

# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •

### Island teens finally have a place to call their own

Jamestown's Teen Center opened last week with a big celebration. On Friday evening an enthusiastic crowd of teenagers, parents and town officials filled the Community Center on Conanicut Avenue where the new facility is housed.

There were a few speeches and a quick ribbon-cutting ceremony. The Teen Center was then officially open for business — just in time for the public schools' week-long winter break.

Many islanders have worked hard for several years to make the Teen Center at East Ferry a reality. Some folks have donated their time and talent. Others have helped with the fund-raising. A major part of the project was finding the right place to house the center and it has had a few temporary homes. The teenagers themselves have been a vital part of the process. The new Teen Center has been a community project that everyone has a right to be proud of.

But the center is much more than just providing our island youth with a safe place to hang out, or "chill" as the kids might say. There will be recreational and learning opportunities available. The teens will have a hand in planning their own activities.

As with many of our Jamestown programs, continued success will hinge upon volunteers. If you'd like to help, don't hesitate to stop by.

The Teen Center is also raising money by selling "Tiles for Teens." Visit the center and purchase a tile that will include your name and inscription.

— Jeff McDonough



### Island has history of helping teens

The story about the teen center brought back terrific memories. In the late 50s, early 60s Don Gillis provided a similar setting with the Boys Club, later Rec Center. It was a busy place that offered a safe haven to us kids, although we probably never realized that until later in life. There was always something going on and Don was always in the middle. Don gave much to the community and even more to us kids then. Later in life I had a chance to emulate Don in a small way. As a dad I became a volunteer soccer coach. We had over 2,300 kids involved in soccer and needed more facilities. I thought back on what Don had done and realized I had to help. Later

## • LETTERS •

I became president of our soccer league. We convinced the city and county governments to donate land and money and the US Soccer league donated matching funds. After a couple of years we had a multi-million dollar facility. During the dedication ceremonies I thought of what Don had done for Jamestown way back when. I am sure he would be pleased. I am sure he is also pleased that after so many years, Melissa Min-to is following his footsteps and the teens of Jamestown will have yet again a safe haven to go to.

Don — thank you! Melissa — good luck!

Joseph Campo  
Las Cruces, NM

### Students support wind energy plans

The Jamestown Wind Energy Committee recently received a petition signed by students, along with a few parents and teachers, from the Melrose School supporting a wind generator for Jamestown.

The organizing force behind the petition is Lily Wright, a fourth grader at Melrose School. Last May, Lily took the initiative to write the petition and seek out the support of her fellow students. Her petition starts out, "I have been thinking about global warming (greenhouse effect). I found out about a better, non-polluting way of powering electricity: Giant windmills!

These generators use wind to create energy that powers all our electric stuff! I don't know about you, but I think that whoever thought that up is really smart! People have been thinking about getting a windmill for the little town of Jamestown. Do you think we should? If you do, sign here."

In just one afternoon, she was able to get over 70 signatures. That kind of progressive environmental awareness and willingness to put the effort into gathering support is just what we all need to keep Jamestown's and other important alternative energy projects moving forward across the country. The Wind Energy Committee says a thank you to Lily and her fellow environmental advocates for all

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### Got something to say?

Write to us. Send your letters to: Editor, The Jamestown Press, 42 Narragansett Ave., Jamestown RI 02835. Our fax number is (401) 423-1661. Our e-mail address is news@jamestownpress.com. Please include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Letters must be limited to 700 words or less.

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, February 19, 1908

Today's snow has again put a stop to the moving of the Whitewood cottage from Knowles court to Walcott avenue.

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 21, 1908

The work of moving the Whitewood cottage was resumed today, and good progress has been made up Clinton avenue, the building being at present opposite Mr. Charles Sowle's place.

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 25, 1908

Improvements, including a new floor, are being made to the Guild hall on the North Main road. This was made possible by a donation of \$25 by Bishop McVickar and the efforts of the various societies connected with the North church.

#### 75 years ago

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 17, 1933

On the proposition of the Holy Ghost society to build a sidewalk in front of their property on Narragansett avenue, it was voted (by the town council) that the town furnish labor, also the sand and stone, providing the society will furnish the cement and all other materials.

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 18, 1933

The Jamestown building ordinance was brought up (at a meeting of the Jamestown Board of Trade) and the consensus of opinion of the majority of the members was that the ordinance was obsolete and should be brought up to date, and that this matter should be brought to the attention of the town council for action.

The money donated by Torpedo Station employees for the relief of the unemployed ... is now available for use in Jamestown and the Station committee would like sugges-



## This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

### Week of February 21

tions as to its disposal. (A committee was as appointed.)

#### 50 years ago

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 18, 1958

The Sam Carr House, oldest building in Jamestown, was destroyed by fire early this morning. Only the 20-inch thick stone walls and fireplace dating back to 1683 were left standing. The building housed the offices of the Commerce Oil Refining Co. and Fluor Construction Co. ... Commerce Oil and its construction contractor, the Fluor Company, said the building contained very valuable tools, records and plans.

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 21, 1958

Private construction of a bridge or tunnel linking Newport and Jamestown was discussed yesterday afternoon at a private conference at the Hotel Viking. ... Reports that leaked from the meeting, however, indicated that what had been discussed was a bridge from Newport to Rose Island and a tunnel from Rose Island to Jamestown. ... The New York engineering firm of Parsons Brinckerhoff, Hall & MacDonald in 1955 recommended to the state that a \$30,000,000 tunnel be built from Newport to Jamestown. The recommendation was deferred on the grounds that estimated traffic would be insufficient to warrant construction if construction were limited to state or private financing.

#### 25 years ago

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 22, 1983

The Town Council discussed a map of proposed anchorage areas in the East Passage of Narragansett Bay at a

workshop Monday night. The Council will have to approve the proposed map before it can go to the Coastal Resources Management Council for approval.

#### From the Newport Daily News, February 24, 1983

The Recreation Center in Jamestown the original home of the USO on Conanicut Island will be the location of the Salute to the USO April 23. This celebration is being arranged by the Appreciation Day committee.

#### 15 years ago

#### From the Jamestown Press, February 19, 1993

The Jamestown Taxpayers' Association will call for reducing the proposed \$7.3 million 1993-94 budget when it is presented to voters at the annual financial town meeting March 1.

It isn't cheap to live in Jamestown. And perhaps no one knows that better than Jamestowners. While local real estate agents say house prices are coming down and the market is picking up, buying one of the 2,400 homes on the island is still a stretch for many, especially young couples. ... The town's recently completed Comprehensive Plan ... states that single family houses in Jamestown had the highest average purchase price in the state in 1990. The plan says only 11 of the 59 house sold that year fell into the affordable housing category at \$122,600, based on an average Jamestown household's income of \$53,000.

#### 10 years ago

#### From the Jamestown Press, February 19, 1998

Town officials will soon send out notices alerting municipal water customers to a water-use alert and a water ban that will be in effect from March 1 to May 25.

The Planning and Development wing of the state Department of Environmental Management has received permission to hire architectural and engineering consultants for the development of a marine fisheries resource center to be located at Ft. Wetherill.