Island Times, Apr 2006

Mary Lou Wendell

David Tyler

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House island owners air problems with Portland

BY DAVID TYLER

The city's Ocean Gateway project has put the future of the Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. and Museum in jeopardy, according to railroad officials. The railroad gives train rides along the city's eastern waterfront to thousands of adults and children every year.

Hundreds of feet of railroad track were ripped up recently to make way for Ocean Gateway, the $10 million water taxi system. The railroad was to be relocated after the Ocean Gateway project was completed. But officials at the railroad company said they found out last week that 700 feet of track will not be restored. That's a problem for the railroad since it is the section of track that runs along Commercial Street, the most visible part of the railroad.

The railroad's ticket booth remains on Commercial Street, but it is also slated for removal.

Without its presence on Commercial Street, one of the busiest sections of the Old Port, the future of the railroad is uncertain, said Randall Brandes, treasurer and a volunteer operator for the railroad company, which also operates a museum.

"It's questionable whether we will be able to survive this," Brandes said. "I would hate to disappoint a lot of kids out there.

Currently, instead of its track ending at its current location at the intersection of Commercial Street and Franklin Arterial, the railroad would end closer to the water just below the former RAILROAD, page 6

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CBITD board considers no confidence petition

BY DAVID TYLER

An employee petition listing 11 complaints against the management of Casco Bay Lines is being considered at a special meeting of the Casco Bay Lines Island Transit District on March 31. The board is also scheduled to talk about negotiations with the seafarer's bargaining unit, according to a meeting agenda posted at the ferry terminal. The meeting will be open to the public.

The petition includes the names of 26 Casco Bay Lines employees, including five senior captains, nine deckhands and two operations agents. It states that the petitioners no longer support or have confidence in Casco Bay Lines' general manager.

"Management needs to be evaluated," said Rob Anderson, an operations agent who signed the petition. "They need to do some investigating to find out why many people are upset and why so many people signed this petition.""
Parking restrictions

Now that construction on Ocean Gate­way has begun, parking for islanders in city-owned lots at the Portland Ocean Ter­minal will be reduced. Starting April 8, con­struction will reduce the number of park­ing spaces in the city lots by between 30 and 100 spaces, said Larry Meade, assistan­t city manager. "The bottom line is that there will be parking spaces available through the summer, but there won't be as many as last year." Islanders with spaces in this lot will be moved to the gravel lots beyond the front parking lot. The lot nearest to Sprague's Boatyard will be used this year, Meade said. "Even with the shift to fewer spaces, the big­gest effect will be on the seasonal popula­tion," he said. "My assessment would be that people who are year-round will find their places early. There is room for them to move." The city's Waterfront Department will still be managing these parking lots. The Parking Department will also work with owners of private lots to help people find parking, although they will have to pay pri­vate rates.

Cocaine arrests on Peaks

Police arrested two Peaks Island residents and issued a summons to a third resident in relation to two incidents involving crack coc­aine, according to Officer Dan Rose, Peaks Island Division, Portland Police Depart­ment. The first incident occurred on May 11 and the second incident happened two weeks after that.

Rose said that William Heller, of Island Avenue, has already appeared in court on charges of possession of crack cocaine and possession of drug paraphernalia. Rose said he could not release the name of the other resident arrested because he had not yet ap­peared in court.

"We have some people out here who par­ticipate in those types of activities," he said, "but things aren't going to get overlooked. We're going to crack down on people out here; we have to protect our kids." Although Peaks has fewer people than the mainland, "we have the same issues out here, such as drug abuse and domestic vio­lence," Rose said. If residents have informa­tion about islanders either using or dealing drugs, they should come to island police of­ficers first, he said. Residents can contact Rose directly at the station, or e-mail him at Danielie@portlandmaine.gov.

Legislature considers Chebeague secession

The bill that would grant Chebeague Island independence, L.D. 1735, could have its first reading in the Maine House of Repre­sentatives as early as March 21. Chebeague Island is the last state of a secession process that began in March of 2005.

On March 8, the Joint Standing Commit­tee on State and Local Government voted unanimously that Chebeague's secession from the town of Cumberland should be passed by the full Legislature. The bill reads: a first and second reading in the House; then will go to the Senate for first and readings. The final step would be enactment by both branches. It was initially thought that this enactment would require a simple majority vote in both houses to pass. However, Herb Maine, president of the Chebeague Island Community Association, said that because the act would require Cumberland to spend some money, the Chebeague bill would need a two-thirds vote from each branch in order to pass. The amount of money is small, the cost of redrawing maps and dividing up records. But this is a constitutional issue, as the state cannot impose any costs on local governments.

"If feasible, we can rise to this chal­lenge," Maine said, "and it will be much stronger state because of it." Since March 8, when the State and Local Government approved the bill, there have been supporters of Chebeague independ­ence at the State House every day the Leg­islature has been in session. "We've main­tained strong presence," said Maine. "And we've had a very warm reception from most people we've had the opportunity to talk to." -David Tyler

Business association formed

On the evening of March 1, 10 Peaks Is­landers gathered at the Peaks Cafe to discuss the creation of a Peaks Island small business association. The conversation focused on what the groups purpose would be, and how it could best support a healthy, sustainable Peaks Island business community. Present present agreed that such an association would not only help small business own­ers to better support each other, but that it would also create an opportunity for better communication with the larger Peaks Island community. The group's next meeting will be held on Wed., April 5, at 7 p.m. at the Peaks Cafe. Topics will include the group's name and mission statement, and the develop­ment of an island business directory. Every­one engaged in commerce on Peaks Island is invited to attend.

-Sarah Hennessey

Diving for soda machines

Drivers are scheduled to search for two soda ma­chines that were dumped off the pier at the Peaks Island ferry landing on Christmas Eve, 2005. Both machines were dumped into the bay by a group of intoxicated young adults, according Officer Dan Rose, Peaks Island Division, Portland Police Department. The loss due to this incident is over $3,000. The machines were owned by The Coca-Cola Company and Pepsi, but were stocked and maintained by island residents Stan Han­ning and Nancy Clark, Rose said. "They are doing a service for the people on the is­land," he said, "they aren't profiting a whole lot from these machines. The islanders gave police permission to try and resolve this case through mediation, rather than prosecution." Rose said. "Usually we prosecute everybody, but this is an island community, and it is a little different." -David Tyler

Oysterfest

Saturday, April 8th

5-9pm

Fresh Oysters served

3 ways:

- On the 1/2 shell
- Rockefeller
- Fried

Tickets: $28 in advance, $32 at the door
Includes 12 oysters prepared any of these 3 ways and 1 paired beverage.

