

Good news was the key word at the annual dinner meeting of the Conanicut Island Art Association, which was held at the PAC Club on May 23. Acting president Don Miller led the meeting.

John Mecray, the keynote speaker, treated the audience of sixty art enthusiasts to views and insights on his life's work. One of the world's great marine artists, Mecray's paintings are eagerly sought by well-known sailors and collectors of fine art. Mecray was also instrumental in establishing key institutions and events that have greatly enhanced the Newport area's attraction as a sailing, boat building, and tourism destination. He helped bring countless boat-lovers, craftsmen, shipwright businesses, and artists to the region each year. Mecray is principal founder of the Museum of Yachting and the Museum's annual Classic Yacht Regatta, and co-founder of the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS.)

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser announced that exhibition space in the new town hall would

CONANICUT
ISLAND
ART
ASSOCIATION

By Karen Krider

be dedicated to showing the work of island artists. He presented the newly-elected CIAA board with a copy of the floor plans, calling the collaborative effort to create a gallery space, "A win-win situation for the town. The island has many fine artists, and we would otherwise have empty white walls. Our architect, Bill Burgin, also welcomes the use of this public space as a gallery, and we are all working to make this happen." The CIAA has agreed to help install any additional hanging and lighting systems that would be needed. The timing of the initial art exhibit will depend on the completion of the town hall building.

Delia Klingbeil, who is a Trustee of the Jamestown Philomenian Library as well as a CIAA board

member, announced that yet another public exhibition space has been made available to the CIAA through the town's generosity. The large meeting room in the library will have shows that can hang for several months at a time. The first exhibit will showcase the work of Jamestown artist Jeanne Bunkley.

Representative Bruce Long also addressed the crowd, providing an update on the arts district designation. He referenced an enlarged map of the island that has been shown at several Town Council meetings. The map, provided by the Jamestown Press, is embellished with 172 red dots that each represent an island artist. "The map clearly shows that artists live and work all over the island, and that artists are a significant percentage of Jamestown's population," Long said. Allie Sabalis, who has worked with Rep. Long on the arts district designation, also received a special thank you.

Maryann England announced that many CIAA scholarships have been earned by talented Jamestown students. Four college scholarships, totaling \$3,000, will be awarded this

year to high school seniors. In addition, scholarship awards for classes at the Newport Art Museum School will be given to elementary school students.

Other business of the board included the approval of a financial report, presented by treasurer Priscilla Foley, and approval of a slate of board nominees, presented by Kevin Somerville. Newly elected CIAA board members-at-large are Matthew Clarke, Wendy Crooks, Barbara Morom-Pollack, and Soozie Sundlun. Returning members-at-large are Maryann England and Delia Klingbeil. Officers are Karen Krider, president; Don Miller, vice president; Barbara Hutchison, communications secretary; Tania Biddle, recording secretary; and Priscilla Foley, treasurer. The nominating committee includes Matthew Clarke, chairman, along with Maryann England and Delia Klingbeil.

CIAA membership is open to any Jamestown resident, artists and non-artists alike. For membership information, call Priscilla Foley at 423-2776. The CIAA is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation.

CIAA awards scholarships

The Conanicut Island Art Association recently awarded a visual arts course at Newport Art Museum to several island students in the Jamestown schools.

Receiving the awards were Gaelyn Dwyer, in kindergarten; Gavin Wagner, in grade 1; Emma Lennon, in grade 2; Maggie Ryng in grade 3 and Colette Baker, in grade 4.

The students can take any course over the next year with their award.

Science center open for season

Save The Bay Exploration Center at Easton's Beach in Newport is now open. This marine science center offers activities for families, children and groups interested in learning more about Narragansett Bay and its inhabitants. The center has touch tanks, aquariums, and several interactive learning activities. Admission is \$4. Call 324-6020.

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