The Green Light ~ Summer 2000 ~ Page 2

The Point Association is a group of neighbors working together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood by getting to know each other • preserving our historic heritage • maintaining the Point’s residential character • beautifying our parks, streets and piers • promoting public policies that strengthen all of Newport’s neighborhoods.

OFFICERS

Suzanne Varisco, President
(841-5220)

Richard Carrubba, 1st Vice Pres.
(847-5815)

Kay O’Brien, 2nd Vice Pres.
(847-7311)

Loretta Goldrick, Corr. Sec’y
(849-9425)

Carole Clark, Recording Sec’y
(849-5245)

Hillard Sarepera, Treasurer
(848-9906)

COMMITTEES

Beautification
Coles & Marcia Mallory (849-5659)

City Liaison
John Spohn (849-2155)

Green Light
Betty Cares (847-2752)

History & Archives
Nancy Espersen (846-2907)

Membership
Judy Leet (841-5382)

Nominating
Dave Pedrick (846-6228)

Publicity/Communications/Web
Betty Cares (847-2752)

Underground Wires
Al Lowe (847-5853)

Board meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members. If you have a concern you would like the board to address, please call Suzanne for time, date and location of the meeting.
The President’s Letter

Dear Neighbors Near and Far,

The old doggerel, “Spring has sprung . . . ,” keeps coming to mind these days, completely unbidden. Contrary to the lines of this silly verse, however, no grass is rising between the bricks of my tiny yard. Nor do I need to wonder for a moment “where the flowers is.” For these colorful beauties are popping into view all along my back fence and in other lawns and gardens throughout the Point and beyond. What a wonderful time of year!

In addition to their visual beauty, these red tulips, yellow jonquils, and purple lilacs, nodding enthusiastically on their leafy green stems, serve as a fitting metaphor for me, these days, for the vibrant spirit of community life in our neighborhood. For, among the many surprises that your Point Association presidency has brought me this year is the continuing involvement and commitment to our way of life that is expressed through your letters and phone calls. As I attempt to respond, one by one, to your concerns and interests, together with the other officers and the committee chairs that comprise your Executive Committee, I am continually energized, feeling truly privileged to be a part of this thriving, multi-faceted tradition.

One welcome annual tradition of your Point Association, Spring Clean Up in the Park, benefited this year from the energetic participation of several newcomers to our neighborhood. Three young men shouldered their borrowed rakes and headed out from their new home on Katzman Place to join a busy Saturday morning’s clean up in Storer Park. Because this new family enriches the diversity of which the Point is justifiably proud, I know that many of you were pleased to greet them in a more formal way at their Open House just a few days later.

Indeed, whether the occasion is an open house, an anniversary, a birthday, or a graduation, neighbors on the Point, like neighbors everywhere, enjoy the tradition of getting together. We gather in our homes to toast the successes of past efforts, to exchange congratulations over joyous events, and to join forces in preparation for a future full of challenges. We also gather at St. John’s Guild Hall and at City Hall to learn of building projects on our borders and to support worthy ventures in our midst.

This year, as we move toward a summer of Tall Ships, Jazz Concerts, and Picnics beside the Bay, let’s pause for a moment to enjoy the results of our accomplishments, as well as a sense of pride in the doing. And because the doing is possible only when we work together, let’s also remember to say thank you to one another. And so I do. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne
Paint the Point
July 15 - August 19

For six consecutive Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m., you are invited to participate in the first annual Point Association summer painting and drawing program. Regardless of what you may think your talents are, here's an opportunity to find out why so many painters at the turn of the century favored the Point as an inspiration for their art.

Beginners and young adults (12 and up) are especially welcome. You can choose any medium: oil, watercolor, colored pencils, pastels, whatever. Each session will be devoted to one particular setting within the boundaries of the Point (location suggestions are welcome).

The cost for six sessions will be $60. Senior citizens, students, and any other financially challenged individuals are $15. All proceeds will go directly to the Point Association.