Call 766-5100 for reservations. All major credit cards accepted.

New Peaks' Web site created

Under the initiative of Sarah Hennessey, please see BRIEFS, page 3.
Peaks tunnel proposed

In a surprise move, the state Department of Transportation (DOT) announced a proposal this week to build an underground tunnel connecting Peaks Island to Portland. The $300 million project would begin next spring and is estimated to take anywhere from five years to complete.

The state DOT awarded an initial $100,000 to the international engineering firm of Hugh E. Louis & Associates, based in Dubuque, Iowa, to create a feasibility study for the new tunnel, currently referred to as the "Peaks Tunnel." This is one of the firms that initially submitted a proposal to build the Channel, the 31-mile-long rail tunnel that connects France to England. That proposal was rejected.

But officials at the Iowa firm say the Peaks Island tunnel would be much more like the Holland Tunnel, which connects New York to New Jersey. Back in the 1920s, people there had many of the same problems that we have here on Peaks and in Portland. Ferries were the only way to get across the Hudson River and it became very difficult to transport more than 20,000 vehicles a day. So New York decided to build an automobile tunnel.

Now, more than 100,000 vehicles pass through daily.

Portland city councilors say they are very excited about the Peaks Island tunnel proposal and expect the new project will appeal to many Islanders, including those fighting to secede from Portland.

"This should solve many of the problems we face on the island," said newly elected councilor Thomas D.O. Little. "Take the problems of islanders moving off, for example." Little said.

"There could be a very high exit fee in the form of a toll for moving vans leaving the island, say $150. And there could be no fee for moving vans coming onto the island. And islanders would never have to worry about parking in their neighborhood again."

Also, Little said, it would be possible to shut the tunnel down once a year to herd the deer off the island. "We wouldn’t have to shoot them anymore," Little said. "We would be able to just run them out of town."

The state DOT’s project manager, Big. R. Isb alternative, would be to shut up the roads and then use a ferry to transport islanders. "That would allow Charter Buses and Construction vehicles such as cranes, fork-lifts, and dump trucks on and off the island with ease." Ever since I was a kid, I’ve loved building tunnels," Isb said. "Even now, whenever I take my family to the beach, the first thing I do with my kids is build sand tunnels. Building this tunnel to Peaks is just taking it to the next level.

Several large waterfront homes on City Point Road, Island Avenue and Centennial would have to be torn down to make way for the exit ramp from the new tunnel onto Peaks. A number of residents have begun gathering signatures on a petition to stop state officials from citing the tunnel entry in "It would also allow us to quadruple our neighborhood. However, Isb said that he would not let such "SIMEDVizers" enter government efforts to improve life on the island.

"People always give us a hard time when we decide to take their homes away from them," Isb said. "But what they need to realize is that it’s for the greater good. Look at this view," he said, "they’ll get a good price for their homes." Officials at Casco Bay Lines are reserving comment on the proposal.

However, officials at the Narrow Gauge Railway Co. and Museum said they were very excited about the proposal. They said they were looking into ways to include railroad tracks in the tunnel development proposal to expand their rail system to Peaks. "It could be a very exciting way for day-trippers to see the island without having to worry about getting stuck in tunnel traffic," said Lowe C.O. Morres.

"It would also allow us to quadruple our neighbors."

Several planning meetings are scheduled in coming months. They will all be held in Augusta either before 7 a.m. or after 9 p.m. All meeting are open to the public. For more information, check the Web site www.AprilFools.com.
An alternative to secession

By BRENDAS BUCHANAN and
JESSE OPPENHEIMER

At the public hearing on Peaks Island March 25, the following ideas were put forward by on behalf of a group committed to finding a path toward independence for the islands that are rolling Peaks Island and worrying its residents. This ad hoc group grew out of the Peaks Island Tomorrow community meeting on Feb. 11. It advocates taking an immediate and sustained approach to the problems identified by island residents at that meeting and in the Neighborhood Plan. This group does not favor secession, but it strongly believes “the status quo is not acceptable” because the way Peaks Island communicates with the City of Portland about important issues is not working, making it difficult for residents to effectively communicate with the City and use its resources creatively to meet community needs. The group’s viewpoint can be summarized as follows:

“Too many people are stressed by the financial pressures for us not to seek to find ways to make it more affordable for people to live on Peaks Island.”

“Too many young adults who grew up here and youngsters who still are in school will never be able to make a life here if we do not take affirmative steps to assure that Peaks is sufficiently affordable to be one of their options.”

“A strictly accept some level of inconvenience as a tradeoff for the pleasures of island life, we should not have to surmount unnecessary obstacles and expenses on the mainland or in transit to our homes.”

“People who will be working will face what of our form of government. The solutions proposed here would rely on a better working partnership with the City of Portland and a commitment from the City to help Peaks Islanders meet these challenges, not just to determine if it is possible to create that partnership.”

“Some of the potential solutions that we put forward, on behalf of the group. We think it is critical to reduce the high cost of living for those who very much want to remain island residents, but are worried that escalating costs will make that impossible.”

1. Taxation
   A.A City circuit-breaker program to piggyback on state program, resulting in maximum of $2,500 ($2,000 state; $500 city) available to homeowners whose property taxes are excessive in relation to their incomes. Income eligibility criteria for state and city programs should be the same—$4,742,900 for single individuals and $99,000 for married couples.

2. A City-operated low-interest loan fund to help homeowners for whom the tax bill still creates a hardship. Such a program would help homeowners when unanticipated, significant, and unavoidable fees are required, and should be available for island residents with a need for a loan. The maximum loan would be $15,000, with repayment at 5% interest over 10 years. The applicant would need to submit documentation about the property and the unpaid tax bill. The applicant would need not be a member of the City’s affordable housing program to qualify. The City Council will hold a workshop to discuss the proposed ordinance April 3.

3. A Peabody-Portland School District agreement to include Peaks Island in its tax base, subject to the approval of the City Council.

4. Council workshop to be held April 3

Scession referendum set for June 13, Council workshop to be held April 3

By HOWARD PELDON

The Portland City Council’s Committee (CIC) had a very busy winter and the future holds much promise for progress in our journey toward independence. Our past two past months, the CIC hosted important forums on education, public works, social services, emergency services, safety services, land use, and water and sewer. We presented a resolution outlining reasons for secession and islanders presented their views at a public hearing on Sat. March 25 2006. We also attended and enlightened islanders and city councilors on island problems, issues and possible solutions for National Register designation. PLP now stewards approximately 170 acres of Peaks Island’s lands—that’s about one percent of the Island’s total area.

