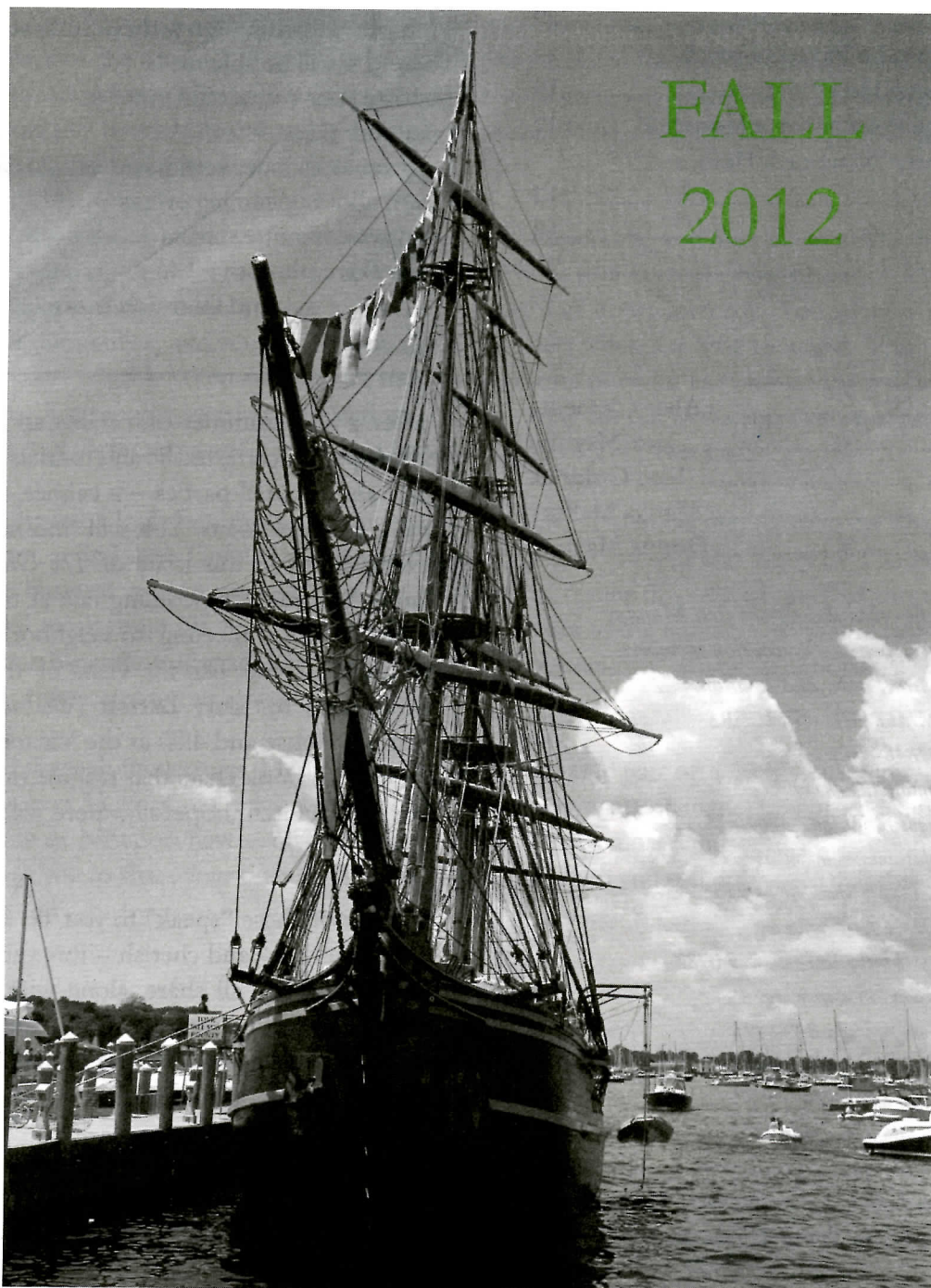


The
GREEN

LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND



FALL
2012

The GREEN LIGHT

LVI No. 3

FALL 2012

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Meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members.

Please call Beth for time, date, and location.

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Copies of *The Green Light* may be purchased for \$1.00 at Bucci's Convenience Store, Poplar at Thames.



The Point Association

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; and promoting public policies that strengthen all of Newport's neighborhoods.

Cover:

One Spectacular Tall Ship from Summer 2012

photo by Tom Kennedy

Visit our website: www.thepointassociation.org

There you will be able to:

- update your contact information
- pay your dues
- stay up to date between issues of *The Green Light*
- learn about upcoming events
- contact committee chairs
- view Point photos

And so much more....



After a busy summer of catamaran races, tall ships, concerts, traffic and tourists – and, yes, picnics and cocktail parties – a calmer, though no less busy, autumn awaits. You will find numerous Point events listed in this issue of *The Green Light*, from James Wermuth's upcoming talk at the Point Association's annual meeting, to neighborhood cleanups, to weekly events like the visits of the bookmobile announced by Mary Barrett (Wednesdays, 3:35 at Harbor House and 4:00 at the Visitors' Center) and the related book chats that resume on September 5. For the children, hopefully, there will be Halloween (see p. 19).

If none of these "speak" to you, do at least take the time to enjoy – and cherish – this very special community that we all share, along with its, for some, unequaled natural setting. All this and front porches and long walks, too. (See the preliminary report on the neighborhood survey.)

Happy autumn!

Alice

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

What a busy summer season we have had here on the Point. From the successful plant sale, to the well-attended picnic, to the productive membership drive and survey launch, to the much anticipated annual cocktail party, our neighborhood has been teeming with activity.

No doubt, I will miss someone, but please indulge me as I take a moment to thank our Board and all others who have worked tirelessly to keep our organization vibrant and fun. To the Comfort and Cuvelier families for welcoming us into their homes and gardens; to the parishioners of St. John's for opening their grounds and hall to us for the plant sale and our general gatherings; to Laurie Shaw for resurrecting the Point Plant Sale so beautifully (and profitably) and also, for accepting the Board's request to fill the vacant Second Vice President's chair; to John Broughan and Maevé Sheehan for venturing out on some of the hottest days of the summer to go door-to-door inviting folks to join our association, and Jane Hence, Linda Narbey, and Lauren Carson for doing wonderful work designing, distributing and analyzing the surveys; and especially to my husband and in-house tech adviser Mike, for all the hours spent integrating data onto our new membership and event management website.

