

Oliver

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well as what would be the same, and what would be different. "Then he took me on a ride that I didn't expect," Cronin said.

From the first page, readers cannot help but smell the salt air and feel freshening ocean breezes as Cronin weaves her story of young Oliver hiding on Captain Eli's classic trading schooner, Surprise. After a fall knocks him unconscious, Oliver wakes up in Jamestown, one week before the devastating hurricane of 1938.

Jamestown residents and visitors will appreciate the references to historical landmarks, many of which still exist. If time travel were possible, this "what if" adventure certainly could have happened.

Cronin comes by her nautical writing skills honestly. She grew up sailing. "I started sailing when I was 10 days old," Cronin said. And she never stopped. She was a member of the elite U.S. Sailing Team from 2001 to 2007. During her time on the team, Cronin won numerous national and international sailing championships that included two races for the U.S.A. at the 2004 Olympics in Athens.

She has since retired from Olympic sailing and now focuses her life on writing for magazines such as Sailing World and Cruising World, as well as Seahorse, a British publication dedicated to offshore sailboat racing.

Cronin's extensive nautical vocabulary lends a comforting sense of authenticity to her work. Readers will feel as if they are in good hands, confident that they can enjoy a safe journey as their knowledgeable captain gives a personally-guided tour of the boats and all things nautical in the language of the sea.

A glossary is available at the back of the book to introduce "landlubbers" to the esoteric terminology used by that close-knit fraternity of sailors who enjoy navigating the



world's lakes, rivers and oceans.

Cronin chose her sister-in-law, Laurie Ann Cronin, to illustrate "Oliver's Surprise." Laurie Ann is a long-time sailor who grew up on the Hudson River sailing a family-owned nineteen-foot Rocket.

Laurie graduated from Syracuse University with a degree in painting. She still sails the Finger Lakes of upstate New York with her husband and son, and occasionally visits the salty waters of Narragansett Bay.

"I always loved her work," Carol said. "I knew she was the right person for the job."

Carol said that working with her sister-in-law was interesting and fun. She said that her intention was to self-publish "Oliver's Surprise" last year because the book was short and didn't lend itself to the mainstream of published fiction. While Carol was editing, Laurie Ann was

finishing the illustrations when she broke her leg.

"You wouldn't think that a broken leg would slow down the drawing, but it did," Carol said. "So I kept editing and polishing as I waited for Laurie to heal and finish her part." During that time, Carol learned of a publisher in Boston who was looking for works of fiction, so she sent her a letter and submitted the work for publication.

"Just last week I thanked Laurie for breaking her leg," Carol said. "If that hadn't happened, I would not have a publisher."

Although the book is listed as young adult fiction, Carol said that she has had positive feedback from people ranging in age from 16 years old to 75 who have read the book. "It's really a story for all ages," Carol said. "I think everyone can relate to it, even if they aren't sailors."

Carol Newman Cronin, 44, was born in Woods Hole, Mass., which she calls her hometown. She moved to Jamestown 13 years ago with her husband Paul and Snaps, their twenty-year-old cat. "Snaps" is short for "Snap Shackle," Cronin pointed out.

The Cronins spend as many hours as possible on Narragansett Bay aboard their 1938 Herreshoff Marlin.

For more information and to read an excerpt from the book, visit Cronin's website at www.livewirepress.com. "Oliver's Surprise" can be purchased at Jamestown Designs, Conanicut Marina Ships Store, and Baker's Pharmacy.



Holiday finery

Suzi Andrews and Joan Vessella, from the Quononoquott Garden Club, plant Christmas greens in the planters along Narragansett Avenue.

Photo by Adrienne Downing

Happenings

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mas Bazaar will be held in the Parish Hall from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Central Baptist Church's annual Christmas Fair will take place from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

- The annual St. Mark Christmas Festival will be held on Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to noon in the Church Hall.

Santa arrives by boat

The star of the day will be the big guy from the North Pole. Santa Claus will make his annual arrival aboard the red lobster boat, the Nancy B, at 1 p.m. on Saturday at East Ferry at Conanicut Marine's ferry dock. Kids may greet Santa as he makes his way to the Conanicut Marine Ship's Store where he will meet individually with youngsters.

Annual tree lighting

Santa's helpers have been busy the past couple of weekends decorating the village Christmas tree at East Ferry. The tree lighting is always the highlight of the day.

Everyone will gather at East Ferry village green at 5:30 p.m. There will be holiday music and caroling, hot chocolate and a bonfire.

After the tree lighting you could enjoy a great dinner at one of the island restaurants.

Sunday, Dec. 7

Polar Express: The Jamestown Chamber of Commerce will host its annual Polar Express on Sunday. Kids and their parents can take a magical trolley ride through Jamestown to see the holiday decorations and listen to a reading from "The Polar Express." Tickets are \$5 per person and are on sale at Baker's Pharmacy. It's rumored that Santa Claus will also make an appearance at the Polar Express.

Lighthouse Open House: The Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association invites everyone to its holiday open house from 1 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 7.

The museum will be decorated for the season and volunteers will be on hand to greet visitors. Learn about the history of lighthouses on Narragansett Bay. Refreshments will be served and the gift shop will be open.



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