After the last session, an art exhibition and sale will be held at St. John's Guild Hall (the date for this to be confirmed). Each artist will donate 25% of all sales to the Point Association and may pocket the balance.

If you're like me, you've probably been saying to yourself over the years, "one of these days I'm going to get out my paints..." Well, here's your chance. Imagine the fruits of your Saturday morning labors hanging in your home, giving you a tremendous sense of pride and achievement. I can promise you, you won't be disappointed with the results.

For more information, registration, help in selecting materials, questions, reassurance you can do it, call Tony Gill at 847-2189.

Space is limited, so don't delay. Surprise yourself, delight your friends and above all, have fun!

Tony Gill

Tony Gill studied at the Royal West of England Academy of Art and is an international-award winning creative director. He has been a guest artist at the Spring Bull Gallery, is currently showing at Sheldon Art and has a triptych of the Point in the juried show at the Newport Art Museum. His work is in private collections in Asia, Europe, New York and now Newport.

Secret Garden Tour
June 23 - 25

For sixteen years, the Benefactors of the Arts has provided garden lovers everywhere with the unique opportunity to tour the spectacular Secret Gardens of the Point. All profits from the tours, which are coordinated and maintained by a dedicated group of volunteers, go to further Arts Education in Aquidneck Island schools.

This year's tour is June 23 through June 25. The price of the walking tour is $20, which includes a complimentary copy of Secret Gardens of the Historic Section of Newport. In addition to visiting the private gardens, visitors can also attend a Garden Bazaar and receive a discounted admission to the historic Hunter House and its Colonial garden. Please call 847-0514 or visit www.secretgardentour.com for tickets or more information.

St. John's Summer Fair
Saturday July 29
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Washington and Willow streets

White elephants, food, silent auction, crafts and more

Free admission ~ Rain or Shine!

Call 848-2561 for more information.
Get out your calendars -
You won’t want to miss these Point Association events!

Point Picnic
Thursday, June 29
6 p.m.
88 Washington Street

Start off your Tall Ships weekend with
a sunset picnic overlooking the harbor.
Anne Reynolds has once again generously
offered her beautiful yard for our summer picnic.
Pack a picnic supper and join your friends
and neighbors for this annual event.

Membership Cocktail Party
Thursday, August 24
6 – 8 p.m.
Villa Marina
72 Washington Street

Gather on the porch of this beautiful waterfront
home and enjoy the view as you welcome new
members and catch up with old friends.

Members are asked to bring an appetizer to share.

Tall Ships Newport
Salute 2000

From June 29 through the afternoon of July 2 our
harbor will once again be filled with beautiful tall ships.
And where best to see them? From the Point, of course!

A parade of lighted yachts around the inner harbor
Thursday night starts the celebration, which culminates
with the Parade of Sail Sunday afternoon. In between,
there will be a picnic and fireworks at the Naval
Station, ball games at Fort Adams and Easton's Beach,
opportunities to visit the ships and many more activities
for crews, cadets and local participants. For more
information, call 847-8206.

Meet the Cadets

Point Association members are needed to be
hospitality helpers during the Tall Ships weekend. Sign
on today and take part in this chance to socialize with
young men and women from around the world. There
are several events planned at Fort Adams, Easton's
Beach and the Newport Yachting Center that need
volunteers to act as local hosts. Folks with foreign
language skills are especially needed to help make the
cadets feel at home during their visit in Newport. Please
contact Beth or Mike Cullen (848-2945) or email
bethcullen@home.com to learn more about this fun
chance to mix and mingle with the Tall Ship crews.
Another Successful Plant Sale

It is said that gardeners don't mind the rain. This was true for this year's Plant Sale. In spite of cool and rainy weather, people came and found that perfect plant for their garden. Working the day of the sale were (l. to r.) Betty Cares, David Aguiar, Judy Leet, Christine Montanaro, Martha Marie Grogan, Melanie Aguiar, Anne Reynolds (seated), Sally Mackay, Susie Powers (chair), Ilse Nesbitt, Anita McAndrews (hostess), Kay O'Brien and Nancy Espersen (your photographer).