Speaking of the website, be sure to visit www.thepointassociation.org, and once there please check your contact information. In order to keep in touch, we must have your current email, phone, and address, recorded properly. Please double check to be sure we have it all down correctly. You are now able to join and pay your dues online, and you will be sent email reminders when it is time to renew. This enabling technology saves valuable volunteer time for much more useful pursuits, like monitoring public policies that affect us all, arranging social and educational events, caring for our parks and open spaces, and keeping you all abreast of Point news and happenings between issues of *The Green Light*.

Now on to the fall, I look forward to greeting you at the General Membership meeting on Thursday, 18 October, 7pm, at St. John's Guild Hall. We will celebrate the past, present and future of The Point. In addition to the business meeting and elections, we will learn the results of our well-received surveys. James Wermuth will speak about Dr. John Clarke, a friend and adviser to the families that first settled here on the Point, and notable author of many founding principles of our country. Lastly, we will award several Born on the Point certificates to our newest neighbors.

As you read through these pages, I hope you will find that you are part of a lively, community-spirited group. For over 55 years, our neighborhood efforts to improve, maintain, document, and support this special section of Newport have evolved into one of the nation's most handsome and historic enclaves. We encourage you to share your time and talents, where and when you can, to ensure that this important work carries on!

Beth Cullen

SNIPPETS – from the Members’ Survey

by Jane Hence

As of mid-August, the responses to the Point Association membership survey are in the remarkable percentage rate of returns of 30-40 percent. The normal expectation for response is commonly ten percent.

The range of opinions/ideas/and self-descriptions is truly an A to Z span, with interesting and surprising facts and views. We have living amongst us a yacht designer, a corporate meeting planner, a test pilot and a husband and wife who run a private yacht. Some of the people now living here have previously lived in New Zealand, Hawaii, the UK, Paris, Japan, Germany, Cuba, DC, Georgia and Louisiana.

A large number of answers to the question of favourite things to do on the Point referred to sitting on one’s front porch, walking (with or without one’s dog), and appreciating and enjoying neighbors and friends. As to secrets not widely known about some of us, the responses ranged from “we are open books” to “those things are secret!” and the following specific activities perhaps not common knowledge. We have an active UFO researcher, a long distance runner, someone who would like to travel in a hot air balloon and the intriguing remark: “nearly everyone who currently lives on the Point does not know me at all.”

An intriguing snapshot into who we are and what we think. The survey data will be tallied and organized and then presented at the Annual Point Association meeting this fall.



The Third & Elm Press

Ilse Buchert Nesbitt
29 Elm Street, Newport
846-0228

www.thirdandelm.com

POINT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, October 18, 2012

7pm ~ St. John’s Guild Hall

General Business Meeting & Committee Reports

Election of Officers

Presentation of Born on the Point Certificates

Neighborhood Survey Results

“Newport’s Resplendent Heritage”

a talk by:

James Wermuth,

Executive Director, John Clarke Society

Refreshments

Thanks to all who participated in the Survey
The raffle winners are:

\$100 Rhumblin gift certificate
Ilse Nesbitt

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Robb Canning

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Lisa Atwood



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NEWPORT'S RESPLENDENT HERITAGE

by James Wermuth

Newport's diminutive historic district resonates with quintessential foundations of American freedom. This is the first place where civil protection for church/state separation was granted by a sovereign (Charles II) to a political entity.

The harbor provides such splendid perspective to contemplate this heritage, a culture that rose not as a proud eagle created by Thomas Jefferson, but as a phoenix from the ashes of theocracy. The hero was Newport founder John Clarke (1609-1676).

I often took my young daughter for early morning walks past what was Mathinos Boatyard. Against that gentle, sandy shore, waves thick with ocean scent lapped in early morning fog. But for the shatter-bone foghorns warning of the entrance to Narragansett Bay it was easy to contemplate the anticipation suffusing two prominent mornings in Newport's harbor centuries ago.

The first morning saw a gathering of "freemen" enduring cold 1663 November weather. Captain George Baxter arrived where entreated; he stood atop a table to read Rhode Island's Royal Charter of 1663 in its entirety.

127 years later, a warm August morning filled with anticipation as President George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and other dignitaries lay anchored just outside the Bay. Having sailed two days from New York City aboard the Newport packet *Hancock*, they set anchor in the sound for a morning arrival; Beavertail light burnt by the British forces made night passage too dangerous.

In Newport, Washington welcomed Rhode Island into the Union by reaffirming the brilliant success of Rhode Island's Charter of 1663. Jefferson recorded Newport's welcome as, "filled with tours and ceremonies..., an evening banquet at the Old Colony House." At perhaps the most salient ceremony that Tuesday morning, President Washington addressed Jews, Quakers, Baptists... in attendance at the Touro Synagogue. The president did not have the opportunity to address such religious diversity in any other new state. Nowhere else does Washington celebrate the

triumph of religious freedom more clearly than through his famous letter to Newport: "It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. While everyone shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid." The 1663 Charter made America's newly ratified Bill of Rights possible. Its author, Dr. John Clarke had the brilliance to institute inalienable rights as law granted by a sovereign to a political entity.

In 1639, disconsolate religious dissidents founded Newport, Rhode Island. Exalting religious toleration, nine educated and somewhat prosperous colonists established Newport's experimental settlement based upon eloquent but dangerously heretical non-theocratic ideals. Nota bene, prior to Newport's creation, theocracy ruled Western culture for millennia; America rose from almost incomprehensible religious persecution where individuals were not permitted, as Martin Luther put it, "freedom of conscience," they were prohibited from free thought.

(Continued on page 20)

"Own the water, not the boat!"



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WILL NEWPORT STILL BE THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN?

From My Point of View

by Ed Madden

In the last two centuries, Great Britain boasted that the sun never set on the British Empire. During that time, their possession of India was known as "The Jewel in the Crown". I do not think that it is much of a stretch to say that Newport is "The Jewel in the Crown of Rhode Island".

