

# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •

### Sail Jamestown!

A unique opportunity exists to create a public boating facility

Town officials report that the Dutch Island Boat Yard has been placed on the auction block. Bids for the three parcels of property that comprise the boating facility are due by June 4.

The properties are adjacent to town-owned waterfront land that for many years has been leased by the boat yard. The town-owned land extends westward from the foot of Narragansett Avenue and includes the pier where boats are usually stored during the winter. The boat yard has also leased from the town about 100 deep-water moorings in Dutch Harbor.

Town officials report there is much interest in the Dutch Harbor Boat Yard property, including possible development as condominiums.

The auction of the Dutch Island Boat Yard property presents the Town of Jamestown with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a community boating facility — a place that would provide everyone affordable access to the waterfront and to sailing. The town could purchase the Dutch Harbor properties and then evaluate how best to organize a community boating facility.

There are a couple of different ways to create a public boating facility if we utilize both the town-owned land and boat yard property. We could establish a not-for-profit foundation, somewhat similar to the highly successful Sail Newport, which would manage the property and the boating programs.

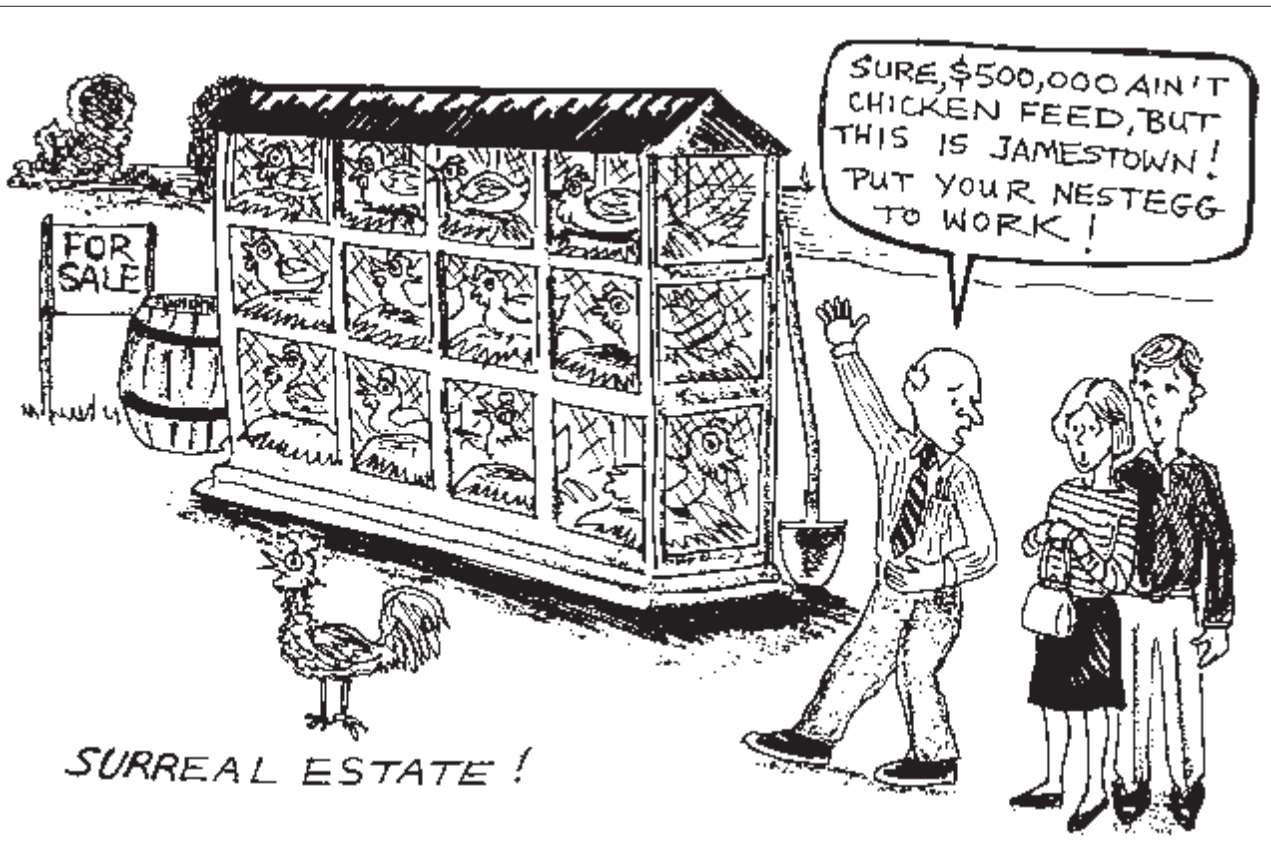
For discussion purposes, let's call the local foundation "Sail Jamestown." The organization would offer the public access to boating through annual memberships. It would offer sailing lessons for kids and adults. It could manage the commercial moorings in Dutch Harbor for seasonal and transient boaters, providing an additional revenue stream for the foundation. The foundation could also provide storage and launching for privately-owned small keelboats. It might also manage a small fleet of sailboats that could be rented by members.

