

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

Preserving our agrarian heritage

On page one of this newspaper is a great photograph of islanders proudly showing off the new community no-till seeder. The seeder was used on Saturday to plant about four acres of hay in a field adjacent to the Jamestown Community Farm, just off of Eldred Avenue.

The no-till seeder was recently purchased through a fund-drive organized by the Conanicut Grange. The seeder is available for use by all island farmers. Many islanders contributed to the cause and a major chunk of the money was donated by the Jamestown Chamber of Commerce from the proceeds of its annual "Night at the Farm" dinner-dance event several years ago. The seeder was too expensive for any one farmer to purchase.

According to Bob Sutton, who heads up the all-volunteer effort at the Jamestown Community Farm, the no-till seeder concept is simple. The device allows the farmer to "stitch" the seeds into the field without having to plow and disturb the grass cover.

Soil quality is often degraded by cultivation. Soil is also lost to erosion and the humus is broken down when fields are plowed. By using the no-till planting method, soil quality is preserved and there is less opportunity for invasive weeds to sprout, which means that herbicides won't be needed — an ecological blessing for Narragansett Bay.

Hopefully, the no-till method will allow for an improved hay crop. On Saturday, the farmers planted Smooth Brome Grass as a test crop. When the hay is harvested, George Neale will use the grass to feed his herd of Belted Galloways, an heirloom breed of beef cattle often seen grazing on the east side of North Main Road.

Like the recent island-wide effort to preserve two Jamestown family farms, the no-till seeder is a great example of our community's dedication to keeping alive our agrarian heritage.

That's a big benefit for all of us.

Dune restoration at Mackerel Cove

Kudos to all the folks who volunteered their time this past Saturday to help plant beach grass at the Mackerel Cove town beach.

The effort is part of an ongoing beach grass restoration project to repair dunes which were severely damaged in the whopper storm that roared across the island last fall.

Volunteers, teenagers, and Boy Scouts gathered on Saturday morning and successfully planted some 11,000 beach grass sprouts. The project was organized by the Jamestown Conservation Commission.

Mark your calender for shoreline cleanup

While we're on the subject of being green and kind to our island, we'd like to encourage everyone to mark their calendars for Saturday, April 26. That day has been set aside for the annual Jamestown Shoreline Cleanup, which is held in conjunction with the global Earth Day celebration.

If you've helped out with the past shoreline cleanups you know that literally tons of trash — jetsom and flotsom — is hauled off our island beaches every spring during the morning effort. Debris such as discarded boats, fish nets, outboard motors, lumber, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans are commonly found.

Our beaches certainly look better after their spring cleaning. The effort gets underway at 8 a.m. on April 26 at the Community Center. Volunteers should wear work clothes, work boots and bring work gloves. Volunteers with pickup trucks are always needed.

The project is sponsored by the Conservation Commission and the Conanicut Island Land Trust. Lunch and beverages are provided for all volunteers.

The island shoreline cleanup is the perfect way to "think globally and act locally!"

— Jeff McDonough



IN POLITICS - MARCH MADNESS GREET'S APRIL FOOLS!

April 5 important day for pets

On Saturday, April 5, the Town of Jamestown will sponsor a rabies clinic at the fire station from 11 a.m. to noon.

This annual clinic sponsored by the Rhode Island Veterinarians Association offers rabies vaccinations at a very low cost. It is so important to have all pets receive this important vaccine. Rabies is a deadly disease which can infect humans as well as animals and presently is reaching epidemic proportions on the East Coast.

In the past, this disease was primarily transmitted through wildlife, but now there have been reports of rabies-infected cats and dogs in Rhode Island. State law mandates that all dogs, cats, and ferrets be vaccinated

against rabies. So, please, if you have not had your pet vaccinated for rabies, come on down to the fire station this Saturday and have your pets get the rabies vaccine.

During this time, the town will also be offering dog licenses to island residents. In addition, members of the Humane Society will also be taking pet photos for our disaster file. Since Hurricane Katrina we have been working with the Jamestown Police to compile a file of photos and pertinent information on all Jamestown pets should an unfortunate disaster occur here.

As spring approaches we would like to remind Jamestown residents that we of-

fer a rebate on spaying and neutering your pets. All we require is a receipt from a veterinarian that you have recently had your pet's reproductive abilities altered. We also have a compassionate-response fund to financially assist Jamestown residents with medical expenses of their pets.

If you would like any information on either spaying/neutering rebates or our compassionate-response fund, please call me at 423-2186 or Donna at 423-1515 and leave a message. We will promptly return your call.

Nancy Crawford
Humane Society

Egg hunt winners announced

The Jamestown Women's Club would like to thank all of the children who participated in the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

The prize winners were: preschool, Casey Westall, Charlie Elsworth and Julia Totten; kindergarten, Ariana Gallo, Julianna McCarthy and Ben Jennings; first and second grade, Conor Smith, Sam Cowan and Ginger Perry; third and Fourth grade, Milo DiGasper and Nysore Dipina.

The winners of the grade 5 and 6 egg toss were Kaela Kennedy and Erica Croft, Courtney McIntyre and Mariah Messinger.

Many thanks to our won-

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• LETTERS •



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

Week of April 3

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, March 30, 1908

The east harbor has grown in favor the past few years as an anchoring place for barges, especially light ones. Yesterday at one time there were 15 heavily laden ones anchored there.

From the Newport Daily News, April 1, 1908

Today's town meeting for the selection of town officers is one of the quietest ever known, there being no opposition to the Republican nominees. At noon only 30 of the 347 qualified voters had cast their ballots and only two or three people are to be seen, besides the supervisors, in or near the voting place.

From the Newport Daily News, April 6, 1908

At the annual financial town meeting held Saturday in the town hall (some of the issues were as follows): That some of the street lights be eliminated from October 1 to June 1, passed. That the town council appoint 10 special police to serve without pay except when called upon to act, passed. That the bounty on crows' heads be discontinued, passed. That an appropriation of \$500 be made for police services, passed. That dustoline be used on two miles of the stone road, not passed.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, April 4, 1933

Samuel W. Smith Jr., Jamestown florist, was appointed Monday by Governor Theodore Francis Green to represent Rhode Island at a White House conference in Washington which will formulate plans for carrying out President Roosevelt's re-forestation program.

The petition of Amos L. Peckham, and signed by many residents and tax payers, that out of town peddlers be prohibited from doing business on the island was received (by the Town Council) and granted.

From the Newport Daily News, April 5, 1933

An audience of about 200 was present at a moving picture show sponsored by the Park & Pollard Co., manufacturers of poultry feeds, at the Holy Ghost hall Monday evening, and was given under the auspices of James T. O'Connell. A member of the faculty of the Rhode State College Agricultural Department was present and gave an interesting and informative talk on poultry raising. Following the demonstration a series of interesting movies was shown.

From the Newport Daily News, April 6, 1933

A record vote was cast at the annual election in Jamestown Wednesday, 796, with 230 straight Republican and 216 straight Democrat ballots and an unusually large number of split ballots, which made tabulation difficult. Democrats and Republicans divided honors in the results, and several new officers were elected.

From the Newport Daily News, April 7, 1933

The East Side Athletics and the West Ferry Tigers will cross bats Saturday morning at 10:30 o'clock on the Thomas H. Clarke school grounds.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, April 1, 1958

Ground for a museum to honor deceased firemen will be broken Thursday night at the Jamestown fire station on Narragansett Avenue by members of the volunteer fire department. ... The museum, designed by Chief (Merton C.) Hull, will

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