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What's next for town-owned Ft. Wetherill site?

By Dotti Farrington

Jamestown has several options for use of the old highway barn site at Fort Wetherill now that voters have approved a new barn at Taylor Point.

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser said it would be up to the town council to decide what to do with the building and property and said he would support a community workshop, conducted by the council, for islanders to discuss possibilities.

"It is a one of a kind location," he said about the location of rugged rock outcroppings on the Atlantic Ocean at the head of Nar-

ragansett Bay between the bay's East and West Passages. "We will need a class one appraisal of its value before we look at options with benefits versus costs on what we do with it," Keiser stressed. He said he was not in a position to make a recommendation without the appraisal and further study.

Some citizens and some state officials have expressed opinions in recent years about proposals for use of the old barn site. The subject is also part of the town Comprehensive Plan of Development adopted in 2002 and the subject of a special reuse study in 2005.

See "Ft. Wetherill" on page 12

Harbor boat tests continue

By Sam Bari

More than six weeks ago, the new harbormaster's boat, manufactured by Ribcraft of Marblehead, Mass., was hauled out of the water for what harbor authorities assumed was routine maintenance and warranty repairs. However, after the boat was hauled, damages caused by possible galvanic corrosion, commonly associated with electrolysis, became apparent.

The anti-fouling paint was removed from the bottom, and the glue attaching the gunnels to the hull separated in one area causing a leak. Other signs of corrosion were also found in various spots around the boat.

The hard-bottomed inflatable craft was hauled and returned to Ribcraft in Marblehead where their technicians inspected the boat to analyze the problems. Ribcraft management replied in a letter to

Police Chief Thomas Tighe and Harbormaster Sam Paterson that the problems were caused by galvanic corrosion that they suspect originated from the area where the boat was docked. Consequently, they did not feel that responsibility for the problems fell on their shoulders.

After hearing Ribcraft's response to the damages to the vessel, the town engaged the services of Professor Otto Gregory, a chemical engineer teaching at the University of Rhode Island, as a consultant.

Last week, Professor Gregory and his assistants tested the marina in the area where the harbormaster's boat was docked. "Although our tests are not conclusive because we haven't completed them, so far we have not found anything

See "Boat" on page 12



Recreation Director Bill Piva, at left, Barbara Szepatowski, center, and Ron Parfitt assess the damage from the Labor Day weekend vandalism at the Jamestown skate park. Photo by Adrienne Downing

Skate park behind the schools may close because of weekend vandalism

By Adrienne Downing

Just two weeks after the successful SkateFest 2007, the Jamestown Recreation Department is now faced with the decision of whether or not to close the island's skate park after vandals damaged it some time over the Labor Day weekend.

Recreation director Bill Piva was conducting a routine inspection of the area on Tuesday morning when he discovered the damage.

"I usually do inspections of the

ball fields and the skate park twice a week. I had spoken to Lew Kitts (school director of buildings and grounds) on Friday and I told him I would go out on Tuesday and make sure everything was ready for school to start on Wednesday," he said.

The park is subject to inspections by the Rhode Island Interlocal Trust, the entity that insures the Town of Jamestown and therefore the skate park.

"The last time the trust did an inspection they found everything

in order except a small problem with the fence, which we fixed, and that we did not have enough signs up," Piva said. "We ordered and placed about \$300 worth of signs right before the SkateFest and now they are covered in spray paint."

Along with the painted signs, there was graffiti spray painted on the bowl itself and a makeshift ramp built on the basketball court. The ramp was made of an old ta-

See "Park" on page 19

Island historical society will showcase two homes in weekend tour



Circa 1888 Antine House on Walcott Avenue

By Michaela Kennedy

The Jamestown Historical Society proudly presents heirloom homes of an earlier age this Saturday, Sept. 8, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets cost \$15 for both houses, and may be purchased at either house on the day of the tour. The annual open house raises money to support preservation of the society's myriad artifacts and activities.

Originally built as summer residences, the two houses featured this weekend echo living and love from continued generations. The J.B. Lippincott House at 177 Beavertail Rd. graces a waterfront property of four and a half acres at Mackerel Cove. The Belvedere cottage enjoys a downtown setting at 36 Walcott Ave. Both homes plant elegant beauty in the eyes and instill wonder in the hearts of visitors.

J.B. Lippincott, a famed publisher from the 19th century, had the 1893 house on Beavertail Road built by Charles Soule of Newport. The wood and stone architecture was designed by Pritchett and Pritchett of Philadelphia. The house in those days had a

360-degree view of Beavertail and Mackerel Cove, since no trees existed, according to descendent and current owner Peter O'Neill. The summer cottage has a direct view of Horsehead, which stands on a bluff on the opposite side of the cove. Before the house was constructed, Lippincott married Joanne Wharton, daughter of Joseph Wharton, who owned Horsehead.

Rays of light shine into the Lippincott-O'Neill house at every angle. The curved front staircase is flooded with sunshine from diamond-shaped windowpanes. Windows and ornate wood moldings throughout the house show off imported Italian craftsmanship. A kitchen hearth wafts imaginary scents of culinary delights. Each room, from the formal dining room to the front sitting room, has its own particularly designed fireplace. O'Neill notes that the house conveys a different image from its older relative Horsehead. "It possesses an intimacy despite its size," he says.

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