Clean Up

Predicted rains went elsewhere as Point residents and park enthusiasts gathered for our annual clean up on Saturday, April 29. Everyone worked diligently, as weeds and a pile of mulch disappeared, as did coffee, soda, bagels and donuts donated by kind neighbors. It was great to greet old and new friends as we raked, heaved and hauled. Enjoy the park this summer, but remember to pick up trash, pull weeds and - if needed - remind dog owners of their responsibility. Many thanks to all workers, especially Ellen and Glenn Secrest for organizing the day.

Pot Luck Supper

The Pot Luck Supper came off without a hitch on Sunday, March 5. Over 100 Point Association members brought incredible dishes from salads to sweets. As always, Point community spirit is alive and well when so many neighbors come together to share a meal. Donna Maytum deserves all our thanks for pulling together this large gathering and making it such a success.
A Warm Welcome to Our New Members

Virginia Bottomley
Todd and Sarah Clark
Todd Grant
Michael Ring
Joanna Salvo
Christine Smith
John Spohn

The Point Association Executive Committee continues to grow and change, as do its individual members. President Suzanne Varisco nominated First Vice President Richard Carrubba to represent the Point on the Mayor’s newly formed Taxation Committee. In addition, Underground Wire Committee Chair Al Lowe has been asked to represent our neighborhood on the Gateway Center Committee. Four Executive Committee slots have also undergone transition. Former President Coles Mallory has offered to assume the responsibilities of our Beautification Committee, together with his wife, Marcia. Carole Clark is assuming the duties of Recording Secretary, which will enable Betty Cares to take on a new role of establishing our presence on the Web and communicating with our membership via print and email. Finally, a new vacancy now exists, as Martha Marie Grogan has resigned from her posts of Program Chair and Neighborhood Watchperson. Congratulations and heartfelt appreciation are in order for these individuals, as well as all members of our leadership, whose continuing efforts in support of a strong neighborhood constitute our Association’s lifeblood.

Association Updates

The Point Association Executive Committee continues to grow and change, as do its individual members. President Suzanne Varisco nominated First Vice President Richard Carrubba to represent the Point on the Mayor’s newly formed Taxation Committee. In addition, Underground Wire Committee Chair Al Lowe has been asked to represent our neighborhood on the Gateway Center Committee. Four Executive Committee slots have also undergone transition. Former President Coles Mallory has offered to assume the responsibilities of our Beautification Committee, together with his wife, Marcia. Carole Clark is assuming the duties of Recording Secretary, which will enable Betty Cares to take on a new role of establishing our presence on the Web and communicating with our membership via print and email. Finally, a new vacancy now exists, as Martha Marie Grogan has resigned from her posts of Program Chair and Neighborhood Watchperson. Congratulations and heartfelt appreciation are in order for these individuals, as well as all members of our leadership, whose continuing efforts in support of a strong neighborhood constitute our Association’s lifeblood.

Antiques “Rhode” Show at St. John’s Guild Hall

Following the Spring membership meeting in April, the Point Association held its own version of The Antiques Road Show. Mike Westman, a noted Newport appraiser, assessed almost 100 items, including artwork, jewelry, toys and many other family treasures. This afternoon of discovery was coordinated by the History and Archives Committee. It was so much fun, perhaps we will do it again!
Update from the City Liaison

Greetings, Neighbors. The Point Association has asked me to assume the role of City Liaison. I didn't know what that meant at first, but it seems to be about keeping an eye on matters involving city government and life on the Point, and doing a bit of facilitation when necessary. Since this is the first report, there are several items to mention:

Second Street Road Works
We've been hearing of the impending repavement of Second Street for some time; and it is finally upon us, witness the preparatory work updating water, sewer, and gas services to homes and installing new fire hydrants. Greg StrakaLuse, the new city traffic engineer, attended our recent town meeting to provide further information and answer questions about the major work, which should commence after the Tall Ships' departure. The extensive repavement will involve removal of all existing pavement and lowering the numerous manhole covers and valve boxes, so the new street will contain run off and drain properly. If you have any specific questions, contact me or any other executive committee member.