Twenty-two years ago, my wife and I moved to Newport for our own permanent residence. We bought a lovely, somewhat shopworn home on the Point and converted it to a B&B – the Stella Maris Inn on Washington Street. This was a second career for both of us and we fell in love with our new enterprise and our lovely city.

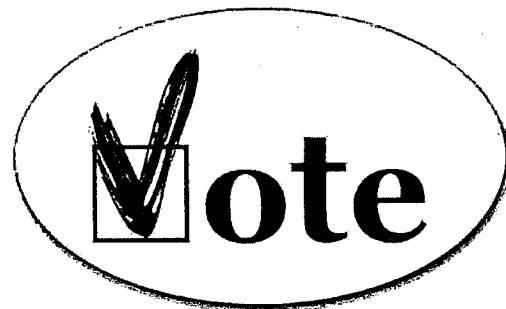
I think that I can speak with a somewhat unique perspective regarding one aspect of our tourist industry, i.e., the makeup of many of Newport's guests. It seems that every able bodied, full blooded sailor – Australian, New Zealander, South African, Asian, European and the rest of the Americas – at some time in his/her life has to pay homage to Newport's nautical history. The non-sailing world comes to Newport attracted by its wonderful seaside location, beaches and natural beauty. Nearly all of our guests have heard of the Cliff Walk, the Preservation Society and its exquisite mansions, the Tennis Hall of Fame, and the historical, architectural and artistic history of our city. The summer musical programs embracing classical, jazz and folk venues are on the top of the national must-do list year in and year out.

Our guests, I believe, are a widespread representation of American and International travelers who appreciate what this truly classic City by the Sea has to offer. But I can honestly say that, in my 22 years of experience as an inn keeper, not one of my guests has come to Newport to gamble!

In general, I cannot say enough about the quality of life in Newport. However, with the prospect of gambling spreading to a full-fledged casino, it doesn't take much imagination to visualize welcoming directional casino

signs in a wide radius for miles around Rhode Island, accompanied by enticing billboards and glaring neon night-lights with flashing and directional arrows to Newport's gambling mecca, a la Las Vegas! Special tour buses, more cars than we know what to do with, and a different class of tourist who doesn't necessarily respect and appreciate Newport for its classic qualities will be gambling's legacy.

Please don't trade in The Jewel in the Crown for a lump of coal! Las Vegas East is something we don't need or want!



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WELCOME, NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

by Joan Rauch

Harbor House residents welcomed Sandra Dugan as their Property Manager in June. Sandra is a lifelong resident of Bristol which she proudly defines as "the most beautiful little town". She graduated in 1999 from Roger Williams University with a degree in Economics and went on to work as a Property Manager and Marketing Director for an Assisted Living community in Bristol. She currently works part-time at the Harbor House and part-time at Belleville, an elderly housing facility in North Kingstown.



Sandra finds her work at the Harbor House rewarding; she finds the building and its location beautiful, and both the residents and her employers are laid back and easy to work with. Her challenges and goals are to focus on maintaining a 100% occupancy rate and to provide opportunities for the residents to gather together. Several ways in which Sandra ensures that residents are not lonely are continuing community breakfasts in the dining room on Wednesdays and instituting a monthly birthday celebration for all residents to honor those whose birthdays are within that month. A weekly Book Chat continues, too, with librarian Mary O'Neill-Barrett facilitating a discussion of what might be interesting to read among those residents who enjoy reading and exchanging books.

Harbor House residents will now be treated to a monthly newsletter, *The Phoenix Broadcaster*, written by Sandra. The inaugural publication was delivered in August and included easy to find phone numbers, office hours, announcements, and upcoming summer events. An informative article on "Beating the Heat" was included with helpful hints on how to stay comfortable in the proverbial dog days of summer. A Sudoku puzzle and calendar were also incorporated.

More personally, Sandra enjoys reading and listening to music by Adele, Bette Midler and Tracy Chapman in her leisure time; however, another job as a server and bartender at a restaurant in Bristol seizes some of that recreation time.

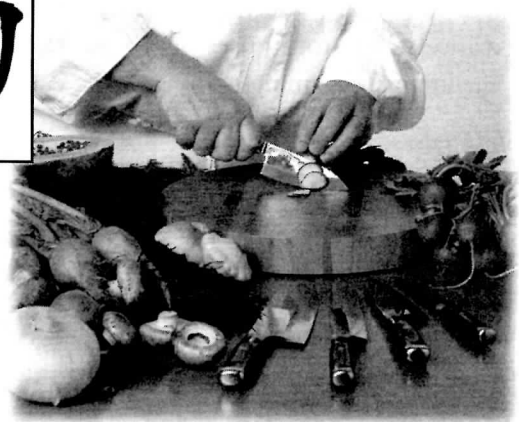
What is something that Sandra would want Point neigh-

bors to know about her? Proudly, Sandra glows as she describes her role as mom to her two children, 12 year old Thomas, who is a talented artist, and 10 year old Tess, who loves the theatre and who has recently played the lead role in a local production. Sandra shared the fact that she loves being a mom and has been blessed with good kids. When asked how she would spend a thoroughly happy day, Sandra replied without hesitation, "Spending quality time with my kids!" She equally loves going to the beach, going for a walk, or going to Disney – anything that

shares time with her children. A perfectly happy day is a day spent with Thomas, Tess and their family dog.

We, the Point Association members, welcome Sandra and wish her much luck in her new position at the Harbor House, and we wish her many perfectly happy days!

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THE ASSOCIATION'S NEW SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

Autobiographical note by Laurice Shaw

I have been involved with the Point Association for a number of years. Shortly after moving to Newport as a Navy wife back in 1978, I heard about *The Green Light* (can't remember where) but after asking around I met Eleanor Weaver and bingo! I was introduced to not only this marvelous neighborhood but also a fantastic association of folks working to make and keep this remarkable piece of Newport special.

Eleanor introduced me to local politics and, starting around 1981, I served on the Historic District Commission, the Planning Board and was then elected at-large to the City Council. I recognized the inestimable value of the neighborhood associations as champions and defenders of what was important to residents' interests and it was, after all, those different interests that made Newport very, very special. I don't see 'special interests' as a negative thing at all in the way the connotation is often given. I believe in working for what you want... or don't want, and that is one thing the Point Association has done very well for over 50 years. Our beautiful Point would be a very different place today had the Association not been vigilant and vocal. We'd have development at Storer Park, amphibious tourist 'ducks' on our driftways and tour buses plying our streets hawking the 'quaint and charming colonial houses'.