On Monday, April 3, at 5 p.m., the Portland City Council will hold a final, binding vote to either accept or reject the negotiations. We present a public hearing on Sat. April 2, and with this public hearing, the public is invited to submit written comments. If the City Council votes to either accept or reject the negotiations, a public hearing on Sat. May 6, will be held to hear and answer any and all questions about Peaks Island’s independence. We will hold a meeting for the islands community.

Howard Peeldon is a member of the IIC.
This island life

By George Boden

The winter meeting of the Peaks Island Engineering and Philosophical Society was held on a cozy-bantered bench on the back shore. The existence of the group is purposely kept unpublicized to prevent the unendurable harassment of engineers and physicists. The stigma of pocket protectors, bad skin, unruly hair and thickness of spectacles is of as much significance in this enlightened time and place. It is probable that there may exist on Peaks Island as many scientists as there are lawyers and doctors.

Our charter is to educate and to broaden respect for matter, motion, mechanisms, and meek load, the need for choice for most technically oriented folks. The chief topic of the meeting was nanotechnology—nano being a thousand times smaller than micro, nanoscopic—one billionth of a whatever. The most afflicted malapertobe is able to visualize a fraction such as 1/1,000,000,000 as being impressive in its smalltude.

Now the punch line. In the works are mechanical devices such as motors, switches, and doodads of all sorts being built to those dimensions. Can you imagine the size of the tools used to build the tools to build the tools to make machines the size of a dust mote? I remember a movie with Marqu Welch and I forget who else, traveling through blood vessels to do nanosurgery on a damaged brain. This may be where we are heading. And it could be good.

Imagine war machines fighting nanowars. Disposal could be reduced to the head of a pin. We are departing from the mindset of bigness. Robotic mini-pots, Parameciums on leashes. Bacteria on bicycles. Thinking smaller is the big thing in science today. And if you think this is the wrong direction, just say no-no to nano. This month's tech-puzzle is how many yards of steel wood would be needed to limit a Volkswagen.

The non-religious paradigm of Easter. Do rabbits lay eggs? I was a city guy like I knows that isn't the case. Chickens lay eggs. How to be exact. So why not an Easter chicken instead of rabbit? Rabbit as fertility symbol! On our cattless island, rabbits exist in children's books and on TV and in Easter baskets. Thinking locally, we should adopt the field mouse or the garner snake as a symbol to replace the bunny. A colored chocolate snake would fit nicely in a basket. Pink, purple and fuchsia niceties could replace marshmallows peeps.

Ah, the power of words. The right words. Walked into the vacuum cleaner parts store and asked for a replacement sweeper head for my Electrolux Mighty Mite. The owner, a woman running the counter, narrowed her eyes and gave me the look of a customs agent. What is it you want? I repeated, and she shot back, looking for a fight, we don't have such a part. Her co-owner husband, sitting at a workbench reconstructing an old Electro-lux, kindly chimed in with, the man wants a combination tool. Those were the passwords that gave me access to her world. In less than ten seconds, she produced a combination replacement head tool from a shelf at the back of the store.

My second purchase was sweeper bags. Style NN or Style M she snapped, back to her old self. Rather than take a chance on getting bopped on the noggin with the tool, I guessed Style M, paid the bill, picked up the un-bagged merchandise and departed. The purchase was a one place where you gotta know the territory.

The same day, I shopped for groceries. I packed about 150 pounds of veggies into my island cart and headed from the parking garage to the ferry. Halfway there, a rear cart wheel decided to go alone.

The situation instantly changed from happily homeward bound to only five minutes to departure, and a huge load in a three-wheeled cart that would tip and spill if left unsupported. In true island fashion, a crowd gathered to help. I announced that I needed a corner pin. I could have asked for a Single Sideband Demodulator and gotten the same response. I had no time to teach. It looks like a bobby pin. This they understood but who has a bobby pin nowadays?

Time was flying—the crowd thinned. I simplified further. A paper clip. One fine law came back from the ticket office with a proper paper clip. I was back on the road in one minute. The entire episode took just three minutes. Now on the deck of the car ferry, a witness to my problem gave me the ultimate fix. A chrome-plated split key ring. He kept a supply on his key chain for such emergencies. It is a handsome addition with the look of a pierced nose ring. Be sure to see it when cast and cast your path.

Please call us with your story ideas at 766-0951, or send us an email at times@maine.rr.com. Anyone who would like to write articles for the Island Times is also invited to contact us with your story ideas. Thanks.

Your input is invaluable to this community newspaper!
Chebeague Chronicles

By Gordon Murphy

As accession becomes increasingly likely, daily life on Chebeague Island remains largely the same as spring slowly unfolds. Tarping is being repaired, buoys are being painted, and boats are being readied for the coming warm months. Thinking about all the wonderful experiences we have had on Chebeague, permit me to relate a few more today.

Prior to living on Chebeague, we were Cliff Islanders for six months. We love Cliff Island; it is a beautiful piece of God's green earth. The Cliff Island real estate market, however, is very fickle—while we were renting out there, never seemed to be anything that came up for sale. As an avid rumler, I would occasionally visit the other Casco Bay islands for a longer run, the longer run on Cliff being a pedestrian four miles or so.

Upon visiting Chebeague, I was captivated by the diverse ecosystems the island presented—pine forests, open meadows, and surrounding views of Casco Bay. Plus it had a store with regular hours and a 15-minute ferry ride. Luckily the Buxton old house was for sale, and we moved right in. The house has great karma, and we love it. Thank you to Mary Cushman for selling it and the '72 Chevy pickup (that came with it to us).

Moving our stuff to the island, however, was another matter. Half of our stuff was in North Conway, and most of the rest of it was on Cliff, where we didn't have a car. Bringing it to the dock cart by cart for Casco Bay Lines was tedious. I have a bright idea to take matters into my own hands and take our canoe to Cliff, laden with our bicycles, garden statues, and other heavy stuff that I didn't want to bring down to the causeway.

The plan went well until I approached Deep Point, where I encountered six-foot swells, an absolutely terrifying experience. Somehow I managed to heave my craft up to Bennett's Cove, and while trying not to hyperventilate, was approached by several Cliff Islanders, including Peter Sproul, who had lots of advice about what I was doing and how much they liked my garden angel. Thank God for guardian angels that day.

