

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

Giving thanks on Thursday

We observe Thanksgiving tomorrow. It is a traditional family holiday, a celebratory gathering punctuated by a major feast. There's the famous Thanksgiving Day parade and, of course, lots and lots of football.

The first Thanksgiving was observed in 1621. Just a few miles up the road from Conanicut Island, a ragtag band of Pilgrims celebrated their survival in a hostile new land. The Pilgrims gathered at an outside feast to give thanks for their first harvest, vegetables that would help see them through the long, cold winter ahead.

One would hope that the Pilgrims also gave thanks for their new-found Native American friends who had taught the Pilgrims how to garden.

Through the following years, Thanksgiving became a rather informal holiday celebrated at different times by the American colonies. President George Washington was the first to declare Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1789.

During the Civil War President Abraham Lincoln named the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving. He was hoping the holiday would help unite the war-torn nation.

There was a bit of controversy in the 1939 when President Franklin Roosevelt made Thanksgiving the third Thursday in November in order to lengthen the Christmas shopping season. In 1941, Congress prevailed and set the holiday as the fourth Thursday, where it has since remained.

Today our Thanksgiving is steeped in tradition, myth and legend. It is a festive time for many. Thanksgiving is the most travelled holiday of the year, a time when far-flung families get together.

We hope your Thanksgiving is filled with joy, laughter and love. May you be surrounded by family and friends. Take a moment to reflect on what you have to be thankful for.

Please remember to help those who are less fortunate.

Happy Thanksgiving!

— Jeff McDonough



Glad pols are 'working for us'

As a relatively new resident to Jamestown, but a 27-year resident of Rhode Island, I was thrilled to read in the Press "that all of the winning candidates are anxious to get to work for the people of Rhode Island." After Jack Welch's comments about Rhode Island about which Gov. Carcieri agreed, I am happy to know that our politicians are planning to do what they have been hired to do. With Rhode Island taking the number one spot as having the worst unemployment rate in the USA and one of the 10 highest taxing states, my question to the incumbents is "What people were you anxious to work for last time you won your political seat?"

Sue Simonsen
Jamestown

• LETTERS •

Benefit raises \$17,000 for 'wishes'

Make-A-Wish Foundation of Rhode Island would like to thank Evelyn and Frank Leddy for hosting a benefit for the chapter at Trattoria Simpatico on Oct. 19. Guests enjoyed food and fun as the famous Kitty Litter made a special appearance and B.B. Hayes auctioned fabulous Rhode Island bachelors and bachelorettes' all for a good cause. The afternoon brought in over \$17,000 to support Rhode Island children living with life-threatening medical conditions, while honoring the memory of a wonderful son, brother and friend, Joseph A. Sindoni.

The Make-A-Wish

Foundation of Rhode Island grants the wishes of children between the ages of 2 and 18 years with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. The foundation's mission reflects the life-changing impact that a Make-A-Wish experience has on children, families, referral sources, donors, sponsors and entire communities. Contributions to the Make-A-Wish Foundation are deductible for federal income tax purposes. For the fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2007, the Rhode Island Chapter's support and revenue totaled over \$1,750,000. Of that amount, 81 percent was used to grant wishes.

The foundation spent 11 percent of its income on fundraising and only 8

percent on management and general costs. Born in 1980, when a group of caring volunteers helped a young boy fulfill his dream of becoming a police officer, Make-A-Wish is the largest wish-granting charity in the world, with 67 chapters in the United States and its territories. With the help of generous donors and more than 25,000 volunteers, Make-A-Wish grants a wish every 41 minutes and has granted more than 170,000 wishes in the U.S. since inception. For more information about the Make-A-Wish Foundation, visit www.wish.org and discover how you can share the power of a wish.

Dianne Thibeault
Chairman, Make-A-Wish
Foundation of Rhode Island

See "Letters" on page 18

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 24, 1908

(At the town council meeting) a reward of \$100 was offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person stealing poultry and notice to that effect posted.

From the Newport Daily News, November 25, 1908

This morning, on the 8:15 trip from here, Steamer Beaver Tail on the run to Newport was delayed by going to the assistance of one of the small torpedo boats used by the government as a ferry to Rose Island.

To allow the crew an opportunity to enjoy their Thanksgiving dinner, the mid-day trips on the ferry will be omitted tomorrow.

From the Newport Daily News, November 27, 1908

Yesterday was one of the quietest Thanksgivings on the island for a number of years, comparatively few either moving about or spending the holiday with others here. The day was very disagreeable, the weather varying from a heavy fog to a light drizzle. There were no services in the churches and no sports, everyone remaining indoors.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 23, 1933

Advocates of a bridge from Jamestown to Saunderson have determined on the site, secured an estimated cost of \$2,400,000, and referred the proposal, in general, to the state advisory committee ... for preliminary study.

From the Newport Daily News, November 24, 1933

At a special meeting of the town council it was voted that the council consider the following projects: A stone wall on the northern boundary of the town cemetery, a stone wall between the town's property and that of Mrs. Jeremiah Allen and the RI Baptist Convention.



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

Week of November 26

From the Daily News, November 27, 1933

The poor of Jamestown are all eligible to participate in the distribution of food at the Public Aid office at the East Ferry. To obtain this it will be necessary to make application for a permit to the pastors of the different churches.

From the Newport Daily News, November 29, 1933

(At a school committee meeting) discussion revealed the fact that high school tuition for the last term amounted to \$2,831.25 and that the total for next year would approach \$2,850, this, because of the new rated of \$135 per year, which goes into effect January 1, and also because of the increased enrollment.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 25, 1958

The Jamestown Town Council last night voted to ask state Sen. Elect John Lyons and Rep.-elect Fred Caswell to introduce legislation in the General Assembly to advance plans for making Jamestown a yachting center.

From the Newport Daily News, November 29, 1958

Arnold-Zweir Post 22, American Legion, will hold a paper drive tomorrow. People are requested to have their bundles tied and on the sidewalk in front of their homes.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, November 29, 1983

The Town Council Monday night denied the renewal of the alcoholic beverage license held by the former operator of the Ferry Boat at East Ferry.

From the Newport Daily News, November 30, 1983

The town will stop using the South Pond Reservoir as the town's main water source because of complaints about discolored water coming into Jamestown's homes.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, November 24, 1993

The Champlin Foundation has awarded Jamestown a \$75,000 grant to be used for the relocation of the town's ambulance garage. ... Town officials for several years have been considering moving the existing ambulance barn on Knowles Court out of the East Ferry area.

State Department of Transportation officials expect a West Coast consulting firm to pick up the cost of repairing two 40-foot hairline cracks in Pier 1 of the new Jamestown Bridge. ... DOT says the cracks occurred in the concrete pier cap because of what T.Y. Lin called a "transposition error" that led to the pier being 6 feet thick at its widest point. DOT maintains it should have been 7 feet thick, as are the other 22 cantilevered piers that support the bridge's deck.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, November 25, 1998

A public hearing on the town's proposed zoning ordinance amendment to split open-space properties into two categories, rezoning certain residential properties to open space in the process, drew a lively crowd of over 100 on Monday evening.

The town may exercise its right to buy five properties from the state that were condemned when Route 138 was turned into a four-lane thruway and turn them into affordable housing.