

# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •

### Night lights and cleaning up our island's shoreline

Earth Hour gained global attention this past Saturday evening as people around the world turned off their lights for one hour to "vote for the Earth."

More than 1,000 cities in 80 countries went dark from Hong Kong to Boston. Even the skyscrapers flipped their light switches, leaving only the blinking red aerial navigation lights illuminated at top.

Lights were turned off here in Jamestown and across the bay in Newport.

It was a good thing to see. There was a noticeable difference in the ambient light in the night sky, although cloud cover prevented any star-gazing.

Kudos to our good neighbors at the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority who participated in Earth Hour. The necklace lights on the Claiborne Pell Newport Bridge and the Mount Hope Bridge were shut off from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. The deck lights, also known as street lights, on both bridges remained lighted due to safety reasons, bridge officials said.

This was the second year for Earth Hour and the participation has grown dramatically.

Earth Hour helps to make us aware that we really don't need all those lights on outside at night. We can turn off many lights and save money at our residences and businesses and in our towns and cities. We'll also be helping the planet by reducing the amount of energy consumed and thereby pumping less carbon into our environment.

Then there is the "light pollution." Fewer lights at night will mean that we can see a few more of those beautiful stars and planets in the heavens above.

In the municipal budget discussions now underway, the Jamestown Town Council has considered reducing the number of street lamps lighted in an effort to save money. The town council should also look into replacing the necessary street and exterior building lights with low-energy consumption bulbs.

While we are on the subject of doing good things for our planet, be sure to mark your calendar for the annual Island Shoreline Cleanup, which will be held on Saturday, April 18, to celebrate Earth Day.

Each year islanders turn out to pick up the trash, garbage, debris, flotsam and jetsam that litter the shoreline of Conanicut Island. Bring the kids! It only takes a few hours of your time and the island looks so much better afterwards.

The event is sponsored by the Jamestown Conservation Commission and the Conanicut Island Land Trust. Work begins at 8:30 a.m. and is usually completed around noon when brautwurst and cold drinks are served for the volunteers.

— Jeff McDonough

*A reminder of upcoming deadlines at The Jamestown Press*

#### Friday, April 10

Advertising deadline for the Jamestown Telephone Directory. Changes for telephone listings are also due!

#### Friday, April 17

Advertising deadline for the annual Spring Home, Garden & Boats magazine.

Call the Press at 423-3200

**JAMESTOWN  
PRESS**



WASHINGTON AWAITS RECOGNITION FOR LAYING LARGEST EGG!

### Pet vaccinations this weekend

This Saturday, April 4, the annual Rabies Clinic will be held at the fire station on Narragansett Avenue from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Jamestown pet owners whose pets have not been vaccinated or who are due for a vaccination are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to protect your pet and you against rabies.

Rabies is at epidemic proportions along the East Coast and for the first time in 2008 it has been reported in domestic pets such as dogs and cats. It is a state law that all dogs, cats, and ferrets be vaccinated against this disease.

Dog owners can also purchase a dog license on Saturday at the same time. This event is sponsored by the Rhode Island Veterinary

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Medicine Association, the State of Rhode Island and the Town of Jamestown. So, please, if your pet needs a rabies vaccination come on down to the firehouse this Saturday and take advantage of this opportunity.

As spring is finally here, please consider adopting a new pet into your home. Our local shelters and rescue organizations have many loving dogs and cats who need forever homes. Many of these pets have been surrendered by their owners who cannot afford to keep them. The Humane Society would also like to remind Jamestown residents that we offer a rebate program on spaying and neutering your pets. This is a great time of the year to adopt a new pet!

Members of the Jame-

stown Humane Society will be on hand Saturday to help out at the Rabies Clinic and to answer your questions on adopting new pets. See you there!

**Nancy Crawford,  
president  
Humane Society of  
Jamestown**

### Slavery big issue in Rhode Island

I read with great interest the March 19 Press article about the exhibit at the Jamestown Philomenian Library and comments by Ray Rickman, project director of the traveling exhibit titled, "Hidden from History: Slavery in Rhode Island from its Inception to Its End."

Unfortunately, I was not

able to attend, but indeed it is remarkable how much Jamestown was involved in slavery. Paul Davis's series "Unrighteous Traffik," published in the Providence Journal in 2006, exposed in detail this hidden slave traffic, its high profitability and the unscrupulous Rhode Island ship owners who profited.

My research, tied to one of the reasons why Beavertail Lighthouse was built in 1749, also revealed much about Jamestown's prominence in slavery.

Slaving was big business and only South Carolina surpassed Rhode Island in the practice of buying and selling slaves. Not only was Rhode Island in the forefront of the slave trade, Jamestown had its share of slaves as well. They worked in both households

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## This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

### Week of April 2

*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, April 1, 1909

Mr. Ralph Barker of Newport was in town today overseeing the planting of a large load of trees and shrubbery on his lot on the corner of Bryer and Conanicut avenues.

##### From the Newport Daily News, April 3, 1909

Large quantities of seed potatoes are being received by the local farmers and by present indications a large acreage will be planted.

The Beaver Tail made a special trip between two of her regular trips this morning to take to Newport several loads of loose hay. The steamboat inspection laws do not allow passenger boats to carry this inflammable material. To carry it a permit must be secured and a special trip made and even then no passengers can be allowed on board.

#### 75 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, April 2, 1934

Easter Sunday was observed in all the churches with large congregations attending the morning and

evening services.

Albert Brown of Clinton avenue and James West of Cole street, who have been engaged in C. C. C. Work at Mansfield, Vt., for several months have returned to their homes as had Francis Le Doux, who was at Plymouth C. C. C. camp.

##### From the Newport Daily News, April 3, 1934

The Easter Monday ball, sponsored by the Conanicut Grange, was held in the grange hall Monday evening, with Gage's orchestra of Newport furnishing music for the dance.

#### 50 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, April 1, 1959

The Jamestown Town Council, in a special meeting last night, was told by several sources of steps to keep freight service in operation on the Jamestown ferry.

##### From the Newport Daily News, April 4, 1959

The United States Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston yesterday granted opponents of Commerce Oil Refining Corp.'s proposed refinery at Jamestown an extension of time, to July 31, to file a brief in the refinery's appeal. The Court's action makes it certain that the appeal cannot be heard before its October session.

#### 25 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, April 3, 1984

Swelling support for a limited-access secondary highway between the island's two bridges has forced the committee studying the new connector road to resurrector plans for that option.

Isle residents may see a combined \$25 increase on their water and sewer bills under a proposal suggested

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