The story of the canoe is only surpassed by the tale of our three cats. On moving day, we could only locate two of them, and being on Cliff Island, a Pet Carrier was not handy. In another brilliant inspirational moment, I thought, "Hmmmm... the banana box is about the same dimensions as a cat carrier, and it is perforated with many holes..." Thus were Fransoo and Minnie shipped from Cliff to Chebeague. Unfortunately, I missed the 4 p.m. boat that day and didn't get to the island until the next boat at 7 p.m. The September day had been rather cold so I figured that the cats would be OK in the boxes of their harness until then. But when I arrived in Casco Bay looking for them, I found the land to be green, with no sign of our cats. I didn't know if Diane was there, but some nice folks (I couldn't remember the names) sent me back with things which was a great indicator of how nice and helpful Chebeagueans are. The cats were returned in short order, and we had a wild time on the island, arrived some months later after being on the land by Cliff's Faith Rodger, who was looking for a place to move to.

Being a runner is my introduction to Chebeague, something I like to say, with Runnings of the Woods, Gleno Crocker, and Nancy Barnett, thank you—this kid went from fast in the former to a leisurely pace in Scarborough, Bath, and our great, hardworking runners, Julia Stefano, Pam Calder, and Beth Howe respectively. As for the island, I am very familiar with this little program, this little market (time lapse approximately 23 seconds). My imaginary conversation which follows is entirely the product of my imagination, but at least it is honest.

Cecil Amos Doughty: Gays, I saw a new planarise CHEBEAGH, page 9

Peaks Police log

Feb. 1: Open door/curfew, Pleasant Avenue. Assistant City Manager Larry Murphy.

Feb. 2: Animal complaint, Island Avenue. Assistant City Manager Larry Murphy.

Feb. 4: Audible alarm, Elizabeth Street; decibel complaint, Casco Beach Avenue; USAV, Island Avenue; Serif, Island Avenue. Railroad officials are not giving up on restoring the track and say they will work to find some way to restore it from a different series of locations, said Mary Lou Sproule, executive director of the railroad company. What we're hoping for is... Unfortunately, Sproule said, this summer is likely to result in less revenues for the railroad because of less visibility in the Old Port. If they can somehow raise the fare on the track, the sooner the work could be done would be in late fall. If that happens, then their Christmas season, when they would normally expect to run about 5,000 riders up and down the East End, could be saved, Sproule said. She also said she is optimistic about the future. "We don't even pretend that it won't happen," Sproule said. "You're going to have to be positive.

Feb. 5: Animal complaint, no address given.

Feb. 10: Animal complaint, no address given.

Feb. 11: EMS service run, no address given.

Feb. 13: Animal complaint, no address given.

Feb. 14: Follow-up, Central Avenue, parking complaints, Whitehead Street.

Chebeague Chronicles

By Gordon Murphy

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Veterinary care to the islands all year long.
Cliff Island News

BY LEO CARTER

The first day of spring I went out my front door and up the smooth hard dirt road to our one room school, where I hoped to find Samantha Crowley. I had heard the familiar sounds of the morning recess, and wanted to ask Samantha about her recent donation of ten inches of hair to Locks of Love, a non-profit group which provides hairpieces to children in financial need who have lost their hair due to long-term medical conditions.

The first person I met was Dylan Griffin, who explained that Samantha was hiding, and that her hair was going to help someone with cancer. He knew about her kind act, and had discussed it with his family. Pretty soon I caught sight of the active short-haired Samantha, and she spent a few seconds answering my questions. First, she learned about the program because her friend's mother has cancer, and second she would donate again. When I asked if I could donate she laughed. Then she sounded bold by saying that her dad probably couldn't do it either.

On the same outing I spotted Billy Green and thanked him for fixing the waiting room on the wharf. The door had been damaged for some time and Tom Forlité, who works for the city of Portland, had hired Billy to fix the door and get rid of the pigeons that had moved in and created a mess. Billy has also been responsible for clearing the wharf and float during this winter. Kudos to Billy and Tom for getting things done, and to Steve LaFlamme who helped with communications, as he so often does.

My bees have emerged on a couple of the recent sunny warm days, and I notice that the area around the hives has no fresh signs of shine. The emerging flies have not been cropped to the ground as was normal in past years. I imagine that this is attributable to the depredation program authorized by Portland and Maine officials. Thanks are due to the deer committee, as well as the city and state officials. Heartfelt gratitude goes to Earl and David MacVane, whose unsullied work in the cold has returned some balance to our ecosystem. Almost everyone is pleased.

Barge landing update

Portland and most of the year round community continue their efforts to get a new barge landing on the site offered by Land Associates. Opponents from the southwestern end of the island are still resisting the city's efforts to get the project done, and to insure normal services. So far two city boards have approved and reviewed the project. People are hoping that some kind of compromise will smooth the way for this needed facility to be available soon.

An elevated development

A big stir has been occurring on Cliff Island as details of a massive ambitious development plan become public. People have been discussing the story that investors, including a Saudi prince, have sought options to buy several sizable tracts of land to develop a high-rise complex for offshore banking. Residents are organizing to oppose this effort, which would disrupt the harmony and tranquility that most people cherish. If the project is allowed to continue there are said to be plans for a fancy marina, too. Landowners would be well compensated for their properties, possibly up to 10 times the current assessed values. Families on the island would benefit from employment opportunities that should be available in the offshore banking business that will be operated on the upper stories of the new building. Offshore banking will be permitted because the upper floors of the innovative structure will float on an air cushion provided by solar powered fans in the lower portion of the building.

Once the floors are floating they will not be connected to the United States, and will qualify as offshore even though the separation will only be an inch or two. Large amounts of money are expected to be transported to and from the island electronically, and the bank has offered to compensate residents with a tiny fraction of these transactions. Special arrangements are being made to use this money to eliminate the need for taxation on any kind on the island.

If your heart is beating too fast, or you are concerned about the previous two paragraphs, please write the first letter of each sentence of a piece of paper.

Thank you One and All.

Susan, Fan, Tai, and I would like to thank the Inn and everyone who came to the Spring Party on March 4 to support Susan in her fight against Breast Cancer. We are profoundly moved and deeply appreciative of each of you and for the love you've shown us, your compassion, and your financial support. We are truly blessed.

Paul, Susan, and Fan Tai

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- CLIFF ISLAND $65.00

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HEARING, from page 2

LOOKING for more recycling options, but nothing has been done. Decisions about the location and construction of public works buildings have been made by the city and the islanders have to live with those decisions, they said.