Driftway Conditions and Improvements
Some efforts are underway to work cooperatively with the city toward improvement of the driftways in the Point. Elm Street is in pretty good shape, but the naturally harsh environment of the shoreline has taken its toll on the others. The principal thrust is to address matters of safety first and then improvements, working with the City Utilities and Recreation departments.

Inn on Long Wharf Proposal
Eastern Resorts' plan to expand and remodel the Inn on Long Wharf has been the subject of several recent meetings attended on your behalf by Point Association representatives. The Maritime Preservation Alliance (MPA) invited representatives from Friends of the Waterfront (FOW) to a meeting in the Newport Yacht Club to explore the positions each would take on the project's impact on waterfront access and traditional maritime uses of the small adjacent lot now owned by Eastern Resorts (ER). A subsequent meeting for public input, jointly sponsored by the Point Association and FOW, was held at a recent City Council workshop. Perry Harris of Eastern Resorts and John Grosvenor of Newport Collaborative Architects presented ER's tentative, conceptual plans, which include a public walkway on the harborside perimeter of the properties. They also asked for public input on the configuration and possible uses of the ground floor, such as a restaurant or shops.

The MPA indicated opposition to the plan, since the small lot is in the Traditional Maritime Zone. The TMZ was created in the wake of the upheavals at the shipyard on Washington Street and is intended to maintain the few properties in "traditional maritime use" as such. This would be the first challenge to that zoning. FOW seemed to be neither actively supporting nor opposing the plan, as it has access provisions but impacts traditional maritime uses. The Point Association has remained neutral, so far, and will continue to monitor the issue as it 'gels'.

Left Turn Restriction on America's Cup Avenue
When the Traffic Calming Committee requested a left turn restriction from northbound America's Cup Avenue onto Elm and Poplar streets, they asked that it apply only on weekday mornings to address northbound cut-through commuter traffic. Concerns have been expressed that the signs make the limited nature of the restriction unclear, and dissuade patrons of Point businesses and St. John's parishioners from using the most direct route to their destination. Mr. StrakaLuse has been approached and has agreed to review the signage to address these concerns.

John Spohn
Church Celebrates Its 200th Anniversary

The site of many Point Association gatherings and the Holly Tea, St. Paul’s Methodist Church on Marlborough Street is celebrating its founding 200 years ago. St. Paul’s can claim to be the first Methodist church in the country to have a steeple, bell and pews. Its long history will be available soon in a commemorative 20-page book with color pictures.

When you are walking on Marlborough Street, remember it was one of the first two city streets, laid out in 1654. Neighbors of the Church are the White Horse Tavern (1673) and the original jailhouse (1772).

St Paul’s welcomes you to visit their church, office or special events and enjoy a part of history.

Historic Preservation Awards

Recently, the Newport Historical Society presented its annual Historic Preservation Awards, two of which had Point connections.

One was the historic Dennis House, believed to have been built by Richard Munday and recently restored (see the Green Light, Winter 1998-99).

The other Point recipient was Martha Marie Grogan for her leadership of the Broadway Improvement Plan, which has so far restored 23 storefronts. The whole revitalization of Broadway has been called "one of the most exciting preservation projects in New England in the last 10 years."

Congratulations to all!

The New Yankee Workshop Comes to the Point

Norm Abram, everybody’s favorite This Old House master carpenter, brought his New Yankee Workshop to the Point last summer. He sat on this porch swing at the Sanford Covell Villa Marina on Washington Street and later recreated the swing in his workshop. WGBH showed the segment only twice last season but we are hoping for more repeats! Be sure to look for the swing while at the Membership Cocktail Party in August.
Our House . . .

