

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

Vote on Tuesday

Next week is important to the future of our island. Jamestown voters will go the polls on Tuesday, Nov. 6, to elect a new Town Council, two School Committee members, and a town moderator.

This year's election rhetoric has been standard island fare. There are no sizzling issues. We've heard talk about the perpetual problems which confront the town. We've got a wide selection of candidates who say they are up to the task and would like our votes.

It's important to note here that the next Town Council will have big shoes to fill. Under the leadership of retiring President David Long, the current council has posted a significant number of accomplishments. Topping the list are the following:

- hiring our current town administrator, Bruce Keiser, who most will admit is doing a bang-up job;
- securing citizen approval (and therefore funding) for a new highway facility, ending years of feuding over where to put the structure;
- preserving several island farms, vital open space that will remain green for future generations to enjoy;
- constructing the functional and historically attractive new town hall and office complex, a project that was long overdue;
- and completing important upgrades to the town water system.

So what will the new Town Council have on its two-year agenda? Finances loom large, as the town decision-makers must continue to grapple with increasing costs while keeping the tax rate as low as possible. Doing more with less, as they say.

Then comes the cost of buying town water. Upgrades to the water system, coupled with a finite supply of water and the necessary conservation, have spurred consumer prices upwards at an alarming rate. Housing here has become unaffordable for many. Will water soon be the same?

The words "housing" and "affordable" combine to create another issue, one that is becoming increasingly urgent. Jamestown must soon meet a mandated quota for federally-approved affordable housing. But we also need to consider legalizing accessory apartments to allow our aging citizens to maintain their island residency and to permit the younger generations to establish island homes. We can also encourage the development of more apartments in the village to create additional housing that people can afford.

That then leads to the question of planning and zoning regulations and their relationship to the development of our island. We recently completed a comprehensive review of our village and its future. The next question for the Jamestown Vision project is "where do we go from here?"

A decision will soon be required on the fate of the old highway barn at Ft. Wetherill. The facility is located on a prime chunk of waterfront real estate. We should maintain the spot for the enjoyment of all islanders. What do we do with the property?

These are only a few of the many issues ahead. There are no easy answers and quick fixes. There will be vocal differing opinions on what should be done.

We applaud all the candidates who are making the commitment to public service locally. Holding a public office is time-consuming and an often thankless task.

As voters it is our duty and responsibility to evaluate the candidates and select those individuals who we think will best represent our interests.

Please take the time to listen to the candidates and vote this Tuesday.

Joy in Mudville

Yes, they made it look easy. On Sunday the Red Sox won the World Series. There wasn't much drama as the Sox took command of the field at home and away from start to finish, claiming the title in a relentless four-game sweep.

The American League Championship Series was by far a better contest.

The Sox are no longer the underdogs. Two World Series trophies in four years. The Red Sox Nation now has a different outlook on baseball from its lofty perch.

Thanks to the Red Sox for a season of great memories. We're looking forward to next year.

— Jeff McDonough



Events are part of a community

I am not sure I understand.

The Rotary has developed a race that is growing in popularity, that brings people to the island, that might help Jamestown's overall appeal to another demographic of people, that promotes fitness, and you want to shut it down because you can't get out of your driveway? Well, I may have been off "the Rock" for a few years, but for the sake of argument let us expand on your point and eradicate a few other island events that meet the criteria you mentioned about the bike race.

Fools Rules Regatta - We must end this siege on East Ferry. For years I was

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not able to launch my boat from the ramp and it was a 15-minute wait to get a hot dog from Freddy's stand. Exactly how many experts in the field of Popsicle sticks are on hand?

Penguin Plunge - How dare these people take over Mackerel Cove in the dead of winter, I should be able to stroll the beach without all those people in tuxedos.

Little League, Soccer, and Softball - Ever been to the athletic fields while a game is going on? All those kids running around, people parking on the side of the road, and I can't practice my four iron shots from the outfield.

Parades - Got to get rid

of them, too, because one or two days a year you may have to walk down Narragansett Avenue.

Tall Ships - You want to talk about traffic...why are we still looking at these old boats...Hey, look, last time it was a hundred years old this time it was one hundred and seven years old...ooh.

Instead of complaining about an event, become a part of it. Set up a lemonade stand, hand water to the cyclists, heck buy a bike and start training. As someone who grew up on the island, I have taken part in all of the above and it is these types of events, the memories they created, the friendships formed that cause me to

write to the Press after living in Louisville for fifteen years.

Jamestown is a community, a community has events, why would you want to change that?

Chris Smyth
Louisville, Kentucky
via 36 Windsor St.

Thanks to all for a successful reunion

On August 11, 2007, the North Kingstown High School Class of 1997 celebrated its tenth reunion. Over 70 guests gathered to enjoy a picnic at Fort Wetherill State Park in Jamestown, followed by an evening cocktail reception at Habourside Grill in East Greenwich.

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This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden
Week of November 1

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

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, October 28, 1907

The high wind and heavy sea interfered with the fishing of the numerous parties which came from Newport yesterday for a day's sport at Beavertail and the Dumpings. In consequence the average catch per man was the smallest of the season.

From the Newport Daily News, October 30, 1907

That there is to be a contest for the office of senator from this town at next Tuesday's election is now assured. The sample ballots have been posted and the name of H. A. Clarke appears as Democratic nominee, opposed to W. F. Caswell, the present Republican incumbent. Matters are at present very quiet, but a more lively time is looked for Tuesday night.

From the Newport Daily News, November 1, 1907

A party of boys committed several minor depredations on cabbage and pumpkin patches last evening.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 1, 1932

A masquerade Halloween ball was held at the Thomas H. Clarke school Monday evening, when ghosts and witches held sway. Black cats and jack o' lanterns were much in evidence, and the costumes of the dancers were in harmony with the occasion. Music was furnished by

a local orchestra. There was a good attendance and the proceeds will go towards defraying the expenses for the annual trip taken by the students.

From the Newport Daily News, November 2, 1932

(A letter to the editor from the Jamestown Board of Trade writing against a state bond issue to be voted on for a bridge across the lower reaches of the Providence river). The town of Jamestown with a 1600 permanent population, through the Jamestown & Newport Ferry Company operates the only transportation link across the southern end of Rhode Island for the convenience of its residents and patrons, and because of its geographical situation has the added demands of the summer tourist travelers, and is operated without profit. ... The Jamestown & Newport Ferry Company employs permanently approximately 50 persons, most of whom are heads of families, who support, in turn, approximately 250 to 300 people. Its summer pay roll has reached, previous to 1932, including high school girl collectors, 78 employees.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 2, 1957

Adults will receive their second polio shots Monday at 7 p.m. at the Visiting Nurse Association Headquarters under the auspices of the Arnold Zweir Post 22, American Legion.

From the Newport Daily News, November 5, 1957

Commerce Oil Refining Corp. yesterday lost its motion to dismiss its own conspiracy suit for \$2,000,000 damages against 17 Jamestown taxpayers and organizations.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 3, 1982

Rep. Norma B. Willis, a Republican, defeated her Democratic opponent ... in the hotly contested race for the General Assembly's Representative District 98, but (her opponent) is going to ask for a recount.

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