Peaks Island Opinion, Vol 1, No 2 : May/Jun 1993

Jenny Yasi
Kathy Caron

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May / June 1993

Peaks Island

Opinion

A View From the Middle

Anybody got some spare aspirin? That's exactly how I feel lately watching and being involved in the issue of remaining with Portland or establishing our own town.

I wish I didn't have to deal with this issue. I'd much rather spend my time on family, house, gardening and business matters than on watching and thinking about this debate. It hurts watching and reading claim/counter-claims and even heated arguments.

I truly believe we need a vote as soon as possible to once and for all decide this issue so we can all get on with our lives. To govern ourselves or remain a unique part of Portland. A simple question so we can all get on with our lives. To govern ourselves or remain a unique part of Portland. A simple question.

City Builds New Boat For Island Medical Services

Several months ago one of my neighbors became ill and was rushed over to the mainland on the fireboat. She asked me to ride over with her and so I did. Although I've lived on Peaks Island over 21 years, this was the first time I had ever been on the fireboat.

On the way over I was really impressed with the professionalism, skills, and dedication displayed by the MEDCU personnel, who worked feverishly and constantly to determine my neighbor's condition and provide medical aid.

However, I was surprised to find that there was no place for them to work on their patient other than the floor. Since there was no real set up for providing emergency medical care on the fireboat, the MEDCU personnel are forced to work on their knees.

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Peaks Island Opinion...

A place where we can agree to disagree: this is the intellectually open environment we value in our community, and hope to nourish in this forum. Two heads are better than one: This project is a collaborative effort of Jenny Yasi, Kathy Caron, Kim Norton, our writers, cartoonists and illustrators. We depend upon sponsors for funding. As the paper grows in size and number of copies, we especially thank you for making this forum financially possible.

Contributor Guidelines: All articles are published unedited; please be concise. Authors write their own heading and subheadings. Cartoonists should use black ink, not pencil. We welcome POETRY, RECIPES, HELPFUL HINTS, ETC, for our Island Home Page. Please send material to Jenny at 7 Central Ave. Ext, Kathy at P.O. Box 1, or hand deliver by the first of each month to either Kathy, Kim, or Jenny. Submissions must be signed; please include your phone number. Upcoming themes: June/July, Our Children. July/August, Island Ecology, Water and Waste. August/September, Taxes, Services and the Cost of Island Life. September/October, Life on Peaks Island in the year 2000 [Visions of the Future]. These suggestions are intentionally broad, to inspire, not limit your writing and cartoons. We're happy to accept material on any topic. The Peaks Island Opinion is published monthly.

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Fire Protection?

Until recently I was a member of the Peaks Island Fire Call Department. After visiting Vinalhaven, Pownel, and having first hand knowledge of Chebeague Island, I am not only envious but down right angry to listen to the powers to be at Portland suggest that we have adequate fire protection on Peaks or any other Portland Island.

Meeting after meeting of the Call Department consisted of how will we get the materials for a dry hydrant at Trout Pond. After asking for about two years, we received the materials, cost about $500.00, and installed them within a couple of weeks labor free.

We were asked to make a list of needed equipment semi-annually. The list was compiled and that was usually the last we heard of it. There was merely a fraction of the equipment listed that was delivered including used or old protective clothing, some new pagers and a few pairs of protective pants mandated by OSHA. Frank Davis and I bought our own pants at a cost of $174.00 each.

With the talk of alternative government for Peaks Island, our good tank truck was taken from Peaks Island to go to Cliff Island. This was great for Cliff continued on page 4
New Boat For Island

continued from page 1

I mentioned this to one of the MEDCU staff and they said that working on the floor on their knees made it more difficult to help their patients.

I was surprised no one had ever thought of installing a pull down table of some sort that was secure enough to place the patients on and allow the MEDCU personnel to work from a standing position. So I called Martin Jordan, who is the city's chief of MEDCU to ask him about it.

I was pleasantly surprised to find out that in about four weeks the city will be putting into service a completely new boat designed specifically to provide emergency medical care to the Casco Bay islands. Chief Jordan said that the 42-foot Fiberglass vessel, which was built in Brooklin, Maine, by Duffy and Duffy boatbuilders, for a cost of $250,000 is scheduled for sea trials at the end of May.

Chief Jordan explained that the new boat will have two permanently installed stretchers placed at waist level, as well as all the amenities needed to work on patients. In addition, it will be capable of traveling at speeds up to 25 knots, which will turn the trip to Peaks Island into one of only several minutes, and shorten the trip to Cliff Island from 2 hours to 20 minutes.

"It's a really big boat and a gorgeous piece of modern equipment," Chief Jordan exclaimed.

He explained that an open house, which includes visits to the islands for public review, will be held when the vessel is officially launched.

Kathy Skerl Caron

The Health Center: An Overview

A group of Peaks islanders and the Maine Medical Center began the Peaks Island Health Center in 1976 after the home on Sterling Street had been donated for that purpose. Renovations on the building were done by a volunteer group of islanders. The Health Center was named and administered by the Maine Medical Center through their Family Practice Unit at India Street and by the Department of Community Medicine. The Board of the Center consisted of Island residents and a representative from M.M.C.

In 1981, the Maine Medical Center withdrew its sponsorship because of costs: about $60,000 each year, at that time.