The Sherman Clark House
67 Bridge Street
Built 1749

By Al and Patti Lowe

It's "the blue house at the corner of Second and Bridge."

It's "the one with the brick arches in the garden."

It's "the house across the street from the Rhumb Line."
There are a lot of different ways to describe our house at 67 Bridge Street, which is probably appropriate since it's been a lot of different things to a lot of different people over the last 250 years. In fact, it wasn't even originally built here. It was constructed at 279 Thames Street opposite the current post office where, before the Revolutionary War, it was owned by Sherman Clark. The house, however, stood on land owned by Thomas Banister. It turns out this was somewhat unfortunate for Sherman Clark, because Mr. Banister was a British sympathizer. Under the act confiscating Tory property, the building was taken in 1784 by the General Treasurer of City Property, Joseph Clarke, as part of the land owned by Mr. Banister and sold to Aaron Sheffield. Later, the house was bought by Benjamin Mumford, who was a supporter of James Madison and, not coincidentally, appointed postmaster of Newport in 1813. Mumford moved the post office into this building, using the front half for public business and the rest as his residence. In 1887, the house was bought by Simeon Davis who converted what is now the west side into a storefront and operated it as The Davis Bakery. Later, this same storefront became Eula's Dressmaking Shop and, reportedly, a few other businesses as well. Probably the most interesting commercial use of the house, however, came in the late 1960s, when it was a boarding house and reputedly occupied by a bookie who kept his receipts in his room on the second floor.

This brings us to the early 1970s, when the house was about to be demolished to make way for the creation of America's Cup Avenue. Appreciating the house's history, Nathaniel Norris bought the house with the intention of moving it to its present location. Shortly before the house was to be moved, though, it was set ablaze by a young man in the employ of the aforementioned bookie. The bookie was spending his time in the ACI and seems to have felt there might be evidence in the house which could have prejudiced a jury against him. At any rate, he apparently decided a fire was the ideal way to get rid of any unwanted slips of paper. Interestingly, the young man who started the fire was apprehended but never convicted for reasons which remain unclear.

At any rate, the blaze was extinguished, the building was saved, and in February 1973 the house was moved from Thames Street to 67 Bridge. Restoration of the house was then undertaken and most of the house is still original, including the bull's-eye glass in the transom over the front door, the door itself, the wide-plank floors, the fireplaces and the posts and beams – some of which still show evidence of the bookie's blaze. In addition to the house, Mr. Norris also did a lot of landscaping, including an herb garden at the corner of Second and Bridge, the brick walls of which were originally the foundation of a small, neighboring house. In the early 1990s, the house was bought and further updated by Roger and Katherine Kirby, who converted the unfinished attic into a full third floor, in addition to revamping the garden.

For the past three years, we've lived here. It is, however, rather difficult to say that we alone possess this house. After all, so many people have lived and worked here – from a Tory and a bookie to a postmaster and a doughnut maker – that we often feel more like caretakers of something precious, important, and ever-evolving. Of course, we've added our own touches and do our best to preserve the property and keep it in fine shape. And we have certainly made it our home. But the simple fact is that this house will be here long, long after we're gone.

And that, in the final analysis, is its true beauty.
Learning of Janet Brownell's death, April 30, 2000, rekindled fond memories of Janet and Ned Brownell's contributions to the renewal and restoration of the Point neighborhood.

It was Janet who phoned my husband, George, and me asking if we would offer an opinion regarding an idea of Janet's. Janet's idea is now known as The Point Association.

Since we had been Point residents for some time and Newport natives, the Brownells felt that we would know if a neighborhood organization would appeal to Point residents. We quickly agreed to host a small group of residents. Subsequent meetings adopted by-laws, established $1.00 annual dues, set goals and policies, and in 1954 the Point Association of Newport (PAN) was founded. The eight founding members were Janet and Ned Brownell, Joseph and Ann Weaver, Tama Sperling, George and Eleanor Weaver and David Nemtzow.