During the mid 1990's I was the director of the Nina Lynette Home on Washington St. — another remarkable aspect of our neighborhood. It is really a huge credit to the people who have volunteered to be on the Board

of Directors over the years and supported this beautiful home for elders since 1905. If you've not had a tour of this beautiful 'rooming house', please take advantage of the next opportunity. I was also elected to the City Council again — this time as the First Ward Councillor. It was an exciting few years!


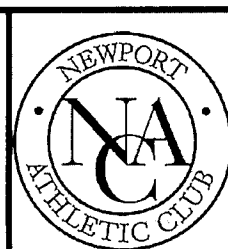
I briefly moved to Connecticut and returned to Newport in 2001 to my current address at 66 Third St. This spring I (finally) got re-involved and headed up the Point Plant Sale. It was lots of fun for me and everyone else I hope. We raised \$1300.00 to, among other projects, put a garden in at Mary Ferrazzoli Park.

I am a Realtor/Broker with my own company, Elderberry Realty Services, with an emphasis on small scale property management. I also have a wooden window repair and restoration business, Newport Window Savers. My son, Jake Cathers, lives in Middletown with his vivacious wife Leslie and three very bright lights in my life: Jackson, Merritt and Georgia.

By accepting the office of second vice president, I hope to be able to help the Association continue making and keeping the Point the most beautiful neighborhood in America. Effectively working with the City Council and Administration and the other 'powers that be' is a skill I hope I can bring to the table. I look forward to working with all of you to this end.



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THANK YOU, AARDVARK ANTIQUES

by Linda McGoldrick

The Arnold Park neighborhood wishes to extend a tremendous THANK YOU to Aardvark Antiques for donating the exquisite basket weave planter. Aardvark is a long-standing local business and good neighbor in Newport.

As part of the Arnold Park beautification effort, the neighbors

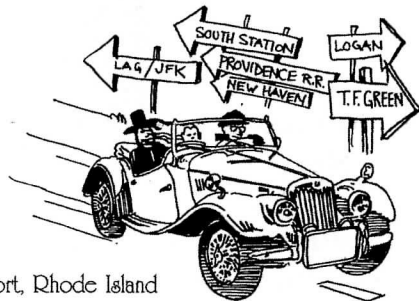
worked hard to source the planter and appropriate foliage for that segment of the overall ongoing plan. We thank the Point Association for covering the costs of transporting the planter and providing soil and plants.



Photo by Joan Simmons

We take pride in enhancing the beauty and aesthetics of our neighborhood. As an extension of historic Washington Square and its recent enhancements, plantings and fountain, Arnold Park helps welcome both Newporters and visitors to the heart of the city.

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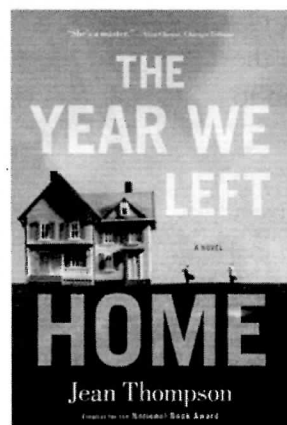
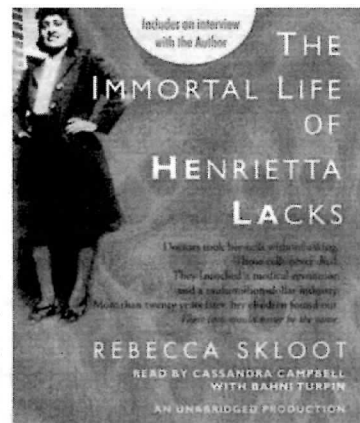
POINT READERS

by Suzanne Varisco

Hey, Readers.....We're back! Hope you're enjoying your summer and are ready to read new books and gather to talk about new books. Here's what we're suggesting for Fall 2012.....

Nonfiction: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot, Broadway Paperbacks, 2012. Known to scientists as HeLa, this poor black tobacco farmer was treated for cancer in 1951, at which time her cells—taken without

her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in modern medicine. "Skloot narrates the science lucidly, tracks the racial politics of medicine thoughtfully, and tells the Lacks family's often painful history with grace," wrote the *New York Times* reviewer. "Made my hair stand on end." We hope to discuss this book in October.



Fiction: *The Year We Left Home* by Jean Thompson, Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2012. This National Book Award finalist goes "from the early 1970s in the Iowa farmlands to contemporary Chicago and far beyond." *Kirkus Reviews* cites this author's "ability to put these characters empathically on the page, in their special setting, over an extended period of years, with

just the right dose of dark humor," praising her work as "a powerful reflection on middle American life—on the changes wrought by the passing years and the values that endure." We hope to discuss this book in November.

Volunteers Needed: Please contact Suzanne Varisco, 841-5220 and/or srvarisco@gmail.com, to volunteer as a book discussion hostess, as well as to inquire about meeting times and places. Hope to see you there.

THE HUNT FOR PIERRE LE PICARD'S FRENCH FLEET AND CAPTAIN KIDD'S TREASURE

by Dave Moore

1689 is the start of the nine-year "King Williams War" - the war between England and France over the British expansion in the French colonies of northern Maine and the Maritime provinces. In July the citizens of Block Island notice a fleet of four vessels approaching that soon anchor off shore. The fleet consists of a large bark, two sloops, and a barge carrying flat bottom rowboats called periaugers. Fifty men in each of three periaugers row into the harbor with their guns hidden out of sight. Many islanders go down to greet them believing they are Englishmen. They soon realize their mistake and have no other choice but to surrender to the Frenchmen. After ransacking the island, the French demand a pilot to get them through the Newport defenses which they plan to invade next.