The city has also addressed problems with summer traffic on the island and failed to provide adequate parking in Portland for islanders, the group said. The list of complaints includes police that are not adequately trained to recognize drivers who are under the influence.

An alternative to secession was presented at the hearing as well. That proposal involved working with city officials to see if some of the problems on the island are addressed. (See story on page 1)

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island on whether Peaks Island should secede from Portland has been scheduled for June.

Group members believe it would be more productive to look at how to solve the problems facing Peaks Island, before debating secession. "I am really interested to see if we have consensus about what are the problems we are trying to solve, before we talk about secession," said Brenda Buchanan, a group member. "What is it that we're looking for government to do?"

The group evolved from a session held on Feb. 11, called "Peaks Island Today and Tomorrow," and mediated by facilitator Jonathan Juteman. On that day, over 100 residents broke into smaller groups to talk about the future of Peaks Island.

These problems are immediate and can be addressed as the secession debate continues, Cohen said. "I don't think it's in the island's best interests to wait and figure out whether we are going to have secession or not in order to wait and do these things," he said.

Marcy Appel, another group member, would like the group to expand. "We need to see how many people there are who are interested in exploring alternatives," she said. Those interested should contact group member Appel said.

In an op-ed column, running in this morning's edition, Buchanan and Perry Sutherland identified four problems and potential solutions to the following:

- costing issues: taxation, governmental structure, the lack of affordable housing on the island, and problems with parking and transportation.
- Solutions to the taxation problem include an additional $500 city tax to help homeowners, to piggyback on the state circuit breaker program and a city-run low-interest loan fund for homeowners who need additional help.
- Buchanan and Sutherland proposed a non-voting island seat on the City Council and replacing the Peaks Island Neighborhood Association with an elected island council to solve island representation problems.
- Reviving zoning rules specifically to help people on Peaks Island build more affordable housing and working with the public, private and non-profit sectors to create more affordable housing on the island are additional suggestions.

Finally, Buchanan and Sutherland suggest working with the city to make sure affordable parking is available on the mainland to year-round islanders and creating multiple parking alternatives, with different prices. The Metro bus system schedule should be with islanders so those who wanted to park in free lots could take the bus.

Michael Richards, one of the leaders of the Island Independence Conference, said he would like to see these ideas. In fact, Richards is part of the group's transportation subcommittee.

"Certainly I welcome the exploration of any alternative to secession that would accomplish what I think are the goals that we are pursuing," he said. "I think the city has said those goals are a reduction in taxes and achieving local power in order to govern the island, but if those can be accomplished without secession and self-government," he said.

Large City Councillor Nick Mavodones said he is glad these ideas have been proposed. "We've got to have the good ideas, and being willing to communicate, and we're willing to communicate he said.

He compared the relationship between the island and the city to a marriage, and said this is the time to assess the relationship. There are some communication problems, there are some insensitivity issues," he said. "If both sides are willing to make a commitment... we can make the relationship so much better that a vast majority of people will feel that's better to stay in the relationship," Suslovic said.

"If secession was provided an opportunity for those on all side of the secession issue to identify the pros and cons of the relationship, he said, that in the past the city has not been as sensitive to the unique needs of the island, although the mayor has done a good job of trying to get their needs met. "It's time to talk to the school and island police, fire and emergency medicine services."

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Earth Day movement

Earth Day began in 1970 when Senator Gaylord Nelson asked Dennis Hayes, a Harvard graduate student interested in solar energy, to become the national coordinator for the event. The first Earth Day organizers in different cities protested against air pollution, oil spills, vanished wilderness, DDT and poaching—and many other problems. But Earth Day was to effect a huge town meeting, asserting that there is more to the American Dream than ever-increasing consumption.

According to Dennis Hayes, Earth Day launched the modern environmental movement, and today it is celebrated in many different countries. There is on-going concern for the earth's natural systems which people are using in ways harmful to these systems. Some current major issues include:

- *extensive fossil fuels, leading to atmospheric pollution and climate change;
- *waste and recycling;
- *pollution of air, water, earth;
- *protecting animal and plant life, and water systems.

Over the years, Peaks Island has had a number of Earth Day activities. This year, on Saturday April 22, (PEAT Foundation) is organizing Clean Peaks Activities. Look for further information and also for posters made by our Peaks Island Elementary students.

Peaks Island has many people who are good models of environmental concern and action. In 1979, the STAR Foundation (Solar Technologies and Applied Research) bought Battery Steele property and promoted solar energy research, community gardens and greenhouses, built a solar compostingouthouse, and organized a youth program during the summer for several years. However, with the loss of federal support for renewable energy projects, the STAR Foundation ended its activities around 1984.

One of the original people with STAR was Albert Peasgood. An engineer with solar and wind technology interests and experience, he decided to stay on Peaks and designed a passive solar house for himself and his family in the mid-'80s. The house is well insulated, has windows that are facing south, and was built with low-toxic materials. Albert says that he uses only 1.5 cords of wood each year to heat the house. He is planning to add a porch this summer with solar hot water panels integrated with the heating system.

Albert mentioned that there are some other passive solar houses on the island. There has also been talk of starting a demonstration wind farm on the Island, with a high efficiency turbine which might sell electricity to Peaks Island and sell more power to Central Maine Power. This could also promote recreational activities.

-Cynthia Cole, Peaks Island
Islanders ponder the question of secession

Christine King

"I'm all for it. We have our own little community and it's definitely not (like the) city, the way to maintain our own downtown and beautiful place. Portland will make it less simple, less white city and green streets...to me, they're so city.

\[Christine King, Director of Planning for Village Crossings at Peaks Island\]

"We have to think about services provided by Peaks Island and something we need...the changes we need as islanders...is that we are concerned for our community, I'll put it in something on my way through. The Glickman Library is hosting a "Self-Government in Maine: The Peaks Island Story" panel discussion on May 24th at 7 p.m. on the 7th floor.

\[Amy LeClair, Director of Nursing for Village Crossings at Cape Elizabeth\]

"I think we have a better shot at making the changes in our own community...the need to maintain our community, a plug for me working on my way through. The Glickman Library is hosting a "Self-Government in Maine: The Peaks Island Story" panel discussion on May 24th at 7 p.m. on the 7th floor.

\[Amy LeClair, Director of Nursing for Village Crossings at Cape Elizabeth\]

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"I'm stuck halfway. I see the pros staying here. I see the cons leaving, but Portland needs to pay more attention to Peaks and the unique problems for the people here. They need to figure taxes fairly, if they did that, the majority would vote to stay with the city."

\[Bob Blanchard, Construction Instructor for American Science and Engineering\]

Christine King

"We have to think about services provided by Peaks Island and something we need...the changes we need as islanders...is that we are concerned for our community, I'll put it in something on my way through. The Glickman Library is hosting a "Self-Government in Maine: The Peaks Island Story" panel discussion on May 24th at 7 p.m. on the 7th floor.

