

Top ten

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North end citizens groups vehemently opposed Lot 47, citing their concerns about well contamination, even though environmental engineers hired to analyze the possibilities for contamination gave the area a clean bill of health. Taylor Point opponents appealed to the council to listen to the recommendations of experts who had concluded that Lot 47 didn't pose a significant environmental risk.

This year proved to be the year that islanders had enough, and voters approved the Taylor Point site with a vote of 934 to 753. If all goes as planned, the highway barn will be completed within a year.

Land Trust almost buys the farms

Roadside signs announcing a \$4 million, two-month fund-raising effort to be used toward the \$11 million purchase of development rights of 160 acres of farmland had Jamestown residents talking for months.

Islanders and visitors were surprised to find a portion of North Main Road lined with cowboards - life-sized, black and white, wooden, livestock cutouts with messages. For those old enough to appreciate their nostalgia, the signs recalled the era of Burma Shave ads that lined roadways, starting in 1925, until superhighways and billboards sped them into extinction after the 1950s.

Just as the Burma Shave signs combined ads, humor and calls for driving safety, the Jamestown cowboards combined a message and a mission to help raise funds to preserve the island agricultural resources in perpetuity.

The cowboards did their job. The funds were raised and the land was set for purchase. Unfortunately, because of a dispute over building rights on the land, the Land Trust pulled out of the deal last week. In an emergency meeting of the Town Council, alternative methods for making the purchase were decided.

Jamestown celebrated 350 years of history

The celebration of Jamestown's 350th birthday was the social event of the year. Festivities began with a parade commemorating the 1657 purchase of Quononacutt Island from the Narragansett tribe. Crowds lined Narragansett Avenue to catch a glimpse of colorful floats, shiny horses and flag-toting scouts.

A color guard led the procession to its first stop at the newly completed municipal building, directly across the street from the Jamestown Museum. Town delegates spilled out of a surrey drawn by a team of twin chocolate horses. The flag-bearing guard stood tall as state and local officials stepped forward for the dedication of the town hall. Witnesses cheered for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

And that's not all the spectators caught. Soaring sweets accented the celebration like graffiti at a ticker tape parade. Packets of sweet bread slices launched from the Portuguese American Citizens Club float landed in the arms of onlookers. Those lucky enough to bag a treat waved in thanks to the red and green vehicle.

The weeklong celebration included special displays at the library and museum, presentations by the Historical Society, a sunset cruise, sidewalk chalk art contests, walking and trolley tours, a variety of live music performances, and food to satisfy even the most discriminating palate.

Tall Ships visited Narragansett Bay

The tall ships started arriving early for the 2007 Tall Ships Festival, scheduled for June 28 to 30. The highlight was the Parade of Sail on Sunday, July 1. Jamestown offered an abundance of excellent locations along the East Passage for magnificent views of the long-anticipated event.

This year, 22 ships participated in the four-day festival and parade. Ships came from as far away as India, Indonesia, the Cook Islands, Brazil, Columbia and Germany.

The Parade of Sail was led by

Rhode Island's own Providence, a 110-foot square topsail sloop, followed by the impressive Cisne Branco from the Brazilian Navy. The 254-foot, steel hulled clipper ship carried 23,627 square feet of sail, had more than a 34-foot beam and a 15-foot, 9-inch draft. Equally impressive was the 267-foot Gorch Foch II, a three-mast barque from Kiel, Germany, as well as the 249-foot Gloria, another three-mast bark that sailed from Colombia.

The parade of ships sailed out of Newport Harbor, up the bay, past Rose Island and under the Pell Bridge, around Gould Island and headed back down the bay, passed Jamestown, and out to sea to their next port of call. Spectators, like the visiting ships, came from around the globe to witness the spectacular event.

Charrette gives residents a chance to voice their opinion

According to an Internet dictionary, the word charrette may refer to any collaborative session in which a group of designers drafts a solution to a design problem.

Thanks to Town Planner Lisa Bryer, consultants met with local residents and ideas were exchanged and discussed, and recommendations for the future of downtown Jamestown were made through the charrette process.

The state praised the local effort, which successfully joined residents' ideas with consultants' explanations. The status of work is detailed on the web site at www.jamestownvision.org.