Edwin Brownell agreed to serve as the first president. Ann Weaver set out to sign up new members, which proved a fairly easy task.

During this time the Redevelopment Agency was busy displacing businesses along Thames Street and Long Wharf. Many bars, nightclubs and satellite Navy businesses opted to move into the Point to remain close to the water and the Navy personnel who docked at Long Wharf. The mission of PAN members was to keep the businesses out of the Point and protect the residential neighborhood.

Those of us doing most of this work began to hear rumors of individual lawsuits by the displaced businesses. Therefore, in 1955, members applied for and received PAN's charter of incorporation from the State of Rhode Island. The charter, of course, protects individual members, performing PAN's activities, from personal liability.

Bill MacLeod, a lawyer, had volunteered his services to review PAN's by-laws to be certain they met the requirements to receive the Rhode Island charter.

Various City Councils eventually voted to expand the Point boundaries designated for residential use, thus preventing "obnoxious enterprises" from locating here.

The main thing we learned over these years is that the vigil never ends.

Eleanor S. Weaver
Herb Rommell receives a May Day bouquet and greetings from members of the Adventure Club. Over fifty bouquets were delivered this year to Point residents during this annual rite of Spring.
Introducing Our New Neighbors on Katzman Place

It took two visits to meet three out of the four young men who moved into Katzman Place the beginning of April. At our first scheduled interview, on a Saturday afternoon, we met Dan Muller, Senior Residential Counselor, who has logged in seven years with Child & Family Services of Newport and resides at Katzman Place on weekends. A dedicated and caring individual, Dan has a B.S. in Criminal Justice and in Teen and Youth Studies.

He quickly corrected us on our use of the term "group home." Katzman Place is not a group home. It is a semi-independent living site, part of the Supervised Adolescent Living program – a place where the highest functioning adolescents in the agency live. It is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All youths aged 17 and over must work 20 hours a week during the school year. They are strongly encouraged to work a 40-hour week in the summers. As they are forbidden by Child & Family Services to own their own cars, they are driven to and from work by agency employees. All four boys were out that Saturday afternoon. Two were at the public library, one was at work and the other at a track meet. Two of them had volunteered that morning at the Storer Park cleanup. Dan said they both had job offers before the morning cleanup was over!

We went back on Sunday morning to meet the boys and found three at home. The fourth was at church. They answered our first question, independently of each other, almost exactly the same. Our question was, "How do you like the Point neighborhood?" All three love the quiet, the calmness of the neighborhood. One boy is especially eager to begin swimming at Van Zandt pier. This young man volunteers at the Fire Department as an Explorer, learning how to handle the hoses. He'll also be working as a ranger at Fort Adams for the summer.

Another one of the young men repairs and maintains automobiles 28-30 hours a week and attends Newport Alternative School. He enjoys cooking, which he learned from his father, and makes especially good burritos with a secret sauce! The third young man is a freshman in high school and will be working on a neighbor's house doing repairs this summer. He especially likes walking around the historic neighborhood looking at old houses.

All three boys are very happy to be on the Point. They say it is a huge improvement over their last home together, which was in the midst of the hustle and bustle of Broadway.

Monica Bailey and Rowena Burke

Gardening Corner

"Hands-on Pruning"

This issue’s “Gardening Corner” is taking on a slightly different format. Instead of writing about pruning – Toni Peters is going to show you how! She will conduct a pruning clinic on Sunday, June 11, to demonstrate the correct method of trimming your trees and bushes. Please contact Toni (849-2362) for more details and to sign up. Space will be limited.
Burying Cables at the Cares’

A new committee headed by Al Lowe will try to assess what it will take to bury our neighborhood’s eyesore, the overhead wires that extend from our houses to the street poles. However, some houses have wires in the backyard as well. As one Point resident found, these wires can be buried if homeowners are willing to spend some time, effort, and money, as well as getting lots of help from Newport Electric.