When Newport and Jamestown learn the news they are shocked by the atrocities and are fearful of an attack. They set signal bonfires along the coast to spread the alarm. The Governor calls on veteran privateer Captain Thomas Paine for help. He is the most seasoned Rhode Island naval warfare fighter although he has a very piratical past. He had a commission to "seize, kill, and capture pirates" but spent most of his time plundering in waters off Florida and the Bahamas aboard his eight-gun bark *Pearl*. He is given the Barbados sloop *Loyal Steele* lying in Newport harbor which Paine hurriedly arms with 10 guns, and a crew of 60 men that includes many of his in-laws. Captain John Godfrey is placed second in command and, with his own sloop, is ordered to accompany Paine.

On arriving at Block Island they are told the French had left because they felt Newport was too well defended and were headed for an attack on New London instead. Paine and Godfrey start to give chase but are surprised to see the French fleet returning towards Block Island. French Commodore Picard had changed his mind again as he felt

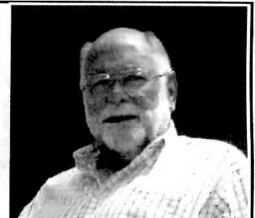
New London was also too well fortified. When he sees the two Newport sloops approaching him, he believes they are merchant vessels and plans to make them prizes. The French send a periauger full of men, with small arms to take them. Paine and Godfrey sail their sloops in as close to the island as possible so that if they receive broadsides or boarding it will be from only one side. They also hang anchors over that out board side to make boarding more difficult.



Paine fires off his bow gun as the periauger comes in range but the ball skips across the water, goes wide, and lands on shore. The

(Continued on page 15)

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WHAT IS NEXT FOR THE FORMER NAVY HOSPITAL?

by Tina Dolen, Director,
Aquidneck Island Planning Commission

By this time next year, residents can expect a significant shift in the status of former Navy properties, including the Navy Hospital. The following article describes the events leading up to this point, and an explanation of the coming year's obligations to prepare the properties for transfer.

In 2010, the Navy announced 225 acres of its property, spread across Portsmouth, Middletown and Newport, were declared "surplus," and would move toward public transfer/disposition. These include the ten acre former Navy Hospital site on Third Street in Newport.

BRAC requirements for eventual transfer of properties follow a comprehensive process. The first year of BRAC required the development of a plan for reuse of the properties. The island redevelopment authority to enact that plan was called the Aquidneck Island Reuse Planning Authority (AIRPA).

After review and discussion of the redevelopment alternatives for each of the sites, including public AIRPA meetings with Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth residents and public meetings with city and town officials, the AIRPA selected a development alternative for each site – referred to as the Preferred Reuse Plan. The Reuse Plan targets specific types of development on each site based on each property's physical, environmental, and locational attributes. In its most basic form, the Preferred Reuse plan for the Navy Hospital identifies a mixed use, consisting of hotel, residential and/or office use.

This plan includes a 3-story hotel (100 to 120 rooms) with additional square footage for retail space and/or restaurants over at-grade parking in the northeast corner of the site; a 3-story 36-unit residential building (or potential office use) over at-grade parking in the southeast corner of the site; and a waterfront park at the western edge of the site. The waterfront park may include amenities such as a pier, a waterfront pedestrian path, a marine harbor shuttle station and recreational boat moorings.

Caveats for the selected plan assume the Navy Hospital Site will be environmentally remediated to enable the pro-

posed uses. They assume the setbacks for parking and buildings will meet the Navy's force protection requirements and that zoning will be modified to enable the proposed uses.

From now until next August, a new coalition will enact the final phase of preparation by creating a compelling Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) for submission and acquisition of the properties from the Navy. The Aquidneck Island Re-Use Implementing Authority (AIRIA) has expanded powers and replaces AIRPA to carry out the next phase. AIRIA will require the services of a professional consultant to assist in the creation of an EDC. The U.S. Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) helps BRAC communities with grant funds for support services and complex research and studies. Since 2010 the OEA has helped the communities of Aquidneck Island execute their BRAC responsibilities.

By mid-August of this year, a consultant will be hired by the AIRIA who will have to satisfy the requirements of working with three jurisdictions and five surplus sites. A snapshot of the tasks to be performed by the implementing consultant include preparing an operating and infrastructure analysis to determine current conditions and suitability for preferred uses, finalizing a business and operations plan to estimate job generation, costs, marketability and financial feasibility and conducting

(Continued on page 14)



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OLIVER HAZARD PERRY: NEWPORT'S HERO IN THE WAR OF 1812

by Tom Kennedy

Two centuries ago the Congress of the United States declared a state of war for the first time in history. By most standards the War of 1812 involved small forces geographically scattered on vague fronts. The issues fueling the conflict with England are still difficult to explain and present clearly. They concern England's ambitions in the (then) American northwest, America's ambitions in Canada, and the use of the seas in the expansion of international trade and commerce. Battles were fought from Canada to Florida, and on the high seas. American victories on Lake Erie, led by Oliver Perry, and in New Orleans (after the treaty ending the war had been signed), led by Andrew Jackson, together with the burning of the White House and much of Washington, D.C. by the British, constitute the best known highlights of the war. The people of Newport and New England, in general, were not in favor of going to war at this time, but despite this antipathy, they welcomed and extolled the heroics of the fledgling U.S. Navy's signal victory on Lake Erie and its leader, Oliver Hazard Perry.

Perry was born in South Kingstown on the Perry family's estate and farm. He was eldest of eight children, and was descended from a line of Quakers who would have been quite estranged from his family's later embrace of the military and the Episcopal Church. Oliver's father, Christian R. Perry, was himself a seaman and naval officer, as well as a merchant and fearless adventurer, who escaped twice from enemy prisons, only to take to sea once again. The Perry family moved to Newport's Point section when Oliver was eight, taking up residence in the house still at the corner of Walnut and Second streets. Oliver was to be baptized and confirmed at Trinity Church, and educated by Mr. John Frazer in Church Street, "an eminent teacher of classical Latin and Greek" (Items, 6), who also instilled in Oliver an abiding interest in mathematics and its application to navigation and nautical astronomy. "Before Oliver left Mr. Frazer's school, the latter was to boast that he was the best navigator in Rhode Island." (Items, 6)

For an eight year-old boy, Newport provided a different world from the routine of life on the Perry farm. The Point was a section of town where cabinetmakers, shipbuilders, ship suppliers, spermaceti manufacturers, and their ships resided just north of the Long Wharf. Numerous ship captains lived in the same neighborhood. The location allowed a young boy to learn about the talents necessary for constructing and outfitting a ship for sea. Here he received informal training in the necessity of logistics, that dismal science of military service. It was an education he put to good use on the shores of Lake Erie twenty years later. Like most preteens of his day, young Perry could handle a line, reef a sail, and steer a small craft that plied the waters of Newport Harbor or Narragansett Bay. (Skaggs, 5)



Oliver began his naval career at age 13 as a midshipman on his father's ship, the *General Greene*, during a conflict with France. After peace with France was established, he served under various commands in the Mediterranean Sea along the Barbary Coast, where at the tender age of 17 he was promoted to Lieutenant. After a number of years at sea, Oliver returned to Newport, which became his home base during several assignments. In 1811 he married Elizabeth Champlin Mason, the daughter of the best known physician in Newport.

