

Island Opinion

• EDITORIALS •



Celebrate 350 years

The big moment has finally arrived — Jamestown's 350th Celebration. Strike up the Jamestown Community Band!

It was 350 years ago when settlers purchased Conanicut Island from the Narragansett Indians. The island has gone through a number of changes through the years. In fact, the island is still evolving.

Festivities get underway this weekend. Many different events are planned over nine days for Jamestowners of all ages. Activities include a benefit dinner-dance, a garden tea, a family picnic, a parade and town hall dedication, concerts, a scavenger hunt, historical tours, boat rides, a talent show, and a foolish regatta — to name a few.

Information about the 350th Celebration can be found in the Jamestown Press this week. There is also a special souvenir 350th program that has been mailed with this issue of the Press to every island home. The keepsake features a great story, is illustrated by many historical photographs, and details island life for the past three and a half centuries.

Be a part of the fun this week. And take a few moments to learn about Jamestown's fascinating history.

Save the island farms

By now everyone has probably seen the cow-like billboards posted along North Main Road. The signs are asking for our help.

The Conanicut Island Land Trust needs to raise \$4 million for its portion of an agreement that will secure the development rights of three island farms. The funds will keep the farms from being sold and turned into subdivisions.

It is fitting that as we celebrate Jamestown's 350th this coming week, we are also striving to preserve our island's agricultural heritage. As the cow signs say, those scenic pastures have been there for 350 years. Let's keep them that way.

You can learn about about the farm preservation efforts by reading the Land Trust's advertisements in this week's Press.

Running for election

This week the first contender has tossed a hat into the local political ring.

Jamestowners will elect a new five-member Town Council this fall. There are two seats open on the School Committee. Islanders will also choose a town moderator.

The filing deadline for candidates is Aug. 23-24. The election will be on Tuesday, Nov. 6.

The first person to announce a candidacy for a council seat is running as an Independent.

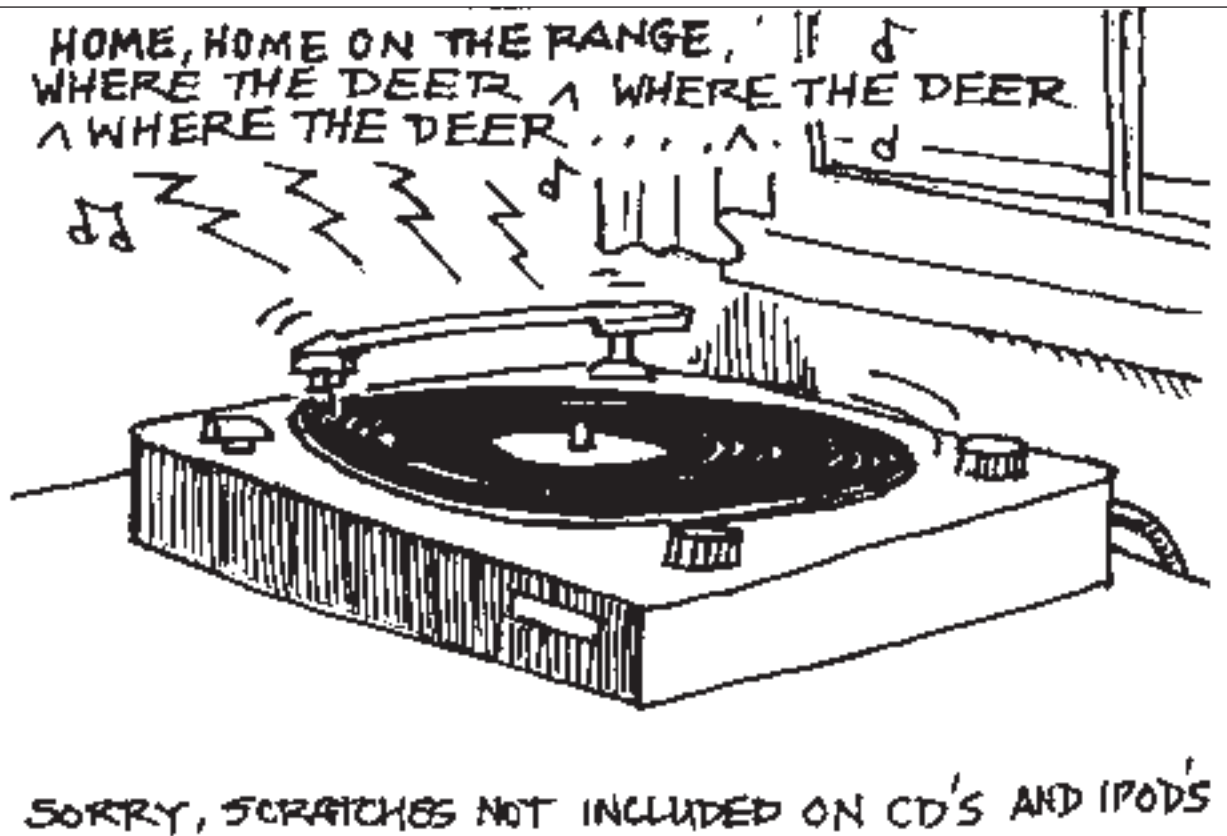
Normally, we don't hear much about the candidates until the town's Democrat and Republican committees unveil their slates at the filing deadline. The two traditional political parties are an important part of the local election process because it is often the parties that recruit the candidates. Sometimes the parties will have more candidates than offices. Then a primary election is held.