Jeff Cares has dug a trench in his 31 Willow backyard to bury his and his neighbor’s electrical service that currently intersects his backyard. As soon as the professional electricians are ready to bring their service to the pole in the back of the property, both Cares and his neighbor, Matt Tupper, will bury the lines in PVC pipe. “It was the perfect time to do it,” he said. “We are completely redoing our house and our neighbors were about to put in their new electric service. We will no longer have to look at these ugly wires.”

Please remember that electricity is a deadly thing if not handled properly. No one should touch wires without help from the electric company and a professional electrician. If you have any questions on what is involved in this process, call Jeff at 847-2752 or email him at jrcaresusn@aol.com.

Summer Hours

The Bookmobile will be starting its summer schedule on July 10. It will be at the Willow Street stop (in St. John’s parking lot) on Wednesdays from 11:00 – 11:30. You can request that library materials be put on the bookmobile and avoid the construction and traffic of going to the main library.
A Bit of History

The Green Light recently received a letter from a Born-on-the-Pointer, Audrey Katzman Wald, answering our query about the history behind the naming of Katzman Place.

Audrey’s father, Hyman Katzman, was the owner of the Point Market and Liquor Store, at the corner of Second and Walnut (in the Matthew Calbraith Perry house). He also owned other properties on the Point, including a house with surrounding acreage on Third Street.

When the time came to sell the property, the house, with part of the land, was sold separately, and the rest sold to a developer for subdivision. Mayor Wheeler, who lived on Washington Street, suggested that the street be named in honor of Hyman Katzman. He and his wife Mary were further honored when the fountain at Storer Park was purchased in their memory.

Two other stores on the Point were owned by Katzmans, cousins of Hyman. Philip had a store on Third Street, just north of Cherry; his brother Barney’s store was on the corner of Third and Poplar. But they had no connection with the naming of Katzman Place.

Our thanks to Audrey for this information!

Funding Received for Star of the Sea Project

Adé Bethune’s dream of renovating the former Carmelite Retreat House on Washington Street into senior housing has taken a step forward to becoming reality.

At an April press conference attended by U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy and other city and state officials, it was announced that Star of the Sea had received approval of a $4.6 million financing package from Rhode Island Housing.

Harbor Point, the name of the congregate living facility, will offer a combination of one-bedroom and efficiency units for people 62 and older. No two apartments will be alike and common areas will include a library, solarium, decks and gardens. The plan calls for a large amount of common space to encourage a feeling of family for those living in the complex.

It is hoped that work will begin in June with the project completed in a year.
All Eyes on Mr. Potato Head

What's Round, Has Two Eyes, Two Arms (sometimes), a Mustache, an Outcropping of Greenery on Top and is a New Resident of Newport?

Got it yet? Jennifer Bailey's creation at the Gateway Center – Mr. Potato Head as a pineapple of hospitality!

Our first question to Bailey, as she likes to be called, was, "Is there an opening in the back for spare parts?" And next, "Can you take them apart?"

The answer to the first question is no. The second is more debatable. That morning Bailey had a call that the three-dimensional comb-like mustache had been ripped off in the night. Ouch!

"Hospitality Spud" in Newport is sponsored by America House Communications. Each Potato Head costs $3000. Supplied parts are the body and arms, made of PVC. They come white and naked. The object weighs about 100 lbs. and is bolted to the ground when finished.

Bailey is a native Newporter with a background in graphics and advertising design, a graduate of Buffalo State and Cazenovia. She holds the position of Information Center Coordinator at the Visitors' Center. In March the Visitors' Bureau asked her to brainstorm ideas for Mr. Potato Heads. She brainstormed away, and her pineapple design was selected as the best to represent the bureau.

The feedback on her Mr. Potato Head has been mixed. Many local residents think that we should represent ourselves with something more elegant than a mere vegetable. However, tourists seem to adore Mr. Potato Head. He was the most photographed resident in town this spring.

