

The springtime reality check

The real signs of spring are finally making themselves evident. 'Tis that time of year when little buds start forming on bushes, grass turns green and begins to grow, and crocuses pop out of the ground bearing their pretty purple, yellow and white flowers. Women start seeds in little indoor pots so the sprouts will be ready for the garden when temperatures rise. Men spend more time at the boatyard and in the garage as they



You can't beat a system you can't understand

By Sam Bari

prepare vessels and fishing gear for the big spring launch. Sounds traditional, happy, and filled with

promise, wouldn't you say? Don't be too hasty to agree.

Spring has another side, a much darker side, a side that none of us care to acknowledge, but must address it whether we like it or not. This wonderful, blossoming season is the time when we are destined to come to grips with many realities.

For instance, we must look at the reality of the results of our New Year's resolutions. Those of us who resolved to go to the gym to lose fifteen pounds so we would look fabulous in new bikinis and swimming trunks have to deal with the fact that we actually gained five because all that exercise made us hungry. As difficult as it is to face, it is sadly true.

Men cannot deny that planting a well-planned garden will give the family healthier, fresher food, and reduce the grocery bill by several hundred dollars. They will also have to explain to their wives why it makes so much sense to maintain a boat, buy fuel, spend money on fishing gear, and several thousand dollars to store and dock the vessel. In other words, they must convince their wives that spending upwards of ten to twenty grand a year justifies catching \$200 worth of tuna, a necessary nutrient. It's a hard sell.

I might suggest tilling the garden while attempting to give a rational explanation for having a boat. It makes the presentation more palatable, if you catch my drift. If that doesn't placate the little woman, diving into the job jar and helping with spring cleaning, planting flower beds, painting the porch and all those little chores and projects that you've been promising to do for years will surely help. This is her opportunity to dangle the bait. You will soon know what it feels like to be a fish.

On the other side of the coin, many ladies must justify all the money they spent for a new wardrobe of skinny clothes that they still cannot wear because they lost

the war in the battle of the bulge. That is also not an easy sale. A little compromise in the boat department could ease the raised eyebrow when the credit card bills arrive.

Even the younger set does not escape spring unscathed. They must make the big decision come spring break, and ask themselves the annual question: Do we party hardy and have some fun, or, do we study hard so we can make good grades when we take finals after spring vacation?

It just doesn't seem fair that report cards can be a direct reflection of the good times that can be had when partying around the clock with impunity with several hundred of their closest friends at a distant resort during their hard-earned, well-deserved holiday. Teenage logic is an amazing thought process. When they are sitting in class at summer school, it finally dawns on them that their thinking might have been slightly askew.

Do not be discouraged. We all go through this every year. At different stages of our lives, we are presented with different challenges. Spring will soon be behind us and we will survive. The garden will be planted, the boat will be in the water, and school will be over so we can do it all again next year while we live in a system we can't quite understand.

Safford receives leadership award

Jamestown resident Kathryn Safford was named the North Kingstown High School representative to the Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership (HOBY) program, which is offered to high school sophomores. Safford was nominated after writing a leadership essay that was evaluated and judged by a school faculty nominating panel. The three-day HOBY seminar will take place from June 8 through June 10.

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- Frank Nobilo, PGA Golfer

Spelling

Continued from page 1

marveled at some of the dialogues Ragland engaged in with the officials. "Expect him to be there next year," Weibust said with confidence.

Ragland talked about a word that especially stumped him, the German word stalag. "Wow, what word is this?" he recalled thinking, and immediately fell into an exchange with the pronouncer. He made all requests allowed to a competitor, including asking about the word's origin and alternate spelling, a discourse that lasted over three minutes.

"I didn't spell the word right, but everyone else got their word wrong, so I was still in it," he said with a grin.

Ragland credited the recent movie, "Akeelah and the Bee," for inspiring him. The movie tells the story of an 11-year-old girl who competes in the Scripps National

Spelling Bee, a goal many participants every year hope to reach.

Through study he found that he already knew certain words and did not have to study them. Other words he learned to recognize by language and culture. "You have to recognize patterns. Greek has a lot of ys and phs," he noted.

At the end of the school-wide spelling bee last month, Ragland expressed his hope that this year the state level would be different, and it was. Last year, Ragland's first chance in the state spelling competition, he stumbled in one of the early rounds. This year, his spelling practice paid off, and he was not disappointed with second place. "I'm excited just to be a part of it," he said.

He admitted that the national level of spelling bee seemed scary. "I might get a word like garfasnoogle or something," he quipped.

Ragland also admitted to enjoying the buzz around him. Maybe next year will be his year.

Community Theatre offers two performing arts awards for students

The Jamestown Community Theatre is offering two \$1000 awards to graduating seniors for achievement in theater and performing arts. The awards will be given based on an essay, not to exceed 500 words, describing the student's involvement in theater and/or performing arts. Two references or letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches and directors will also be considered. It is not a requirement that the student's experience be with the Jamestown Community Theatre. Applicants must be Jamestown residents, but may be graduating from any high school.

This is an award based on achievement thus far and not to be considered as a scholarship for future training. The student may use the award in any way he or she decides.

Students who wish to apply for the JCT Theatre and Performing Arts Award should submit the essay and references by May 1, to: Jamestown Community Theatre, P.O. Box 14

Jamestown, RI 02835. The awards will be presented at the student's high school awards ceremony. For more information, call Maria Liebhauser at 423-0261.



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