The town planner described the consultants as responsible for using form-based zoning for: downtown zoning, affordable housing, and for impacts on the entire island. Bryer identified the existing zones on the island, which are open space, public, residential, and commercial districts. The current zoning system used by the town is Euclidian, or traditional, zoning. Traditional zoning divides the municipality into a series of mapped districts, and then assigns permitted uses to each zone.

The ongoing story of the charrette was an inspiration to surrounding municipalities that commended Jamestown for its efforts to involve residents in the molding of the community at the most intimate levels.

New Town Hall blends old and new

The story of the building of the new Town Hall couldn't have been better if it were a work of fiction. The project from planning to completion was an overwhelming

success. On time, and on budget, the award-winning structure won the hearts and support of residents and visitors alike.

The magnificent design by Jamestown resident and architect Bill Burgin and construction by contractors Richard and Ronald Pazzuco of Cranston, was as close to flawless as any project of this magnitude could possibly be.

A pre-opening tour showed a typical work-in-progress construction scene, with sawdust being vacuumed and signs of incompleteness. Dust aside, it was hard to miss the excitement of town workers and island residents welcoming the new facilities.

A pristine 10,400-square-foot complex of offices was appended to the renovated old town hall built in 1883, of nearly 2,400 square feet, to create a spacious town council meeting room for 100 people.

The new municipal center, with white exterior and green window sashes, was opened to the public for viewing without concern about unpainted walls, hanging wires and assorted unfinished sections, as part of the town's celebration of the 350th anniversary of its purchase by colonists from the Narragansett Indians, whose relics continue to be unearthed on the island.

The new Town Hall opened on Thursday, Oct. 4. Town employees now serve residents in need of public records and municipal services in a pleasant and attractive environment in a facility that offers unprecedented efficiency and ease of navigation, and especially secure record storage. The completed facility is the pride of the town and has more than lived up to its expectations.

David Swain arrested for murder

This ongoing, heartbreaking story has been making headlines and front page news for over seven years.

Former Town Council vice president David Swain, owner of Ocean State Scuba on North Main Road, was arrested Wednesday, Nov. 14, at his business location on a charge that he murdered his wife, Shelley Arden Tyre, 46, while they were scuba diving in 1999 in the British Virgin Islands.

The arrest was made on a warrant by the BVI court, as prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee Vilker in U.S. District Court for Rhode Island, in conjunction with extradition proceedings under a treaty with the United Kingdom.

District Judge Lincoln Almond ordered Swain be held without bail pending an extradition hearing set for Wednesday, Nov. 21, in Providence.

Swain has continued to deny that he killed his wife in waters off the BVI island of Tortola.

Vilker wrote in his court complaint calling for the extradition that there was "overwhelming circumstantial evidence" that Swain killed his wife while they were scuba diving.

New Town Council elected

Some 4,506 residents, most of them not affiliated with any political party, were eligible to vote for municipal leaders in an election that completed the charter changes started five years ago.

Of the registered voters, 1,062 were Democrats and 716 were Republicans. Some 2,728 were registered as unaffiliated with any political party.

On Nov. 6, the registered voters chose five Town Council members for two-year terms from among 10 candidates, and two School Committee members for four-year terms from among three hopefuls. They also voted on the reelection of Democrat James A. Donnelly, who ran unopposed for town moderator for a two-year term.

The Democrats were Julio DiGiando, going for a third term; one term incumbents William Kelly, and Michael Schnack; Robert Sutton, a first-time council candidate; and Michael White, in his second try for a council seat.

Republicans wanting council seats were Barbara Szepatowski, who tied Long as top vote getter in the last election, her first campaign; David DeAngelis, Republican first-time candidate; and Frederick W. Glomb, a first-time candidate.

Candidates who were not affiliated with a political party were Sav Rebecchi, and new candidate Ellen Winsor.

The results of the election for town council showed Robert Sutton with the most votes followed by Julio DiGiando, William Kelly, Barbara Szepatowski and Michael White.

Teen Center finds home in community center

Teen Coordinator Melissa Minto had her hands full with trying to turn a section of the community center into the new headquarters for island teen activities.

Minto worked with Town Administrator Bruce Keiser and local architect Ron DiMauro to come up with a plan for the space.

The basic idea was to tear down a couple of walls in the former harbor master's office at the northeast corner of the building, Minto said. In addition to the office space, a couple of large storage closets were included in the teen center plan. In all, the area for teens was about 29- by 45- feet.

Among the features of the center was a lounge with seating and a television for watching movies, and the other side included a com-

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