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"Initially, I was very excited. As time goes on, I have mixed feelings. We have to have a clear focus. It may be a devil of a detail...the city change the tax so the summer people pay more than the year-round residents. There is a lack of creativity on Portland's part."

\[Paul Andersen, Director of Planning for Village Crossings at Peaks Island\]

In the stickboy way, I see the pros staying with the city and the cons with the taxes for people who have been here lives. It's a life just being born here. It's a difference in the life just being born.

\[Chris Callow, Construction worker on Peaks Island\]

Alternatives:

1. Repeal the Peaks Island Neighborhood Association (PINA) with an elected Island Council.
2. Replace the Peaks Island Neighborhood Association (PINA) with an elected Island Council.
3. Create an elected Island Council of three or fewer members to advocate for Peaks Island residents, including small lot infill development and making long-term apartments permitted.
4. Look to the public sector (government grants), the private sector (give private developers an incentive by allowing more units on less land), the nonprofit sector (Habitat for Humanity, etc.) to come up with a variety of strategies to work in coordination to the market, and keep the units affordable through reasonable resale profit restrictions.
5. Fasing parking and transportation concerns we are all familiar with the "Peaks Island Surcharge," the inescapable costs of living on the island that compound the tax burden. Two major aspects of this problem are mainland parking and transportation. This is a broad area of concern with many potential cost-saving solutions. These solutions are made far more achievable as residents of Peaks Island and the city of Portland have neighborhood associations. Some recommend that the city council maintain its ability to represent island concerns and ideas to the Island Council and advocate, with the help of the Island District Councilor, for adoption of these recommendations.

\[Sandra LeClair, Director of Nursing for Village Crossings at Cape Elizabeth\]

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\[Sandra LeClair, Director of Nursing for Village Crossings at Cape Elizabeth\]
CRITICAL from page 1

Little Diamond Island. "We're not tak­
ing the petition seriously."

Five employees asked other employees to enter their name on the petition because those employees were on their shift duty, or out-of-town, when the petition was being compiled, before the March 17 board meeting. There are about 40 full-time employees at Casco Bay Lines.

The petition states that fraud and deception regarding this past and that management did not respond, even when employees brought it to their attention. It alleges that employees are harassed for questioning management decisions, or lack of democracy.

Safety issues are not being addressed, the petition alleges. In one case, senior captains were signing off without receiving inspections or clarification of guidelines. Christian and the management fail to adequately communicate problems and priorities, forcing existing employees to work excess overtime, which often creates safety problems, according to the petition.

Petitioners specifically criticized Chris­
tian's management style. "He has allowed and often encouraged a culture of fear, hate, favoritism and retaliation," the petition alleges. Christian refuses to communicate with employees in a friendly way, "creating a closed door environment," the petition alleges.

Christian said the staff petition surprised him. "I found the accusations not only to be unfounded, but also puzzling," he said. "I was really surprised that safety came up, because I think we're doing a really good job. We always talk to employees and customers respectfully, he said.

He said that Casco Bay Lines has an excellent safety record with the U.S. Coast Guard. "Last fall we got an award from Maine Employ­ees' Mutual (Insurance Company) for a great safety record," Christian said. "We put a lot of emphasis on safety and training."

In response to the allegations of past fraud, Christian said that in 1993 there was a case of mishandled funds and an employee was terminated. Two years ago, there were concerns about an employee, which were investigated, and that employee resigned, he said. "We investigated it and resolved it," he said.

Christian said that some of the complaints "have to do with me having to make a de­cision, whether it's popular, or unpopular. It goes with the territory. You have to make those decisions and move on. My job is to try to bring everybody back together so we can keep bringing out a great product."

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Installation of a fraud hotline was dis­
cussed at a board meeting earlier this year.

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Across
1. Storage and retrieval, e.g.
2. Put on hold
3. A Band Hero, 1936
4. Keep clear of
5. Zip
6. Happen
7. Think
8. Breakfast
9. Put on a rug, perhaps
10. Common Spelling phenomenon
11. Faulkner's "As I Lay Dying"
12. It has dimensions
13. Finger
14. 1936 premiere of early Gaumont Films
15. Get by
16. Unique (one of the bunch)
17. College application requirement
18. Spring Festival
19. Sheimited us to "Come On"
20. 100 yrs
21. Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour on April 2!
22. Collector of ticks (one of the bunch)
23. Cigar
24. Colored sea polyp with tentacles
25. Norm (abbrev.)
26. Sardonic
27. Longest serving U.S. Senator, into the future
28. 57, Bloody Hill Operation
29. Viking, male
30. System of allocation or assistance
31. Hip retailer
32. European capital
33. Flee, perhaps
34. One-name country music star
35. Pickle juice
36. Perfect place for a camp
37. Port of IMS
38. One-name country music star
39. Perfect place for a camp
40. Doctor's call
41. 1936 premiere of W.C. Fields (one of the bunch)
42. Mona Lisa and Cari with a Pearl Earring
43. For jeans (one of the bunch)
44. Umbra
45. Barber shop staples
46. Spring Festival
47. Ta ps
48. No paper sea.
49. Jell-o
50. Fujifilm (one of the bunch)
51. Modernism (one of the bunch)
52. Pie
53. Capture
54. Jewelry
55. Home of the "girl from Iowa"
56. Getsby
57. Bloody Well operations
58. Sanatorium (6-down, perhaps)
59. "License streak"
60. Stip
61. "License streak"
62. "License streak"
63. Body of water cut off from a larger body

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Peaks Island Fuel

Peaks Island Times
Illustration by Jamie Hagan

BY MICHAEL RICHARDS

"April is the cruellest month" for astronomers and backyard stargazers, bringing "showers sweet" but clouds galore to block our view of the stars above.

Daylight-saving time on April 2 provides an hour more of morning darkness, allowing us another view of Venus on clear mornings so we wake up early and look eastward. If conditions are perfect, you might also see tiny Mercury well down and to the left of Venus, close to the horizon.

With a telescope, you might see a blue dot to the right of Venus—that’s Uranus, nearly 2 billion miles away. Daylight-saving time also postpones darkness until 7 p.m., but what a show in the evening sky this month!

