

# Lukon ready to challenge kids at all levels

By Donna K. Drago

Jamestown's new head of schools didn't have too much of a retirement. Instead of relaxing by the pool, or working in her garden, Marcia Lukon, Ph.D., jumped directly into a new part-time position with the Jamestown School District. Her official last day of work for the Berlin-Boylston Regional district is tomorrow, but Lukon already has two weeks under her belt at the island schools.

In her prior post, for four years, Lukon managed a district comprised of two towns in central Massachusetts with two K to 6 schools and a combination middle and high school. In all, she supervised some 1,200 students—about twice the number in Jamestown. Before that she was the school chief in Norfolk, Mass., which has about 1,100 students. In her 32 years as an educator, Lukon has also been a curriculum director, an elementary principal and a classroom teacher.



Marcia Lukon, Ph.D.

"I've taught grades 1, 2, 3 and 5 as a classroom teacher," Lukon said, adding that she had also taught grades 4 to 8 in a gifted and talented program and grades K to 6 in remedial education.

Gifted and talented kids are an area Lukon is especially eager to work with in Jamestown.

While, "I believe in all the goals of NCLB," Lukon said, she noted the importance of challenging the brightest children. "We can't waste talent," Lukon said.

She said that the pilot program of Virtual High School, which will begin in the fall, is geared to very bright students who need a challenge. Admission to the program is by selection, and students take on-line courses and receive a final grade.

Lukon said learning to navigate on-line courses is important because there are so many more on-line offerings at the college level. "They'll be better prepared," Lukon said about the students.

She is also excited that there is special education help at every grade level in Jamestown. "There's a wealth of support for students who need it," Lukon said.

Her first days on the island have been pleasant, Lukon said.

"Everyone is friendly and wel-

coming," she said, and added, "Everyone smiles."

She noted that the "School Committee is very positive," and there is a "different sort of attitude," in Jamestown among all staff, faculty and parents, who "are very involved."

Lukon said she is very excited about the administrative team, which includes a new director of pupil services, a new aspiring principal, and Principal Kathleen Almanzor.

"This is a great team to provide leadership," for the island schools, Lukon said.

Lukon purchased a "fixer-upper," house in Charlestown prior to her retirement decision and was delighted when the posting for the

Jamestown superintendency came up.

She said she was familiar with Jamestown because she is a scuba diver, but she did some more research on the island and decided to apply.

When she is not being an educator, Lukon is a serious diver and world traveler. She combines both loves on vacations and has recently been diving in Mexico, Thailand and Malaysia, she said. Lukon also loves all water sports and does a lot of kayaking, canoeing as well as camping and skiing.

She is single, with two grown children. Joshua is the vice president of a software firm in Boston and Holly is a massage therapist in Worcester, Mass

# Dr. Bob returns to special ed. post

By Donna K. Drago

Robert Fricklas, Ph.D., said that island students who attended the Jamestown school during the late 1980s will likely remember him as the guy who did the morning announcements.

The affable Fricklas, who said everyone calls him "Dr. Bob," said he had the most fun messing with the daily lunch menu—especially the "flavored rice" offering, for which he made up some unlikely combinations. During a Dr. Bob announcement it was fairly typical for students to hear that they'd be served "licorice lasagna," or "butterscotch macadamia rice," he said, adding that he got a kick out of doing the job and he wouldn't mind a bit if he was asked to take on the role once again.

Fricklas served as the island's special education director from 1985 to 1990, and though he left to take a better position with the Chariho district, Fricklas said that he'd always regretted his decision. No matter where he has taught since, Fricklas said "you can't replace the collegiality and intimacy," of the small island school



Robert Fricklas, Ph.D.

system. He said he got a "raise in pay and a boost in title," but lost the "tight-knit community where kids come first."

Fricklas, a resident of North Kingstown, said that moments after learning the Jamestown post was available, he updated his resume, and "got ready to market myself," for a job he wanted back. "I got my application in ASAP," Fricklas said.

Now that he is back at the island district, Fricklas said he is looking forward to reconnecting with teachers who he once worked with, as well as meeting all the new staff members and the

students he will serve.

The role of director of pupil services includes being the special education director as well as overseeing all Section 504 activity, English language learning, as well as nursing services and serving as the liaison to North Kingstown High School, Fricklas said.

Prior to coming back to Jamestown, Fricklas was the assistant director as well as the special education director for the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative, in Cumberland, for four years. He held a similar position in the North Smithfield school district from 1997 to 2003 and also worked for the Meeting Street Center, the South Kingstown School Department as well as the Chariho district, Fricklas said.

Fricklas is married to May and has two adult children. Erica is an occupational therapist in Maine and Ethan is a rehabilitation/ergonomic engineer at Duke University.

Fricklas noted that it is "very gratifying," that both his children chose careers in the field of helping those with disabilities.

## Dance classes begin Sept. 10

Mary Beth Murphy's dance classes for children begin Sept. 10 at Wellspring, 32 Pemberton Ave.

Creative Dance for 4 year olds will be on Tuesdays from 3:45 to 4:30 p.m. Pre-Ballet, for ages 5 and 6, meets on Mondays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Modern Dance for ages 11 to 13 will be on Wednesdays from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. Basic Ballet for ages 7 to 8 is on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. and Classical Ballet, for ages 8 to 10 will meet on Mondays from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m.

Classes run from Sept. 10 to Jan. 25, 2008. Tuition is \$200 for the term.

Mary Beth Murphy has been teaching ballet to children and adults for over 20 years. She is currently on the faculty of RI College where she teaches Ballet and is rehearsal director for the RI College Dance Company. She is also a guest teacher at Providence Ballet and the Newport Academy of Ballet.

Pre-registration is required and class size is limited. Students may register at the community center starting this week. For more information, call Mary Beth at 423-2691.



### Town of Jamestown Recreation Department Request for Electrical Bid

The Town of Jamestown, Recreation Department is requesting electrical bids for work in the Jamestown Teen Center. Specifications can be picked up at the Recreation Center, 41 Conanicus Avenue. Bids are due Friday, September 7, 2007 by 3:00 p.m. at the Jamestown Town Hall, 44 Southwest Avenue.

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