer Association, the Jamestown Baseball Association, representatives from the School Committee and Town Council, the planning office and the recreation department. "We are pleased to have such high-caliber volunteers who know the island and are experienced in accomplishing big projects," Nelson-Lee wrote in a memorandum to the council.

For more information about the project, contact the Planning Office at 423-7210. An overview of the SRTS program can be found at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saf-routes>.

Chamber music concert Sunday

The Redwood Library and Athenaeum will host a concert featuring Janara Khassenova on piano and violinist Arman Mourzagaliev on Sunday, Feb. 11, at 2:30 p.m. in the library at 50 Bellevue Ave. in Newport.

Included in the program will be Robert Schumann's Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Minor, opus 105, and Felix Mendelssohn's Sonata in F Major for Violin and Piano forte.

Because this concert is co-sponsored by the Redwood library, Larry Brown Piano Services, and Jessica Hagen Fine Art and Design, it is free and open to the public.

A National Historic Landmark, the Redwood is the oldest lending library in the U. S. An independent circulating/research library and museum, the Redwood remains true to its 1747 mission of making knowledge and useful learning as lasting and widespread as possible. For more information, call 847-0295, ext. 111.

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COMEDY SHOW
Hotel Viking, Bellevue Ave., Newport
Fri., Feb. 23, 7:30pm

Laugh it up with Ken Rogerson
Ken has been featured in *Fever Pitch*, and *There's Something About Mary*; and has been seen on *The Late Show with David Letterman* and *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*
Tickets \$26/\$22 in advance or w/button
VP Tables Available. No one under 15 admitted.

PIZZA COOK-OFF
Sat., Feb. 24, 11am-4pm
Hyatt Regency Newport
Taste them all and vote for your favorite. Bring an appetite it's "All you can eat!!"
Adults \$10/\$7 w/button
Kids (ages 4-10) \$6/\$5 w/button.
Kids under 4 free

BeatleMania
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Sat., Feb. 24, 9pm-12am
Belcourt Castle
Featuring music by Steve Stanley, merging jazz, blues, country and surf influences into guitar fueled compositions. DJ Butch spins your favorites too!
Tickets \$35/\$29 w/button
call 846-0669

The Ravers
Thurs., Feb. 22, 9:30pm
Studio 3/above One Pelham East
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Tickets \$8/\$6 w/button

The Artist Ball: the Snow Ball
Fri., Feb. 16, 8pm • Newport Art Museum
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People's Credit Union's Day At Easton's Beach
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• Suspenders Juggling Troupe
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