Perry's naval career reached a low point in 1811, when his ship, *Revenge*, ran aground off Watch Hill. An enquiry eventually cleared Perry of all blame, and even praised him

for bringing all hands to shore safely. Nonetheless, Parry felt that his naval career had been compromised and his future opportunities for promotion and important assignments were in jeopardy. Ironically, according to some historians, Perry's concern about his career led him to grasp immediately the opportunity to serve on Lake Erie, an assignment which, on its face, would not be attractive to an ambitious naval officer and was unlikely to lead to glory. The situation on Lake Erie was most discouraging. The British had a small, but effective, fleet there and were in control of the Lake. The only American vessel on the Lake, *Big Adams*, had been taken by the British when they captured Detroit. American attacks on land had been beaten badly. It was clear that he who controlled the lake, controlled the area. Perry would have to start from scratch. He had to build a fleet, train men to man it, and battle an experienced and successful British force, in an area that was virtually a wilderness.

To accomplish his mission, Perry brought over 180 men, whom he had trained in Newport, with him to Lake Erie. These men formed the nucleus of his new force. So unlikely a victory might never have occurred without the loyalty and experience of these men. Outmanned and badly battered, Perry's courage and persistence won the day and brought him fame and recognition both at home and throughout the country. He was invited to Washington, where he was feted by Congress and President Madison. Gilbert Stuart painted his portrait. In Newport, a great celebration and reception took place.

On the eighteenth of November he entered his own town, Newport. Nowhere was he more publicly honored. Bells were ringing, the vessels in the harbor were dressed with flags, the fort from which he had set out on the trip to Erie fired salute after salute. The townspeople turned out en masse, escorting him from the edge of town through the streets to his home. It was a great parade, bands playing, men and women cheering, dogs barking on the streets. The procession continued to his own doorstep. It was home he wished to be. He had just learned, as he came down from Provi-

dence, that he was again a father. A son was awaiting him.

(Dutton, 221-222)



Perry eventually bought a large house on Washington Square, still located on Touro Street, just opposite his statue in the park. Perry also expanded his activities and connections in the community. He became more involved in the affairs of Trinity Church, and accepted an appointment to the Donation Committee of the Redwood Library. It was from his home on Washington Square that he embarked

on his final assignment, a diplomatic mission to Venezuela, where he was stricken with yellow fever and died in August of 1819.

Because of the heat and the severity of the circumstances, his remains were buried on the island of Trinidad. They would be twice more interred in Newport. In 1826 Perry's casket was buried in the Common Burial Ground, and in 1836 he would be moved with great pomp to Newport's Island Cemetery, where his grave is marked by a tall granite monument erected by the state of Rhode Island. Perry's statue was placed in the park at Washington Square with appropriate ceremonies in September of 1885. It was designed by William G. Turner, a Newport artist.

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 11)

numerous other analyses.

This preparation will culminate in an Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) package justified by results of the year's intensive implementation work. The AIRIA will make its case to the Navy through the EDC to acquire the properties at a competitive price in order to improve the economic status of their communities. This includes job generation resulting from redevelopment of the properties. Putting value back into the communities by creating new work opportunities is a primary goal for the Navy.

It is a complicated process, which explains why the redevelopment authorities have been hard at work since late 2010. Residents can rest assured, however, that the members of AIRIA have begun their implementation tasks with effectiveness, dedication and enthusiasm. We can expect significant change in 2013

For further information contact:

tina@aquidneckplanning.org

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Matthew C. Perry, Oliver's younger brother, also won fame in a later mission to Japan. His statue now stands in Touro Park, still today the scene of festivities to celebrate his Black Ships, which opened Japan to the west. The Perrys of Newport have left a rich legacy to the people of their home town.

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French, now surprised, row in a hasty retreat and wait for

the large ships to catch up. Commodore Picard on the French bark is the first to come in range and fires in a broadside with small arms. The two French sloops follow with their own broad-sides. Newporters bravely answer them in the same manner and their own shots are doing more damage. The French bullets are fired too high and can be heard breaking off tree branches on the island beyond their sloops. The shooting lasts for two hours until dark.

During the night the French fleet anchors out of firing range a small distance away. The British, now low on ammunition, send men ashore in the dark to bring back more from the colonists, as they expect the battle to continue at daybreak. The French shots were so high that the islanders, with lanterns, are able to pick up the lead balls on the shore.

In the dark the British could hear the French pulling up

their anchors. Early next morning they are surprised that the French fleet had sailed off abandoning Block Island. They recover a small boat left from the sinking of one of the French sloops. The sloop had been loaded with wine and brandy and apparently was too slow to escape. The British give chase, but are too far behind them. The French head for Buzzards Bay where they encounter the powerful British man-of-war *Nonsuch* to which they are forced to surrender.

French Commodore Picard tells his captors that when he saw Captain Paine's personal flag flying during the battle he knew it was time to flee for he had served under him as a lieutenant in previous years as a privateer. He said: "He would soon fight with the devil (than against) him."¹ One of his fellow shipmates said that French Captain Trimming was killed during the battle when a bullet struck him in his neck. He had been taking a glass of wine to drink, and boasting to his crew "Wished it might be his damnation if he did not board them immediately,"² Picard said about Trimming: "He would rather have lost thirty of his men (than him)".³

This is the country's first naval battle. With just ninety men, Paine repels an attack by 200 Frenchmen about half of which become casualties. Paine's losses are only one man killed and six wounded. Paine now has instant fame in Newport and many visitors flock to his homestead on the northeast side of Conanicut Island. One of these is Captain William Kidd who finds Rhode Island a safe haven because it is known that Governor Cranston feels piracy is good for business, and the local merchants are very anxious to buy illegal contraband.