On April 1, before the time change, the crescent moon, leading with its darker earth side, occults (or hides) the stars in Pleiades, winking them out one by one as it moves outward, starting with Electra (6:30 p.m.), followed by Menusa (7:20 p.m.), Alcyone (7:45 p.m.), Atlas (8:30 p.m.), and Peleion (8:50 p.m.).

Astronomers will travel a few hundred miles south of here to watch the mountains on the moon’s north pole graze Tarantula, a tight binary star system, and to better calculate the distance between the two stars and the amount of their respective masses. After dusk in the western sky, ruddy Mars is moving eastward between the horn tips of Taurus toward the feet of Gemini. On April 17, Mars moves right into the open star cluster M35, an impressive sight in binoculars. Saturn’s high in the southern sky and closing in on the Beehive Cluster in Cancer. Saturn’s tilt is nearly 29 degrees and it reaches quadrature later this month, throwing its shadow sideways onto its rings, the best you’ll see it for the next 7 years.

Jupiter rises in the east just after sunset, and there’s no missing it: as it outshines everything nearby, As- tronomers have forced another red spot on Jupiter, smaller than the Great Red Spot, and just below the southern belt. They’ve dubbed it “Juno,” but they expect it will grow. Both red spots are enormous storms the size of several earths: the first has lasted centuries, and the new one may go longer.

The spring constellation is Leo the Lion, high in the southeastern sky, its mane traced by the reverse question mark on the right, punctuated by mighty Regulus, a huge star sitting right on the ecliptic, along which the sun, moon, and planets travel.

Regulus is twice as hot as our sun, ten times as big and 350 times as bright. Our sun rotates once every 27 days: Regulus rotates every 18 hours, making it quite oblate or fat. It’s pulsing a little faster it would simply by itself.

April 1: Sunrise is at 5:53 a.m. and sunset’s at 7:08 p.m. The tide’s quite low today. The crescent moon occults the stars in the Plea- des cluster beginning at 6:30 p.m. Set your clock an hour ahead before you go to bed tonight.

April 2: New sunrise is at 6:21 a.m. and sunset’s at 6:09 p.m. The moon’s in its third quarter, and planets rise high in the sky at sunset, just below Gemini twin, Pollux. April 6: The gibbous moon sits up above Saturn, great for telescopes the next few nights.

April 7-8: Mercury is as high and bright as it gets this cycle, but still just a pinpoint of light above the eastern horizon before dawn. Leap today, barely 6 feet between high and low this morning, because the moon’s at apogee tomorrow.

April 13b: Full moon tonight is called Pink Moon, named for the pink wild moss or phlox, which flowers early in spring. Other names for this moon include Egg Moon, Egg Moon, and, among coastal tribes, Fish Moon, because the shad swim up stream now to open.

April 14: Jupiter sets to the left of the moon tonight, with Libra’s alpha star, Zuben El Ge- mid, in between. Highest this month is tonight at 11:40 p.m.; lowest this month is tomorrow night at 1:02 a.m., just as the car ferry pulls into Peaks.

April 18: Venus appears next to Uranus before dawn.

April 20b: Last quarter moon is high in the sky at dawn today.

April 22: The Lyrid meteor shower reaches its peak early this morning. If you’re up late Friday night, and if you see stars, head for the back shore (or just the back yard), get comfortable and look up.

April 25: Venus passes closest to Earth, a long crescent on the horizon at dawn.

April 27: New moon at 3:44 p.m. this afternoon, two days after peak, means tide swings lower and higher than normal the next few days. Highest this month is tonight at 11:40 p.m.; lowest tide this month is tomorrow at 1:02 a.m., just as the car ferry pulls into Peaks.

SUGGESTIONS, from page 16
includes securing an agent.
Sugrinnis, the conference director, is not with her novel-in-progress. Roundout islanders participating in the conference are poet Helene Schwartz, and man-of-many-talents Olive O’Brien. Olive will provide music (and probably commentary) during the confer- ence’s annual dance. Included in this year’s conference is an excursion to House Island, which will include a lobster bake and a tour of Fort Scammell.

From her experience with past confer- ences, Sugrinnis feels that they achieve their goal, primarily because “the focus is on the teaching of writing (with) no barriers be- tween students and faculty.” Although she says she’s not involved in the planning and execution of the conference as non-stop work, she finds re- wards in the success she has observed in pre-vious conferences and in particular in seeing the “growth” evidenced by the students at the end of the program. Though several months away, the Conference is already one-quarter full. To be a part of the Stonecorner Writers’ Conference, this July 21-26, get your applications in as soon as possi- ble. New writers, experienced writers, all are welcome.
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By Lynne Richard

Do we have Vernal Pools here on Peaks Island? I've been trying to answer that question for about five years, and haven't been able to positively identify one yet. Perhaps you can help...

A vernal pool is a small type of wetland that forms in the spring, usually when snow and ice melt (most years) and spring rains, small depressions in the earth fill with water and become habitats for a variety of wildlife. Many vernal pools lose their water to evaporation over the summer, but some remain water-year round.

In order for a water-filled depression to be classified as a vernal pool it must contain one or more of four indicator species. Vernal pool species are in a race for space; they are specially adapted to fulfill life cycle requirements given the fact that their habitat may disappear out from under (or over) them. They must migrate out before the water evaporates. The newly formed pools become habitats for a variety of wildlife. Vernal pools do not contain fish, mostly due to the temporary nature of the habitat. The lack of fish also allows the many invertebrates the opportunity to become dominant in the pool. Insects become the dominant species for the indicator species, as fish would certainly eat most of the eggs deposited.

Food web that can be found in vernal pools:
1. Wood frog—This is the first frog to appear in early spring even before the tree buds. It’s a brown frog with striped legs and a dark mark between the eyes. Adult wood frogs reproduce, lay eggs, hatch, eat, and migrate out before the water evaporates.
2. Yellow spotted salamander—a large dark salamander with bright yellow spots, that can be found in a few locations on Peaks Island. Yellow spotted salamanders can grow up to 10 inches in length. They are known to hibernate under logs and rocks within a couple of thousand feet of the vernal pool, and migrate out before the water evaporates.
3. Blue spotted salamander—Another mole salamander, but it is much smaller and darker, but with light blue irregularly shaped spots along it's body. It has yellow tail bands which sneaks out the bottom of the pool and out of sight. It is less obvious than the egg masses of the yellow spotted salamander.
4. Fairy shrimp—A tiny crustacean, the fairy shrimp can only be seen in late May, once eggs overwinter in the leaf layers at the bottom of vernal pools, and hatch in the spring. They are much larger in the spring than autumn. The fairy shrimp lives its entire life cycle in less than a month—hatching, developing into 5-day larva, breathing, and dying by late May. This little animal swims upside down, using 11 pairs of feathered-gilled legs to swim and breathe.