Where is Mr. Potato Head going at the end of the season? He'll be auctioned off the end of October and the proceeds will go to Kids Café, a program that helps feed children breakfasts and lunches.

And has Bailey enjoyed this project? "Great project! It requires constant attention and maintenance." She really loves her Mr. Potato Head, comparing it to a child.

So, what'll be next? Stay tuned......

Monica Bailey and Rowena Burke

* * * * * * *

Other Mr. Potato Heads have been "sprouting" up in Newport. "Meet & Potatoes" can be found at the entrance of the Marriott Hotel and "Sparkle Spud" has been sighted in various locations around town.

Tel: 401-847-5681 Fax: 401-848-4508

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A Letter From First Ward Councilor Rick O'Neill

It doesn't seem possible that, as of the printing of this quarterly bulletin, six months will have passed since I was first elected. Although we have made significant progress during that time frame, there are still plenty of important issues facing the City of Newport and Point residents. I would ask you to consider serving on one of the thirty boards and commissions appointed by the City Council. Currently, there are openings on the Waterfront Commission, Building Code of Appeal, Cliff Walk Commission, Newport Beach Commission, Newport Sports Advisory Commission, Newport Tree Commission, Redevelopment Agency and the Newport Beautification Committee. If you are interested, I have information on each commission. Recent appointments are Point residents Coles Mallory and Al Lowe to the Gateway Design Review Committee and Richard Carrubba to the newly created Property Tax Review Commission. Thank you for working to improve our City.

Hopefully, you had the opportunity to attend the neighborhood meeting held May 23, 2000, at St. John's Guild Hall. Representatives from the city administration discussed the upcoming re-paving of Second Street (scheduled for summer 2000), and Officer Patrick Shea, Community Police Division, spoke about neighborhood quality-of-life concerns. Additionally, there are numerous projects, namely Eastern Resorts expansion, the Gateway Center Highest and Best Use, waterfront access/development projects, North End Development, Van Zandt Bridge improvements, reconnection of Connell Highway, State Fishing Pier, dinghy docks at Elm Street Pier and general quality-of-life matters that may impact our neighborhoods.

As always, I am available to speak with you collectively or individually on any matters that are of concern. Contact me at 847-5202 or e-mail rickfirstward@aol.com. Have a great summer.

Note: Fifty residents attended the May 23rd meeting. A second neighborhood forum is planned for September.
**Point Association Web Site**

As of May 15th, the Point Association owns the URL www.pointassociation.org. Betty Cares will be developing a web site for our group. She has found an inexpensive service provider and will start development of the site soon. There will be lots of opportunities to help out on this project. If you are interested, e-mail Betty at bettytully@aol.com. More details as they emerge!

Coming Soon: www.pointassociation.org

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**The Point Association Membership Form**

*Please make check payable to The Point Association.*

*A subscription to The Green Light is included with all memberships.*

□ Individual: $10.00 □ Family: $15.00 □ Sustaining: $25.00 □ Patron: $40.00 □ Other: $____

Name: __________________________

Phone: __________________________ E-mail: __________________________ Fax: __________________________

Mailing address: __________________________

Second address (if applicable): __________________________

**Committees & Activities**

*Please check the categories of interest to you.*

□ Adventure Club □ Beautification □ Green Light □ History & Archives

□ Membership □ Neighborhood Watch □ Plant Sale □ Programs/Special Events

□ Publicity/Communications/Web □ Underground Wires □ Waterfront

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Summer Calendar

June 23 - 25  *Secret Garden Tour*  
Sponsored by  
The Benefactors of the Arts

June 29  *Point Picnic*  
6 p.m.  
Anne Reynolds'  
88 Washington Street

June 29 to July 2  *Tall Ships*  
Various Newport Locations

July 15 to August 19  *Paint the Point*  
Painting & Drawing Program  
Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

July 29  *St. John's Fair*  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Willow & Washington streets

August 24  *Membership Cocktail Party*  
6 – 8 p.m.  
Villa Marina  
72 Washington Street