In 1699 Kidd arrives off Newport and anchors his richly laden sloop. It is loaded with plunder worth 30,000 pounds. He had pirated this from the great Moorish ship he took in India, called the *Quedah Merchant*, which he later scuttled in a creek on the coast of Hispaniola. The Newport Tax Collector, Jahleel Brenton, in a boat with thirty armed men, attempts to seize his vessel, but they retreat after Kidd fires two cannon shots at them. Kidd sails up the bay as far as Captain Paine's house and anchors. He sends his boat ashore with an invitation for Paine to come aboard, which Paine accepts. It is here that Kidd turns over a horde of gold to him. Kidd

(Continued on page 16)



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(Continued from page 15)

next sails to Block Island where he visits former mariner James Sands.

Kidd is so impressed with Sands' daughter who prepares his dinner that he tells her to hold out her apron. He throws into it gold and jewels until it is full. With her new wealth she will later buy a large estate in Eastern Connecticut.

Leaving Rhode Island, Captain Kidd sails to Gardner's Island in Long Island Sound where he buries a chest, a box of gold, a bundle of quilts, and four bales of goods. He marks the burial spot with a pile of rocks that is located half a mile inland from the western coastline. Kidd believes that if he should turn himself in, he would be pardoned from piracy because of his earlier record of service to England. He tries to use the treasure's secret location as a bargaining tool for his defense. The loot, however, is later found and sent to England and used as evidence against him. His hope of being pardoned fails and he is found guilty of piracy and murder of gunner's mate William Moore. Sarah Kidd, the Captain's wife, while in jail with her husband, writes a letter to Captain Paine asking him to deliver to the bearer, Andrew Knott, twenty-four ounces of gold and to keep all the rest in custody for it was all they had to support them in time of want. Kidd is hanged in London on 23 May, 1701.

In 1891, some sanitation workers digging under Paine's old home on Conanicut discover a large horde of gold, silver, and ivory. They quickly quit their jobs. Kidd made some cryptic remarks just before he was hanged that he had been able to bury something of substance somewhere near Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Today, fortune

seekers inspired by this and other stories continue their search for Kidd's missing booty allegedly buried in places from Block Island to Nova Scotia, but so far have come up empty-handed. Recently, the sunken remains of Kidd's ships *Quedah Merchant* and *Adventure Galley* are believed to have been found. Archaeologists consider these finds more important than Kidd's treasure.

Notes

1. Rhode Island Historical Society document, p. 27
2. Ibid. p. 27
3. Ibid. p. 26

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3. Arnold, Samuel Green, *History of the State of Rhode Island*, Vol. 1, 1636-1700, p. 546.

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THE WANNABE PEP TALK

by Ed Madden

The recent death of Junior Seau on 5/2/12 from a self-inflicted gunshot wound shocked and saddened the sports world. The 43-year-old American Samoan was well known to the football fraternity, having played as a fierce, dominating linebacker for the NFL's San Diego Chargers for 13 years, then the Miami Dolphins for 3 years and lastly for the New England Patriots for 4 years. His last competitive season was in 2008.

Junior, whose full name was Tiaina Basil Seau, was born in January 1969 to parents of American Samoan heritage who were living in San Diego, California, at that time. When he was a child, his parents moved back to Samoa, an American island possession in the western Pacific. The family remained there for several years and then moved back to the mainland, settling in Oceanside, California.

Junior enrolled at the local high school. A husky, very athletic youth, he excelled in many sports, especially football. In his senior year, he was selected on the All American High School football team which gave him an entrée to the University of Southern California with a football scholarship. In his college years, he again became a dominant force on the football field, culminating in his selection as an All American in his senior year.

Following his successful career as a professional football player in the NFL, he retired in 2008 and settled in Oceanside, California. Interviews with relatives and friends, including his girl friend, apparently have not unearthed a reason for his suicide.

All of this information is a preamble to a "Knutie Rockney wannabe story," i.e., the famous Notre Dame coach who gave one of the most inspiring half time speeches of all time – "Win One for the Gipper" – that motivated them to turn around a losing season into a winning effort. This present – true – story surfaced from a long hibernation in my memory, jostled loose by the recollections of my previous life in the Oceanside landscape.

From 1963 to 1965, I served as an orthopedic surgeon in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps and was stationed at

Camp Pendleton Hospital at the large U.S. Marine base. The city of Oceanside was located just outside the base and, as a pleasurable volunteer experience, I served as a team doctor for the Oceanside High School football team for their home games.

The makeup of the football team was a formidable mix with about 30% of players of Samoan ancestry. Their fathers were either active duty or retired American Samoans living on the base or in the surrounding countryside. These sons were for the most part huskier and 20-30 pounds heavier than their fellow classmates. Many were even growing beards and moustaches! The majority were linemen and there was no more inspiring and terrifying sight for a foe to face than an offensive and defensive line from end to end composed of the fierce, snarling American Samoans on the Oceanside Pirates football team.

The memorable occasion that recently resurfaced in my recollection involved a particular game at the high school football field in Oceanside. The Oceanside Pirates were playing a formidable foe from San Diego and were fa-

(continued on p. 19)

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(Continued from page 18)

vored to win. However, by the end of the first half, they were down by 2 touchdowns and were rather listless and uninspired in their play.

As usual, at half time I joined the team in the locker room to attend to any injuries. We were all awaiting the arrival of the coach, anticipating a good dressing down for the players. It was the coach's custom to review the highlights of the first half. He would diagram plays on the blackboard and make encouraging suggestions about improving the second half performance.

However, for the first 20 minutes, he was a no show. Then he burst into the room with a scowl on his face. He went to the blackboard, wrote down "Oceanside Pirates" and then crossed out "Pirates" and inserted "Pussies". He then turned and stormed out of the room and nary a word was spoken!

