

Dateline NBC to air tragic story of Swain, Tyre on Friday

By Eileen M. Daly

Jamestown will find itself in the national spotlight tomorrow evening when the television show Dateline NBC airs an episode focusing on the 1999 drowning death of Shelley Tyre and the subsequent murder conviction of her husband, David Swain.

Dateline NBC producer Sarah Karlson described the segment, titled "Diver," as a straightforward account of the events leading up to Tyre's 1999 death, and the civil and criminal trials of Swain that followed.

"We are not taking any one side or presenting any one per-

son," Karlson said.

According to Karlson, the episode will simply recount the events that led up to the civic and criminal trials, and will include the material that was brought out during the trials. Karlson said the episode strives to give viewers, including those who did not know Shelley Tyre and David Swain, an understanding of the couple through character portraits derived from numerous interviews with people from various parts of the couple's lives.

"We interviewed many different people who spoke both on and off the record," Karlson



David Swain

said. She declined to name any of those interviewed, saying she was unsure of who would actually be included in the final version of the show, and added that said she did not want to mislead anyone into thinking they would be included if they were not.

According to Karlson, Dateline NBC started to follow the case when it first began to surface in a variety of news outlets.

"We have teams that are constantly following the news in

each local area," she said. Once a story is identified as a potential Dateline NBC episode, all available materials are researched and read. Source materials include LexisNexis, a widely used archive of print materials, as well as newspapers, magazines, Web sources and blogs, Karlson said.

What follows is a "conversation with senior staff members," she said. Once that process is complete and an okay to proceed is given, "we start from scratch and interview everyone we can in order to get the most broad-based viewpoint possible," Karlson said. "In this case, we've had a long time, two years, to gather all of the different perspectives and interview everyone willing to talk with us."

The Tyre and Swain story is one that many people find fascinating and interest in the story picked up following the civil trial of Swain and his subsequent arrest on criminal charges, Karlson said. The Dateline episode will cover both the civil trial and

criminal trials, she said.

"We attended both trials," Karlson said. "We were in Tortola for the criminal trial. The two trials were really very different things. It was fascinating to see the differences in the British and the American justice systems."

Karlson said that her interviews here on the island revealed not only a number of different perspectives, but also the realization that this is still a difficult subject for many of the people who knew the couple best – and that opinions remain both polarized and powerful.

Since many people continue to have strong opinions – both positive and negative – Karlson said it is clear that the subject can still become a dividing line. She explained that her intent was "not to ruffle feathers," or to hurt anyone in a small town that is clearly "still torn up" from these events. Rather, she said, Dateline NBC is hoping to present a perspective that will let viewers reach their own conclusions about the case.

The show will air tomorrow, Friday, Dec. 18, at 9 p.m. on NBC.

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High school students to host benefit concert

North Kingstown High School students will host a benefit coffeehouse concert tomorrow, Friday, Dec. 18, at 6 p.m. at the community center on Beach Street in North Kingstown.

Proceeds will benefit the Invisible Children organization, which raises money and awareness for child soldiers in war-torn regions of northern Uganda.

Performing at the Dec. 18 coffeehouse will be Conor Fagan's funk band and two soloist NKHS alumni, Mike Simonelli and Andrew Young, both on guitar.

A \$7 admission fee covers entry, the concert, food and coffee.

Call Laura Young at 932-8130 for more information.

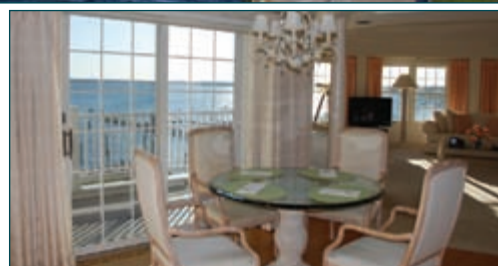
Blood drive to be held Jan. 24 at PAC club

The American Legion and the R.I. Blood Center will sponsor a blood drive from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 24, at the Portuguese American Citizens Club.

Visit www.ribc.org for more information.

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