The second option would have the town operate a community boating facility through our Parks & Recreation Department. The rec department could manage the facility with public programs ranging from learn-to-sail to affordable access for bigger boats. Such programs work well elsewhere in New England. One only has to look towards Edgartown to see a mooring field that is managed by the municipal entity.

We are a community of boaters. However, affordable access to the water is becoming a scarce commodity in Jamestown. Getting out on the water is expensive. The Dutch Harbor Boat Yard auction offers an exciting opportunity to establish a public boating facility on one of the best harbors in the state. Affordable boating for families could become more than a dream.

We can save the farms. Now let's save the waterfront — for our own use!

— Jeff McDonough



### Sheep shearing day a success

The entire Watson Farm flock of sheep was shorn this weekend, and we thank everyone for coming out to make the event a huge success. Close to 1,000 people ventured to the farm for what turned out to be a beautiful day. We could not have done it without the help of so many volunteers.

Thank you to Nancy Lush, Gail Chase, Valerie McLaughlin, Lacey Schlachter and the Rhode Island Spinners Guild who helped greet visitors and teach about wool. Thank you to Jenn Kittredge-

## • LETTERS •

Clarke and the grade 7 and 8 Project Based Learning class who created and organized the "Watson Farm Quest" and also to our fifth and sixth grade "Farm Kid" volunteers.

Thanks to Freddy Binglell at House of Pizza for again donating his hotdog cart for the day. And finally, a special thanks to our high school volunteer "Farm Crew," who ran the refreshment stand. They have helped us every Saturday for two months to prepare

the farm for our open season, while learning about agriculture. The proceeds from the refreshments were donated to the Jamestown Teen Center for all of the teens' hard work.

Thank you to everyone else who was on hand to help out wherever we needed. We hope everyone had a great time and we will see you again next year when the wool has all grown back. Historic New England welcomes visitors to the farm from June 1 to

Oct. 15 on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. Come and enjoy a walk around the farm.

The Minto Family  
Watson Farm

### A 'dream team' gets the job done

Congratulations and hooray to Rolling Agenda for positioning the Town of Jamestown to receive a \$250,000 Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant. The grant, passed through the State of Rhode Island, has several goals: promote safe walking and

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## This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

### Week of May 15

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, May 11, 1908

The road scupper is at work on Clinton avenue clearing out the gutters and rounding up the roadbed.

##### From the Newport Daily News, May 14, 1908

Yesterday was the first warm day of the spring, at noon the thermometer registered 80 at several points on the island.

##### From the Newport Daily News, May 18, 1908

Several fishing parties visited the rocks at the Dumpings and Beavertail yesterday.

##### From the Newport Daily News, May 19, 1908

Submarine Octopus is being tried over the measured mile off the east shore of the island today.

Quite a number of the cottagers are expected to arrive next week, and work on grounds and buildings is being rushed to have them in readiness.

#### 75 years ago

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

A meeting was called by the school committee Monday evening, for the purpose of ascertaining the wishes of the parents of pupils in the seventh and eighth grades, in relation to the matter of keeping the ninth grade in Newport Rogers High, or returning it to Jamestown in the Thomas H. Clarke school. There was a large attendance of parents and all members of the school committee were present. ... There were many ideas presented both for and against the proposition, and after calling for a rising vote, by the chairman, a large number voted to retain the ninth grade at Rogers high school.

#### 50 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, May 12, 1958

Jamestown taxpayers, Saturday, adopted a record budget of \$383,921.81 for the next fiscal year in a quiet meeting attended by only five per cent of the 1,148 eligible voters.

Jamestown taxpayers Saturday voted 191-29 in favor of the permanent police bill ratifying the enabling legislation passed by the General Assembly.

##### From the Newport Daily News, May 16, 1958

A bill abolishing the Jamestown Ferry Authority and transferring its duties, powers, rights and functions to the state director of public works passed the House without opposition yesterday, and was sent to the Senate.

Testimony was completed yesterday in the 41-day trial over the construction of the proposed \$55,000,000 refinery in Jamestown. The case, said to be the longest in more than 20 years in the U.S. District Court in Providence, was heard by Federal Judge Edward W. Day. Refinery opponents took 19 days to present their testimony. The Commerce Oil Corp. took 22 days to present its side. Each will present oral arguments May 26 to Judge Day, who heard the case without jury.

The new ferry Jamestown, largest craft ever on the Newport-Jamestown run, made its first trip from Jamestown to Newport at 3 o'clock this afternoon without ceremony or fanfare ... The Jamestown carries 58 cars and 500 passengers. The Governor Carr, which it replaces on the run, can accommodate 32 cars and 300 passengers.

#### 25 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, May 17, 1983

The Watson Pond South Reservoir is deteriorating and millions of gallons of fresh water are lost each year, the Town Council was told Monday night. Town Engineer Richard Zimmerman said the daily water loss from the reservoir ranges from 700,000 gallons to almost three million gallons because inadequate storage capacity at the pond causes overflow.

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