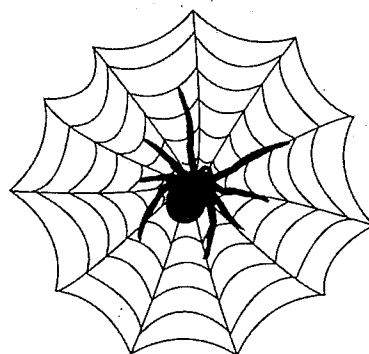
The players were stunned. Then they slowly started muttering to themselves. At this point, the captain jumped up and shouted: "We ain't no F-ing Pussies." The rest of the players chimed in, repeating the same expletive over and over. A moment or so later, the referee knocked on the door announcing the start of the second half. The team to a man stormed out of the locker room repeating their chant as they went.

The game ended one hour later:

Oceanside Pirates – 21

San Diego – 14.

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(Continued from page 5)

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It takes intellectual courage to grasp America's history. Begin by disregarding the entertaining PBS documentaries produced by Ken Burns and Garry Wills, a rewrite of history wherein Thomas Jefferson conceives of, authors, and secures civil protection of inalienable rights. Instead, consider a dialogue between Bill Moyers and Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), a retired professor intent on teaching methods to understand American life. Campbell proposes that, "it is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life...." Indeed, civil protection of inalienable rights emerged from extraordinarily dark times; a theocratic abyss filled with centuries of terrifying inquisitions, Puritan and Catholic monarchs throwing hundreds of thousands into prison to starve, beheadings, and tortures.

Realize that America's best ideals emerged from Newport, from our historic neighborhoods. Exalting religious toleration, Newport founder John Clarke MD realized that the best of intentions meant nothing without civil protection; a sovereign must accept and defend the ideal.

Against all odds, Clarke succeeded in obtaining King Charles II's seal on Rhode Island's Royal Charter of 1663. Not only did this Charter remove perhaps 50% of the King's power (consider that Charles II was adamant

in his religious control and disdain for "fringe religions"), it also annulled Connecticut's annexing 90% of Rhode Island's property. Our Charter was heretical and it flew in the face of neighboring Puritan colonies.

2013 marks the 350th anniversary of Rhode Island's Charter of 1663. It is our astounding gift to world civilization. Isn't it time to join together to have Newport recognized as a World Heritage Site? Is not it time to put an end to the mindless cultivation of Newport as nothing more than a watering hole?

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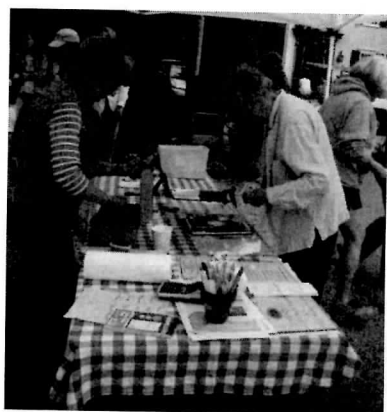
PLANT SALE - 5/26/12

by Laurice Shaw

The plant sale was a big success taking in over \$1,785.00 with a profit of just over \$1,300.00. We were lucky to have a gorgeous day after a rainy week. Perfect!



A great group of volunteers including: Beth O'Shea, John Ward III, Nancy Scott, Ron Barr, Barbara Bessette, Constance Metcalf, Sue Beckers, Jennifer Hering, Patty MacLeish, Joan Simmons, Mary Berlinghoff, Mike Conroy, Mike Cullen, Jack Maytum, Beth Cullen and Laurie Shaw made it all happen. St. John's was kind enough to let us use the beautiful grass corridor north of the church and the parking lot. Teddie Shaw and company provided yummy goodies and coffee.



It was a fantastic example of generous neighborhood spirit with donations coming in from all areas of the Point and beyond. The rainy weather prior to the sale made some of the digging of plants that were offered difficult but we had a bounty of beautiful plants.

We partnered with 'Newport In Bloom' to utilize some of the plants left over from their sale the week before by purchasing at cost and taking the larger shrubs on 'consignment' as the remainders could be returned to Hoogendoorn Nursery. We purchased wholesale herbs from Chases Farm, which were very popular. We also had some fun 'stuff' donated to sell on a white elephant table, notably a large quantity of clay pots from Elizabeth Stetson of Thames St. Many gardening books were also donated and added interest and money to the sale.

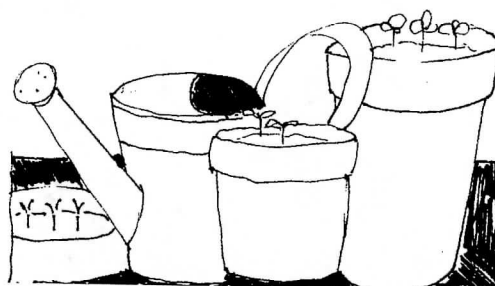
The sale was held from 9-1 on Saturday the 26th. Being Memorial Day weekend there were plenty of folks on hand. We had press releases in both the *Newport Daily News* and *Newport This Week*. Internet postings were with both newspapers sites as well as Newport Patch. Email blasts were sent out to Point Assoc. members via 'Wild Apricot' and the 'Pointer Sisters', and ALN also was notified. The classic flyer, with Ilse Nesbitt's iconic Solomon's seal design, was plastered over the Point and other neighborhoods. Free standing signs with balloons were stationed at Farewell and VanZandt, America's Cup and Poplar, Washington and Willow, and Third and Willow.

The relatively few plants that remained were either planted in some public areas like Martin Park near the Van Zandt pier or, as in the case of some perennials, are being tended to use again next year. Please, think of next year's sale as you are tending and culling your gardens. Things potted up now for sale in the spring will give us a huge leg up on next year's sale. Please save us your pots too (especially medium and large). Call Laurie Shaw at 846-3945 or lauriceshaw@msn.com if you need help.

The focus for proceeds from the sale is Mary Ferrazzoli Park at the southern end of Washington St. at Long Wharf. Folks seemed to enjoy knowing where the money was going to be spent and in particular commented on the appropriateness of honoring Mary.



On to next year!!





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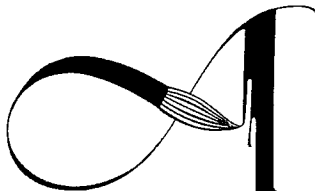


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