

Pre-school teacher receives state recognition

By Michaela Kennedy

It was announced at the April 24 School Committee meeting that pre-school educator Marguerite Wark, known to all as "Miss Peggy," received the Special Friend of Rhode Island Children's Award.

Wark's achievement marks the first time the prize, given annually by the R.I. Association for the Education of Young Children, has been awarded to a classroom teacher, "a point of pride for both Miss Peggy and our school community," said co-principal Carrie Melucci. "We are so fortunate to have a recognized expert in the field of early childhood education as our preschool teacher," Melucci added.

The School Committee heard the announcement following approval of next year's spending plan.

The committee agreed to submit a budget proposal of almost \$11.8 million. Committee member William "Bucky" Brennan expressed concern that the price of diesel was approaching \$5 a gallon. He suggested hiring a consultant to design a plan to monitor bus miles and fuel.

Following the budget vote, the committee voted to eliminate the job fair as a means to fill vacancies in the educational staff. School Committee Chairwoman Cathy Kaiser reminded the committee of its consensus, and of the superintendent's recommendation, that a job fair might not be the best way to fill vacancies, and may not

create the best results for students. "We'd like to work with the staff to see if there's a better way to do it," she said. Kaiser cited strains on the administrative system and the need for management to have a stronger say in building the flexibility needed in the staff. "Management has the best big picture of what the system needs. Veto power alone doesn't help explain how the decision is made. We want to have discussions, and decide on mutual grounds."

Some teachers stood up to voice objections to the dismissal of the job fair, pointing out that no alternate plan was in place. "The JTA (Jamestown Teachers' Association) hasn't even voted for this," one unidentified teacher said.

Kaiser responded that the committee's decision was not dependent on JTA agreement. "If there's no job fair, the administration reserves the right to make teacher appointments," she said. "The plan is going to be less formal than what you want it to be. It's a process, we're going to try. We're pretty confident that it's going to work out for the system."

The superintendent said she would like to hear from everyone, and would send out a questionnaire. "This is a very open process. We want people to be in a place where they want to be. This is not going to be an arbitrary decision," she assured the teachers.

The teachers agreed they would rather have a job fair this year, and use it to work out distrust issues,

rather than face the uncertainty of no plan.

Committee member Bruce "B.J." Whitehouse spoke up in support of abandoning the job fair. "It sounds like we're messing with people's lives here. I've been laid off nine times. I know more than anyone else the feeling of uncertainty. We're not up here just moving people around like checkers. We want to make sure people are using their talents to their utmost capability."

Julie Kallfelz, vice chairwoman, urged the educators to trust in the administration's decision-making abilities in the absence of written guidelines. "At the end of the day, it's the school's performance that we are responsible for," she said. "I see the job fair as creating conflict. It sets up an opportunity for conflict."

In new business, the committee approved a memorandum to the Town Council urging support to use reserve funds for the Best Land Use Plan. Brennan stressed the importance of supporting capital improvements while funds are available, adding, "We've talked about in the years moving forward, we have to consider costs."

In correspondence, Brennan referred to a comment from a town councilman about open meetings laws. Brennan warned the committee to be careful when sending e-mails, when asking for opinions, and when editing or approving a document. Referring to directions about open meetings laws received

from Town Clerk Arlene Petit, he said, "You can talk about what you want on an agenda, talk about calendars, but other than that, you should not be editing outside of an open meeting."

In the superintendent's report, Marcia Lukon said the administration was "ready to go live" with school committee policies online. She explained it was part of a plan to use technology for better communication between the schools

and the community.

In other business, the committee:

- approved a leave of absence for Terry Kahn.
- approved a job share request from Karyn Kauffman and Gilda Codilla.
- tabled until the next meeting a request for a two-year leave of absence for Phil Capaldi.
- Approved the calendar for school year 2008-2009.

Prout school honor roll

The Prout School in Wakefield announced the names of students named to the honor roll for the third quarter. Those students from Jamestown named to the roll are:

In **grade 9**, Hannah Cordes and Kevin Flanagan. From **grade 10**, Anthony Irwin* and Adele Huffine. In **grade 11**, Jennifer Thomas; and in **grade 12** Elizabeth Aresti, Meredith Deffley, Patrick Regan, Brian Rubino, Victoria Ryng, and Harrison Scott-Bennett.

* denotes high honors

You are invited to the
JAMESTOWN ROTARY CLUB'S
Annual
May Breakfast
 7 to 10:30 a.m. this Saturday, May 3rd
 Lawn Avenue School Cafeteria

\$8⁰⁰ Adults
\$3⁰⁰ Children

Proceeds to purchase a portable pitcher's mound for Jamestown baseball

www.jamestownri.com/rotary



MURPHY'S LAW

In 1801, a man nominated by the President for appointment as Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, *declined* the job. That act opened the way for the President to make another attempt at filling this important vacancy. The person then appointed to the seemingly difficult-to-fill position has since been deemed by many knowledgeable observers to be the greatest of all Chief Justices: John Marshall.

...

Marshall was the first Chief Justice to preside over a Supreme Court headquartered in the District of Columbia.

...

Founder means to sink, either literally or figuratively. *Flounder* means to flail helplessly. Which verb correctly describes our state officials' behavior at this time?

...

With gasoline at \$3.60+ per gallon, the very practical *SMART* fuel sipping automobile is certainly living up to its name.

.....
 Brought to you as a public service by
MORNEAU & MURPHY
ATTORNEYS
 77 Narragansett Avenue
 Jamestown, RI 02835
 (401) 423-0400
 E-mail: jamurphy@jamestownlawyer.com

YANKEE Kitchen Remodel by
HOUSEWRIGHTS



CHRYSALIS AWARD WINNER
Best Kitchen

Robert Van Cleef, Master Builder—RI Registration #10
 (401) 423-3800
yankeehousewrights.com

Advertise in the Jamestown Press and your display ad automatically appears online at JamestownPress.com Include your Web site address in your ad and a link will be provided!

Open EVERYDAY! PLENTY OF FREE PARKING

Grapes & Gourmet

9 Ferry Wharf • Jamestown • 423.0070 • www.grapesandgourmet.com

Surprise Mom with Hand Made Italian Ceramics



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

Give Mom the Night Off With . . .

FRESH ENTREES & SOUPS **TO GO!**

by Ann Deffley of Jamestown - The Traveling Gourmet

Spirits Specials

COMPARE OUR PRICES FOR YOURSELF

Jameson Irish Whiskey 750ml \$23.75
 Mount Gay Rum 1.75ltr \$25.75
 Absolut Vodka 1.75ltr \$32.75

Wine Specials

Moet & Chandon White Star \$33.75
 Lindemans Mix 'n Match 1.5ltr 3 for \$30
 Fabiano Pinot Grigio 1.5ltr 2 for \$18

Beer Specials

Coors Light or Miller Lite 30 Pack Cans \$21.00

CINCO DE MAYO Don't Forget Paula's Famous Salsa de Mayo

Jamestown's Favorite Locally-Owned, Hometown Liquor Store