

# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •

### Got E-Z Pass questions? Go to the public hearing

There has been much confusion and misinformation about the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority's proposal to convert the Pell Bridge toll system to E-Z Pass.

RITBA will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, Sept. 16, at 7 p.m. at the Goat Island Hyatt Regency in Newport.

RITBA Chairman David Darlington this week said the E-Z Pass plan must be approved by the board of the directors who will meet on Sept. 24.

Here's the proposal as I understand it, as outlined for me this week by Darlington:

- There is no rate increase for local users. The E-Z Pass rate will be based on the current local bulk token rate achieved when you purchase 60 tokens for \$50 (about 83 cents per token).

- Local users will need to purchase E-Z Pass transponders. The transponders will cost RITBA \$20.93 each. RITBA will add \$5 for handling, so the consumer cost will be \$26.93 each. You will need one per vehicle.

- Cash customers will still pay the same rate of \$2 per axle.

- Future bridge maintenance expenses will be addressed at a later date. Any proposed rate increase on the Pell Bridge toll, or putting a toll on the Mt. Hope Bridge, will be taken up by the RITBA board this fall.

If you've got questions, go to the public hearing. I believe the E-Z Pass proposal makes sense. The E-Z Pass system is used throughout New England on toll roads and bridges. It's time we put the system to work here on the Pell Bridge.

— Jeff McDonough

### Blogging from Ghana at JamestownPress.com

This Saturday, my wife Kim and I will begin a journey to Africa where we will meet a young man who has been a pen pal with our daughter for several years.

We are heading to Ghana, an emerging third world country found in West Africa near the equator. Ghana is tropical — hot and humid. They say the heat takes your breath away when you first arrive. Ghana has rain forests and hundreds of miles of beautiful coastal scenery. The country is home to elephants and hippos, hartebeests and the endangered bongo.

Malaria and Yellow Fever are rampant.

Ghana was once a British protectorate. The British were preceded by the Dutch and the Portuguese. Ghana played a major role in the Gold Coast slave trade. We plan to visit one of the restored European castles that was used as a traders' fort from which slaves were shipped to the U.S.

Ghana gained its independence in March 1957, one month before I was born. Today, Ghana is considered one of the few politically stable countries in the region.

On Saturday we fly from here to Amsterdam and then on to Accra, the capital of Ghana. The trip will take nearly 24 hours. From Accra we will head west, along the coast to a city named Cape Coast. Then we will go inland to Tarkwa. The teenager we plan to visit lives in Aboso, a small village near Tarkwa.

We are taking along a duffle bag loaded with gifts and supplies for the local school. One of the school's teachers called us over the weekend and said the entire village was excited in anticipation of our visit.

It should be an interesting journey, to say the least.

Kim and I decided to visit Ghana to determine how we could help this 17-year-old earn a college education. He's poor, but an eager and adept student. His mother and grandfather died last year. He's never known his father. We would also like to see what we can do to help others who live in his village.

Technology is a wonderful thing. The Internet has reached Ghana and many of its residents have cell phones even though they live in stark poverty by our standards. I am taking along my laptop and my camera. I plan to write about our travels and the people we meet. I will blog on our newspaper Web site whenever I can find an Internet connection.

You can read about our trip as it happens online at JamestownPress.com.

— Jeff McDonough



### Compassion all that's needed

I understand why Derek Carlino, president of the police union, wants to defend his fellow officers as I have been involved with unions for 24 years.

I couldn't have asked for a better officer to have written a rebuttal to my letter. Over the past month many have spoken to me about my experience, and his name has brought negative and derogatory comments for the way he handles situations and his attitude. I do not know Derek Carlino. I've never had trouble with the police here, or anywhere else for that matter.

## • LETTERS •

### Elections letters policy

The Jamestown Press has a long-standing policy of not publishing letters concerning obvious campaigns. During this election season, the Press will not print letters supporting or opposing local or national candidates who are running for public offices.

I have trained a few police department dive teams for diving and let me state that I have the utmost respect for the police. Being a police officer is a hard and often thankless job, but it should not have to be this way in Jamestown.

If you take the time to listen to the tapes of Aug. 8

as Derek Carlino suggested, when the tragedy with my dog occurred, you will hear some important things: unprofessional demeanor unpleasant attitude, and incorrect information given by the dispatcher and officer. I stand by this.

This whole incident could

have been handled with common sense, compassion and a good attitude. According to Lt. Bill Donovan, they don't teach these attributes in the academy. All I needed to hear were the magic words, "How can I help you?" They were never said. Furthermore, no one from the department, the chief or any other officers, called to console me or to respond to my resentment toward this issue. It was 22 days later that my friend, Lt. Bill Donovan called me upon his return from vacation. I thank him for that call and the meeting we had; it has helped me a lot.

See "Letters" on page 10



## This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

### Week of September 11

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, September 8, 1908

The cast that gave a play at the Carr Homestead on the evening of August 8 have presented to the Jamestown Free Library a large quartered oak desk, well equipped with roomy drawers. This will prove very useful as the librarian has been cramped for space heretofore.

Yesterday was one of the liveliest Labor days ever seen on the island. Numerous parties were entertained by relatives and friends, while other parties from Newport and vicinity visited Beavertail to fish and the swamps to gather wild grapes.

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

A large number of fishing and graping parties were on the island yesterday.

#### 75 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, September 8, 1933

The excellence of the train service at Kingston was voiced by the many members of the summer colony (at the Board of Trade meeting), and plans were made to bring bus service to Saunderson from Kingston during the summer of 1934. ... Early boat service on the west bay for the accommodation of motorists leaving Jamestown was discussed.

##### From the Newport Daily News, September 9, 1933

A pre-school immunization clinic for the prevention of diphtheria will be held Monday, October 2, at 2:15 in the kindergarten room of the Carr school. A

banner is to be awarded to the town in the state having 100 per cent of its children treated.

##### From the Newport Daily News, September 13, 1933

The Beavertail Golf and Country Club has issued invitations to the officers on the Norfolk and Wyoming to play golf and tennis during their stay in the harbor.

##### From the Newport Daily News, September 14, 1933

Enrollments in the schools of Jamestown total 281, with 109 pupils attending Rogers High in Newport.

... Registration by grade is as follows: Kindergarten 27; first grade 40; second grade 27; third grade 32; fourth grade 33; making a total in the Carr school of 159; fifth grade 42; sixth grade 28, seventh grade 26; eighth grade 26; making a total of 122 in the Clarke school.

#### 50 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, September 9, 1958

The Jamestown Town Council last night accepted the estimate of \$775 from the Spaulding Moss Co. of Boston for preparing and printing 1,500 tax books to be made available to the public.

The Clemshaw firm submitted a bill for \$3,562, final installment on the \$11,000 cost of the revaluation except for the 10 per cent retained by the town until the work is completed.

The Council will ask commanding officers at Fort Wetherill and Beavertail to allow spectators on the reservations to view the boats on their way out and back from the America's Cup races.

The Industrial National Bank's Jamestown branch was given permission to erect a 24 by 30 inch hanging sign at the corner of Green Lane and Narragansett Avenue, in colonial pattern.

##### From the Newport Daily News, September 10, 1958

A new high of 386 pupils in opening day elementary school enrollment in Jamestown was reported to the Jamestown School Committee last night. Supt. Anthony J. Miller said this compares to 380 on opening day last year. In addition, 107 Jamestown pupils are enrolled in

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