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Town receives \$540K appraisal for old town offices

By Sam Bari

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser reported at the Monday meeting of the Town Council that the old town offices at 44 Southwest Ave. were recently appraised at \$540,000 by an appraiser hired on the town's behalf. Keiser and Town Tax Assessor Ken Gray engaged Hogan and Associates of Middletown to handle the appraisal.

The \$540,000 appraisal is dramatically different from the \$425,000 assessment by the

Church Community Housing Corporation's appraiser, Keiser said. CCHC offered the town \$425,000 to purchase the Southwest Avenue property to build a nine-unit affordable housing facility on the site.

Keiser said he would discuss the matter with CCHC. He also said that the town always felt their appraisal was low. Additionally, Keiser said he would address the issue of an archeological study

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Renewable energy consultant may begin study in April

By Michaela Kennedy

The Jamestown Wind Energy Committee plans this month to recommend a sustainable energy consultant to the Town Council. Applied Technology and Management from Newport was named as top choice to conduct the first phase of a wind power feasibility study on the island.

The committee interviewed prospective advisors for the wind energy exploration project the last week of February, and made a

selection at its March 4 meeting. They expressed hope to put the recommendation before the council in the next few weeks, and start work on the feasibility study as soon as the first week in April.

Panel members agreed that the three top-ranked bidders in the search were equally impressive. Committee member Michael Larkin commented that "three really good proposals and three really

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Making rank

Members of Diane Archibald's Webelos 2 Cub Scout den, top photo, participated in the Arrow of Light ceremony at the annual Blue and Gold dinner. The award is the highest rank in Cub Scouts and is the only advancement recognized in Boy Scouts.

Boy Scouts assisting in the ceremony were Michael Brendlinger, lighting the candle, and Drew Matley, acting as narrator.

Conor Kennedy, at right, lent his support as an honorary scout for the night.

Photos by Andrea von Hohenleiten



The sisters that are saying good-bye to the Secret Garden, with the shop's new owner, are, from left, Holly Howard, David Urban, Heidi Lessard and Helenna Fountain.

It's no secret: there's a new gardener in town

By Sam Bari

David Urban, 24, the new proprietor of the Secret Garden at 12 Southwest Ave., has been training for the job since his sophomore year in high school. It was then that Ferris Farms in Somerset, N. J. hired him to work in their greenhouse.

Urban, originally from Hillsborough, N.J., has since earned a degree in horticulture, with a minor in business, from the University of Rhode Island, where he graduated in 2006. Along with ten years of experience working in every phase of the florist industry, he has the perfect combination to manage his own store.

"My love of plants and flowers actually started when I was quite young. I helped my Italian grand-

father and grandmother on my mother's side plant and tend their garden. Raising tomatoes and other vegetables is in their blood. So I guess I came by my love for things that grow quite honestly," he said.

Since moving to Rhode Island to attend URI, he has worked part-time as a student at Broadview Florist in Wakefield where he was primarily a floral designer. Urban considers the owners, Mark and Sherry Koswaski, to be his extended family and still gives them a hand when they need it.

During summers since 1999, Urban worked for Gray's Florist in Watchung, N. J., a family-owned, fourth generation florist. "I'm used to working for a fast-paced, high

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