Vernal pool organisms are responsible for converting large quantities of biomas to usable nutrients. They are a food factory for the forest. The forest area surrounding a vernal pool provides the overwintering habitat and vegetative food source necessary for success. Thoroughly broke down, many other forest species visit vernal pools to breed and feed, including species of concern to Maine.

Vernal pools offer a special perspective to mass migration in spring. This is a Big Night. Each year, on a rainy spring night, when the ground is saturated and the night-time temperature is 40 degrees or warmer, many species of frogs and salamanders will leave their winter hibernations to migrate in masses to nearby vernal pools. In some locations, hundreds of thousands of amphibians can be seen at a time. Their choruses of croaking and wailing, and egg laying. Big nights are already occurring in Conn., Rhode Island, and New England. And there is no sneaking up on these through the woods. Though Peaks Island’s coastal weather tends to delay 40 degree nighttime temperatures until late May, it happens every year.

So, do we have any vernal pools on Peaks Island? In early spring, I see yellow spotted salamanders and egg masses, and last year I wore I heard a wood frog, but I did not confirm it. I was not looking for wood frogs, I was specifically interested in locating wood frogs and/or fairy shrimp on Peaks Island. I have not on the Island, though Peaks Island’s coastal weather tends to delay 40 degree nighttime temperatures until late May, it happens every year.

So, do we have any vernal pools on Peaks Island? In early spring, I see yellow spotted salamanders and egg masses, and last year I wore I heard a wood frog, but I did not confirm it. I was not looking for wood frogs, but specifically interested in locating wood frogs and/or fairy shrimp on Peaks Island. I have not seen them on the Island, though Peaks Island’s coastal weather tends to delay 40 degree nighttime temperatures until late May, it happens every year.

When I say "we" it is really "I". One of the mole salamander. They are known to hibernate under logs and rocks within a couple of thousand feet of the vernal pool, and migrate out before the water evaporates. They are known to hibernate under logs and rocks within a couple of thousand feet of the vernal pool, and migrate out before the water evaporates. They are known to hibernate under logs and rocks within a couple of thousand feet of the vernal pool, and migrate out before the water evaporates.

By Hannah Berg

Peaks Island’s own Laima Sruoginis rarely slows down, "You can get all the sleep you need when you’re lying in your grave," she says.

In addition to her half-time position on the faculty of the University of Southern Maine (where she has taught creative writing since 1998), volunteering at Peaks Island School (currently teaching about and encouraging the children to write their own fairy tales), teaching and sound, in celebration of spring. Beyond the Peaks Island writers’ workshop, and caring for her three children (Aurimas, Dainius and Rona), Sruoginis is also in her second year as festival director of the Stonecoast Writers’ Conference, one of New England’s premier summer teaching workshops.

Initially, she co-directed the conference with Lee Horsley. When Horsley resigned, Laima took over completely, including securing the wide array of impressive faculty who have taught and will be teaching at the conference.

Now held in Fremont by the water’s edge in a large, beautiful stone mansion designed by John Calvin Stevens, the Stonecoast Writers’ Conference is in its 27th year. Sruoginis says that the peaceful setting, abundant fresh air, and the open space provided by this lovely location, provide the desired inspiration to the diverse group of writers—ranging from college students to published writers—who come the last week of July each year to devote themselves to their writing.

University of Southern Maine students and students from other universities, can earn three credits for attending the conference. Maine residents 65 years and older can attend for free. In addition, financial aid is accepted. Admissions are rolling and applications will be accepted through July. Applicants must provide 15 pages of prose or 10 poems along with their completed application or letter—i.e., all of which is reviewed by Sruoginis.

The conference boasts an impressive faculty of writers and artists, including curriculums poetry, writing (now for this year), non-fiction, fiction, the novel and the short story. The faculty includes Margo Jefferson, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic for the New York Times, and Brian Turner, winner of the poetry collection Here, Bullet while in Iraqi combat zones. New this year will be Jack Neary, dancer and playwright.

Theater workshop participants interested in exploring the creation of stage productions provide a free-page-scene which will form the basis of their instruction as they guide their transformation of their scene into a one-act play. In addition to the variety of courses available, the conference concludes with an evening cider, hot chocolate and cheese, and a reading at which to get one’s work published (which please see SROGINS, page 14

Community Notes

Peaks Fest volunteers needed

Planning for PeaksFest is underway and volunteers are needed. "This year, of all years, it is helpful for us to come together to celebrate the community of Peaks Island," said David Coban, one of the organizers. "We need help."

Meetings are held at The Pub on the Inn on Peaks Island at 6:30 p.m. every other Tuesday. Meetings will be held April 4, April 18, May 2, June 6, June 20, 30, July 4, and July 25. It's a great way to meet other islanders," Coban said. The festival always creates room for the festival and community energizers. "It's been amazing how people have come together and raised money for schools and parks beyond anybody's expectations," he said.

Islanders celebrate Earth Day

The newly formed Peaks Island Action Team (PEAT) is sponsoring "Clean Peaks" on Earth Day, April 22. In addition to a peak clean-up, there will be. Please reserve in advance by contacting Dylan@clark.com or 207-760-8604. Camps are free, but we do ask for a small donation to help cover the cost of the African Tribal Art Museum.

Spring show at Gem

GEM gallery will kick the 2006 season into gear with its group show "Bloom," a collection of art work inspired by spring. The reception will be Friday April 28 from 5 p.m.-8 p.m. The gallery will be open the following Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sign up for summer camp

It might still be a little chilly on Peaks Island this summer is just around the corner. Tennis, sailing and day camps at the TEA Club will be available for our island youngsters ages 6 and up. Sign up now. Please pick up a registration form at the TEA Club and return to the member at 303. Do not send any money at this time.

Last summer many of our island students attended camp on the Libra scholarships. Please see COMMUNITY NOTES, page 9

Vernal pools are a sure sign of spring, but do they exist on Peaks?

Laima Sruoginis is a writer, translator and teacher, and now director of Stonecoast

Oscar Mokome, wearing a ram’s mask, is pictured during last year’s procession of Ebune.

Peaks Island resident Laima Sruoginis directs the Stonecoast Writers’ Conference in Freeport.

Photo by Rhonda Berg