Without the two local committees, we might not have as many people running for office.

However, the independent candidates are important. We encourage interested islanders who are not affiliated to consider running for office as an independent.

Thoughtful, rational discussion of island issues is vital to good government. There are many challenges ahead for our island community. The more candidates who participate in our local election process the better.

— Jeff McDonough



Reject barn location

As a former Town Councillor for the Town of Jamestown, I am urging all voters of Jamestown to reject the Taylor Point site for the highway barn. The Land Trust is in the midst of a campaign to save the three farms on the middle of the island from development; and all of the pictures that have been shown in the Jamestown Press over the last couple of weeks include the area of the proposed highway barn. The barn will ruin the beauty of Taylor Point and the feeling in Potter's Cove. This area is still undeveloped and a place for people to jog, fish, quahog, tube, bicycle, sit in the sun, anchor, walk and bird watch. This will be spoiled by inclusion of a highway barn and all of the exter-

nal items that are included: gravel pile, snowplows, sand pile, asphalt pile, sanders, storage, pipes, and brick pallets. The space for the highway barn is undersized, and all of the extra items and vehicles will spill over into the sewer plant. Because a majority of the trees that have grown up around the plant for more than 30 years will be torn down for the barn, now we will see everything — from the bridge, from East Shore Road, and from Potter's Cove.

So please keep the gateway to Conanicut Island as natural as possible. Vote to reject on Aug. 28 and then decide on the next site in the November election.

Claire Ferguson
Bayview Drive

Lot 47 still the best choice

There seems to be a lot of false information going around about the highway barn proposed for Taylor Point.

First of all, I keep hearing that Taylor Point will be more efficient and less costly to operate because it is more centrally located. I don't think so. Lot 47 is closer to the Jamestown Shores (with nearly half the town's roads) and Taylor Point is closer to downtown. Both are about the same distance from the "average" worksite. Based on that, operational costs would be about the same for a barn located at either site.

But what tips the balance on efficiency and cost is that

a Taylor Point barn would mean a split operation, with daily trips between the barn and the existing outdoor storage yard at the old landfill, five miles away. A lot of highway department time and taxpayer money would be wasted every year driving back and forth between Taylor Point and the north end.

Second, some say the highway barn must be in the center of the island in case there's a hurricane. But, the fire, ambulance, highway, and police departments try to cover all three parts of the Island — Beavertail, center island, and north end — during a hurricane. Wouldn't it help to have a building at Lot 47 that all departments could use in an emergency?

Finally, some say the barn can't be built at Lot 47

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• LETTERS •

The news of 10 and 15 years ago is from the Jamestown Press. The news of 100 years ago from the Newport Daily News came from the collection of the Newport Historical Society.

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 5, 1907

The trial of the submarines over the mile course off the east shore attracts much attention from the numerous automobile parties, which cross the ferries between Newport and the island.

From the Newport Daily News, August 10, 1907

Battleships Kentucky and Illinois came into the bay early this morning and anchored in the east harbor, close inshore, just off the ferry.

Bids were opened ... for the construction of a water supply for Fort Greble (on Dutch Island) and fencing. The project consists in conveying water from several springs on the land in Saunderstown side into a 400,000 gallon reservoir of reinforced concrete and piping it across Narragansett Bay into a reservoir at Fort Greble through land and submarine pipes. Michael A. McCormick was the only bidder on the project, his bid aggregating \$78,450. He is also the lowest bidder on fencing the reservation, at \$770.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 5, 1932

Among the attractions at the Mackerel Cove beach at present are the classes of swimmers with Henry Armbrust as instructor and many are taking lessons in the art.

The members of the Cole Street Baptist Church held a picnic at Beavertail Thursday evening, when supper was served on the rocks, after which a community sing was held.

From the Newport Daily News, August 9, 1932



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden
Week of August 9

Owing to the absence of the fleet, the number present (at the Admirals' Annual Tea Party) was not as large as in previous years, but those who were there enjoyed the opportunity of talking over the affairs of the day. ... This party was started by Admiral

George C. Remy eight years ago and has been continued every summer since then.

From the Newport Daily News, August 10, 1932

Henry Lathan is suffering with a broken wrist, which he sustained while fishing on the rocks at beavertail. Dr. Sweet, of Newport, who was at his camp at Beavertail at the time, gave the needed aid.

From the Newport Daily News, August 11, 1932

The Park committee (of the Fire department) ... was appointed on moving the canon from the Thomas H. Clarke school yard to the fire department park.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 7, 1957

Jamestown is all ready for a gala reception in honor of the purchase of Conanicut Island from the Indians 300 years ago. An eight day festival of pageants and parades, dinners and barbecues and concerts, has been arranged to help celebrate the island's 300th birthday. Banners carrying the greeting, "Hi Neighbor," and a welcome to the island (sign), have been hung at both entrances to the island and along the principal business streets.

From the Newport Daily News, August 9, 1957

Commerce Oil Refining Corp. has completed the purchase of all the land on which it had options on the approximate 725 acre tract where it plans a \$71,000,000 refinery in

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