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Tuesday racing

Bowmen (top photo) call the starting line as their sailboats line up next to the committee boat at the beginning of a race Tuesday evening on Narragansett Bay. The sailboat racing is part of the Jamestown Yacht Club's summer series. At right, boats jockey for position as they sail down wind with their colorful spinnakers. You can see more pictures online at www.JamestownPress.com. Click on Photo Album.

Photos by Jeff McDonough



Oldest living island veteran shares lifetime of memories

By Adrienne Downing

Jim West's favorite time in the U.S. Army was the 13 days he spent with the U.S. Navy.

West, Jamestown's oldest living veteran, spent 34 months in the Army during World War II in places like New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan, but it was the trip home from Japan aboard the aircraft carrier USS Intrepid, after the war was over, that was his most memorable.

West was born in Jamestown in 1915 and lived on Old North Road, Narragansett Avenue and Cole Street before settling in his house on Greene Lane in 1940.

"Things were a lot different back then," West said. "We walked everywhere. There were very few cars on the island."

He did not attend kindergarten, but started first grade at the Carr School in 1921. "In 1925, I went to the Clarke School, which is where the library is now. We didn't take a bus, we walked from Cole Street even in the winter in the snow. And, we didn't miss very many days either," he said.

After completing the Clarke School, West rode the ferry to Newport, where he attended Rogers High School for two years. "My dad was a machinist who worked at the torpedo station. After two years at the high school, he told me he had supported me long enough, so I joined the CCCs," he said.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was a public work relief program started during President Franklin Roosevelt's administration. It focused on natural resource conservation, and in the fall of 1933, the program took West to Vermont.

"In March of 1934, I returned to Jamestown to caddy at the golf course on Beavertail for the summer," he said. When the course closed in the fall, he reunited with the CCC in Plymouth, Vermont.

"Cheese, trees and ocean breeze"

About a year later, West climbed aboard a Pullman train car and traveled through 32 states to Tillamook, Ore. "We called it the land of cheese, trees and ocean breeze," he said. "We built log cabins for the hunters, made roads and saw trees like I had never seen before. There were Douglas Fir trees that were 12 feet in diameter and 400-foot tall."

Let the sun shine! Island businesses hope blue skies will dominate

By Jeff McDonough

Island business owners say they feel like they've received a double dose of hard times.

First, the economy tanks with a deep recession. Then, when summer arrives — a season that many island businesses rely heavily on to survive — endless days of rain

dominate the local weather.

But blue skies are ahead and most merchants remain optimistic.

David Urban of the Secret Garden said much of May and June were a wash for his florist and garden center business on Southwest Avenue. "We hardly had any sun

and had lots and lots of rain. Our plants took a real beating," Urban said. "The rain definitely affected business. The plants looked awful and we had to throw many of them away."

Urban said spring garden sales are important to his business. He added that the recent round of

blue skies has improved his economic outlook. "We are okay going into July," he added. "Keep the sun shining."

Ilesh Patel of Jamestown Wine & Spirits, also located on Southwest Avenue, agreed that the rain

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Harbor Commission moves 'step closer' to Ft. Getty boat ramp repairs

By Erin Tiernan

Harbor Management Commission members will take a close look at the harbormaster and harbor clerk positions during the next month, analyze the harbor office operations and report on the efficiency of these job functions to the Town Council by September.

Commissioner Richard Anderson tied the council's concerns about the efficiency of the harbor

operation to upcoming elections that will affect several current Town Council members.

"This is not a process that I'm in favor of rushing just to satisfy perhaps one politician who might drop off the Town Council," Anderson said during the July 8 Harbor Commission meeting. "If we're going to do this right, this is something that could take from now until next February."

Andrew Kallfelz, vice chair of the Harbor Commission, agreed.

"We need a heck of a lot more data to have a grounded discussion," he said, and added that a complete review of procedure would only be possible after commissioners have an opportunity to fully review duties of the harbormaster and clerk. The commission needs to assess what activities are currently being outsourced to see

if they can be internalized and compare Jamestown's harbor operation with staffing models from surrounding communities, he said.

According to Town Council President Julio DiGiando, most of the council's concerns are budgetary.

"My perception is that there is an urge by some (council mem-

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