

# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •

### A beacon returns to West Passage

A bit of history was made Saturday evening when the Dutch Island Lighthouse once again flashed a beacon across the waters of Narragansett Bay's West Passage.

Built in 1857, the lighthouse had been dark for nearly 30 years, made obsolete by advancing technology. The abandoned landmark had fallen to ruin and had become an eyesore.

A group of lighthouse-lovers from Jamestown and across the bay in Saunterstown decided to save the lighthouse. They formed the Dutch Island Lighthouse Society and raised money to restore the structure.

On Saturday the lighthouse was returned to its original purpose of serving as a beacon to mariners. A blinking red light was placed atop the square tower and will be lighted year-round from dusk to dawn.

A bit of island legend and lore has been preserved for future generations.

The Dutch Island Lighthouse Society is planning to continue its fund-raising so that the lighthouse and its new beacon can be maintained in the years ahead.

A job well done.

### Giving thanks for more than a feast

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving.

Tradition holds that we gather in groups of family and friends to feast and give thanks for the bounties we've received during the past year. The holiday fare usually includes, among other tasty treats, turkey, stuffing, oysters, yams, and pie. Don't forget the cranberries. During the day many of us watch parades and football games on the television.

The pilgrims of Plymouth celebrated the first Thanksgiving not many miles northeast of Jamestown. Strangers in a strange land, they were thankful that they had survived a bitter winter and had reaped a harvest that would hopefully see them through the next winter.

So what do we have to be thankful for?

We can be thankful for our lifestyles. We reside in a place where people are not shooting at us. We don't have to face suicide bombers when grocery shopping. We do not battle disease and pestilence and worry about our children starving to death. There are many countries around the globe where the struggle to survive is a daily task.

Life here is comfortable for the most part.

We should give thanks for our nation's freedoms. We have a long list of freedoms that we take for granted. Read the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights on Thanksgiving.

Be thankful for the men and women who go in harm's way to protect those freedoms.

We ought to be thankful that we can assist those who are less fortunate. Remember the needy both at home and overseas.

The holiday shopping madness will begin on Friday. On Thursday, though, let's forget the commercialism and think about why Thanksgiving is important.

May your Thanksgiving be filled with joy, laughter, and love. May you be surrounded by those family and friends you care about. May you have something to be thankful for.

Happy Thanksgiving.

— Jeff McDonough



### Community hate needs to end!

A few days before the Nov. 6 election, a postcard was mailed to residents of Jamestown that had derogatory and misleading comments regarding the two independent candidates for Town Council. Unfortunately, there was no possible way to respond to the charges because of the last minute timing of the mailing.

The return address was that of Dennis Webster, later identified as the official Treasurer of a newly formed Political Action Committee ([www.elections.ri.gov](http://www.elections.ri.gov)) called the Jamestown Voter Information.

Dennis is a known anti-Taylor Point supporter and it was no surprise that the language of the mailing was an

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obvious attempt to link the candidates to the hate that is held toward the North End Concerned Citizens.

Perhaps they believed that if the candidates mentioned were elected, their continued efforts to stop the barn would be at risk. It's no secret that the anti-Taylor Point group supported Council candidates, Democrats and Republican, who are on the record as being against the voter's decision to build the barn at Taylor Point.

Their group has once before successfully elected a Council that allowed them to stop the barn and to build a case against Taylor Point by demanding excessive, expensive design requirements that

raised the cost far above what voters would approve.

It's unfortunate that they continue to promote hateful feelings among our citizens to achieve their objectives when the future challenges ahead for our community will need island-wide cooperation and solidarity.

One of the most disturbing things in their mailing was the inference that my campaign was "funded by generous contributions," from two North End residents who they consistently vilify in their hate campaign.

So, for those who were persuaded to vote against me based on their information, here are the facts...

I ran my own independent

campaign, designed my own ads and my own mailings. I took directions from no one person or group. I ran a positive campaign and did not attack any other candidate.

My campaign fund totaled \$4,055, of which \$2,000 came from my personal account. The remainder was in contributions from 19 different households.

By state law, a two-person household can contribute up to \$2,000 per candidate. The largest donation received from any household was \$300 and the smallest \$25. The average donation was \$105.

The inference in the mailing that my judgment and leadership could be swayed by financial contributions is childish slander and old

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### This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden  
Week of November 21

*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, November 20, 1907**

The local farmers are harvesting and shipping more than the usual fall crop of cabbages and turnips.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 21, 1907**

The discontinuing of the Enterprise line which stopped here on the trips between New York and Fall River has materially affected the business of the ferry, and unless the line resumes running soon the ferry company will probably reduce its trips.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 23, 1907**

The firemen gave the first of their series of whists and dancing last evening in the hall of the Gardner House. The first part of the evening was devoted to progressive whist. ... After the whist light refreshments were served and the floor was cleared for dancing. Although the weather was threatening the attendance was large.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 25, 1907**

Yesterday was the quietest Sunday of the fall on the island, the strong northeast wind and the rain keeping every one indoors. The attendance at the churches was small, while the travel on the ferry was of the lightest order.

#### 75 years ago

**From the Newport Daily News, November 22, 1932**

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Westall and family of Melrose

avenue left this morning by motor for Palm Beach, Fla., where they will remain until April.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 25, 1932**

J. H. Tefft reports a rhododendron in bloom for the second time this year, on his lawn on Grinnell street.

#### 50 years ago

**From the Newport Daily News, November 19, 1957**

A resumption of the Jamestown oil refinery battle consumed four hours in Judge Edward W. Day's U.S. District Court in Providence yesterday without reaching any conclusion. The latest phase was on the Commerce Oil Refining Corp.'s motion for a summary judgment against the Jamestown Protective Assn.'s pleas for an injunction to halt the refinery construction.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 22, 1957**

A 21-bed hospital is planned for Jamestown. It became known today when articles of association for a charter were filed with the secretary of state's office in Providence. Andrew P. Quinn, attorney, said the incorporators are Dr. Alfred B. Gobeille, Harold Shipee, John R. Foley and Edward R. Davenport.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 23, 1957**

The attorney for the Commerce Oil Refining Corp. told the Jamestown Progressive Citizens League last night that foundation and road work for the proposed \$70,000,000 refinery may be started before winter sets in.

#### 25 years ago

**From the Newport Daily News, November 18, 1982**

The Jamestown Taxpayers Association Wednesday joined the chorus of island protest over a federal plan to sell part of Beavertail. The seven acres of open land at Beavertail has been declared surplus by the General Services Administration. Under new federal regulation it is being put up for sale at a fair market value.

**From the Newport Daily News, November 23, 1982**

(The Town Council) placed on file a notice from the

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### This week on the Web:

• The new Town Council will be sworn into office Tuesday night, after the Jamestown Press goes to print. The council will elect a new president. Read about it online.

• Jamestown David Swain has been charged with the murder of his wife Shelley Arden Tyre who died while scuba diving in 1999 in the British Virgin Islands. Swain appears in federal court Wednesday for an extradition hearing. Look for a full report of the hearing online.

[www.JamestownPress.com](http://www.JamestownPress.com)