

The Chamber is excited about the upcoming Breakfast Series that will begin on Thursday, Jan. 15. In the last few years, these have been popular events with each one focusing on a topic of interest to our Chamber members.

The first topic for 2009 is: "Jamestown Vision: Next Steps", and will feature Mike Swistak, from the Jamestown Planning Commission, and Town Administrator Bruce Keiser as speakers.

The breakfast will be held at the Bay Voyage and will include a full hot breakfast, beginning at 7:15 a.m. The cost is \$15 for Chamber members, and \$20 for non-members. This informative meeting will benefit all residents. Please bring your thoughts and questions with you. RSVP by Monday, Jan. 12, to info@jamestownrichamber.com.

Future Breakfast Series dates are Thursday, Feb 26 and Tuesday, April 7.

This Breakfast Series is underwritten by Peter Brockmann, of Brockmann & Associates, Attorneys at Law.

It is with much pride and excitement that the Chamber of Commerce is announcing the kick-off of its "Buy Jamestown" initiative, headed up by Jack Hubbard and Julie Kallfelz. Buy Jamestown is the Chamber's latest effort to help local service providers and merchants understand what they can do to better meet Jamestown's needs, and to raise the awareness to the importance and advantages of buying from local merchants and



Chamber Chatter

By Vicki de Angeli

utilizing the many service people located here in Jamestown.

This initiative will begin with a fact-gathering questionnaire that will be available in both paper format and online at a new website being set up.

The Chamber is looking for all Jamestown residents and businesses to respond to the survey, as this program will ultimately benefit both sectors. Look for further details in the Thursday, Feb. 5, edition of the Jamestown Press.

The Chamber of Commerce is looking for applicants to fill a couple of board openings, beginning this spring. If you are a Chamber member who would like to become more active in the business community, and would like to serve on the Board of Directors, we welcome your interest. Please contact Peter Brockmann at 401-423-1969.

The Jamestown Chamber of Commerce was very pleased to once again have been part of the Christmas festivities here in Jamestown. The Polar Express Trolley, including the visit to Santa's House, and the Teddy Bear Tea were well attended and everyone had a wonderful time. Many people worked very hard to ensure that everything came

together without a hitch, and the Chamber is appreciative of the wonderful volunteer community here in Jamestown. Thank you all for donating the time and money necessary to make it all happen.

The Chamber receives many inquiries throughout the year for recommendations and referrals.

One of the benefits of Chamber membership is to have your business listed on the Chamber's website. If your business has not already renewed its membership, or would like to apply as a new member, now is the time. If you would like more information, or need an application form, please

go to the Chamber website, www.jamestownrichamber.com.

For further information on Chamber activities, go to the Chamber's website, or contact Donna Olney Kohler, executive director, 423-3650, or info@jamestownrichamber.com.

Coast Guard phases out old analog technology

As the door closes on 2008 and the new year of offers a new start, the Coast Guard is urging mariners and aviators to start the year off right and make the switch to a digital emergency beacon.

Beginning Sunday, Feb. 1, the Coast Guard and other search and rescue personnel will only receive distress alerts broadcast using digital 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons.

Search and rescue satellites will no longer process older model analog EPIRBs that only transmit on 121.5 or 243 MHz.

Because satellites will no longer receive analog transmissions, Rescue Coordination Centers will no longer receive transmissions from 121.5 EPIRBs, said Rick Arsenault, a search and rescue specialist at the First Coast Guard District Command Center in Boston.

The 406 EPIRB's signal is 50 times more powerful than the 121.5 beacon's, allowing satellites to better detect its signal and provide a more accurate search area for rescue crews. "With 121.5 beacons, an initial position uncertainty can result in a 500 square mile search area," Arsenault said. "With a digital beacon, that initial search is reduced to 25 square miles." Furthermore, a GPS-embedded 406 EPIRB can shrink a search area to about 100 yards and can also pinpoint the position of a distressed mariner within minutes.

Additionally, the number of false alerts with digital beacons is significantly lower than analog beacons. Satellites are not capable of distinguishing between beacon and non-beacon sources using analog frequencies, making only about one in five

alerts actually coming from a beacon. Many false alert signals come from ATMs, pizza ovens and stadium scoreboards.

With analog beacons, the only way to determine if an alert is an actual emergency is to send rescue crews to the area, which costs thousands of dollars, takes resources away from actual emergencies and puts the lives of responders at risk needlessly.

EPIRB owners are required by law to provide emergency contact information and a vessel description by registering their beacons with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This lets search and rescue personnel quickly confirm if a distress signal is real, and identify who and what type of boat or aircraft to look for. It also means accidental activation of an EPIRB may be resolved quickly with a phone call to the owner. EPIRB registration needs to be accurate, complete and current, Arsenault said.

When buying a used beacon, the new owner needs to register it with the new information. "Otherwise we may be looking for the wrong boat and contact the wrong person if we receive a distress signal from the EPIRB," said Arsenault.

EPIRB users can register their beacons in the U.S. 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database at www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov or by calling 1-888-212-SAVE. Beacon registrations must also be updated at least every two years or when information such as emergency contact phone numbers and other vital information changes. Registration information is only available to authorized search and rescue personnel.

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