In an attempt to continue to provide health services on the Island, the Center was sold to two osteopathic physicians for $210,000. However, since they were unable to realize the income they felt they needed, they sold the building to another private physician for $28,000. Nine months later, that doctor, too, was forced to put the building on the market. In its ongoing effort to fulfill its mission, the Board felt obligated to purchase the building, this time for $42,000, using all its endowment.

During this entire period, the Health Center board continued to function and address island health issues.

Peaks Island has been designated a "medically underserved area" which means that doctors can use their time at the Center to pay back time owed under their loan agreement with the federal government. We were fortunate to attract a fine physician, Dr. Chuck Radis, who served the Island well during the years he was here.

Because there is limited income for a doctor serving Peaks, the Board of the Health Center has gradually assumed the operating costs of the Center. The City of Portland, through the federal Housing and Community Development Funds (HCD), has, between 1988 and 1993, given $23,077 to the Health Center for equipment which is owned by the City. In addition, at the Board's request, in 1991, Portland purchased the building with HCD funds so that the interest could be used to defray part of the operating costs of the Center. It had become impossible to maintain the building and pay the operating costs. There is now some financial base, but fund raising will still be necessary. The City will provide capital expenditures for maintenance as long as it owns the building.

It has not been easy and it will become increasingly more difficult to find doctors willing to work at the Center as we know it cannot provide a full-time income. We were fortunate to find Dr. Elizabeth Rudenberg in 1991, and are happy that she has recently returned to her practice on Peaks after the birth of her son. Dr. Rudenberg serves the Island as a private osteopathic physician with staff privileges at Brighton Medical Center.

The annual meeting of the Health Center Board will be held in August and is open to the public. Anyone interested in serving on the Board may phone Kay Taylor (766-2811). Questions or concerns? Please call Fay Garman (766-5054) or Annie Romanyshyn (766-2887).

Annie Romanyshyn and Fay Garman

Spring Office hours are:
Mondays 8:30 - 1:30
Wednesdays 8:30 - 1:30
Thursdays 1:00 - 4:00

Call 766-2929 for an appointment.

Rising Full Moon

Etherial, magnetizing, squatly, earth blaze phase so huge and close.

What magic makes you smaller as you rise in the dark skies?

Over water your reflection keeps pace with my direction.

How?

Carolyn Coffin Ladd

Johnny Jump-Up

May/June 1993
An Opinion

In a recently published Special Editorial to the Press Herald, Jenny Yasi called for audible public debate of the issues facing Peaks Island voters as they progress through legislative approval toward referendum. Secession is an emotionally charged topic, but at this point, is it secession or is it the democratic process that is the subject of concern? The button wars have commenced on Peaks Island and they have polarized the community around a premature issue. They ask people to align with the Peaks/Portland Union or the Right to Vote. What does this mean?

Supporters of the Union! have already made a decision about what's best for the community, encouraging others to join them without any further interest in past or future research by the Peaks Island Research Committee. They are pushing to stop the process now, rather than listening to the gathering data and voting (yes or no) in a community-wide referendum. They would protest in righteous indignation that they support the right to vote, just not in this case.

The Peaks Island Research Committee had been working to gather fully sourced hard facts and figures about our relationship to Portland with concurrent comparisons to other autonomous island communities and small Maine towns. They have conducted a telephone survey of 3/5 of registered island voters with a 93% response in favor of allowing a referendum. They support the right of the community to vote in this and all cases.

The survey of '92 revealed overwhelmingly that residents wanted more information. The PIRC Steering Committee holds weekly preannounced meetings that are open to the public and where input from Union! supporters has contributed valuable context to the bill now in the legislature. Regular community informational meetings have been held since October '92. The Union!, by contrast has held open public meetings for only the last three months though they have been informally vocal for at least a year. Members of PIRC are unwelcome at their Steering Committee meetings despite their stated open door policy.

The Peaks Island Neighborhood Association has offered a forum for objective public debate, allowing data from both sides to be presented. PIRC has welcomed the opportunity to put out the fruits of its countless research hours and resulting budget. How better to serve that 93% who is seeking more information?

Union! has refused to debate. They say it is not necessary, after all, to debate what they hope to defeat before it becomes a topic for community referendum. How then can they be consistent and still profess support for the right to vote? It certainly can't be when Union! stone-walls the means to let an entire community get good information so each individual voter may enter that cubicle with the striped curtains and intelligently decide the issue on its merit for him or herself.

Jane Banquer

A View From the Middle

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me the answer but frankly, I'm expecting I'll still have to make a decision.

For me, I have concerns about either alternative. I'm extremely afraid of remaining a part of Portland.

At a simple 6 percent increase in my taxes per year over the next twelve years, my property taxes will exceed $10,000. At that price, I'll almost certainly have to consider giving up a home and life I prize dearly. Portland has over the last twenty years been historically anti-business and pro-spending. Steps have been taken in the last two years attempting to remedy this but they are at times confusing and contradictory. Two rather large companies have indicated a willingness to move into Portland - a plus. Removal of the Porteous building from the tax rolls through its sale to the Portland/Maine School of Art is a short term negative and an unknown long term impact. Additionally, our taxes are subsidizing this purchase through a low interest loan. The escalating anticipated costs of a train station and baseball facility are a definite short term negative. I don't have a lot of trust remaining in Portland or the City Council.

While I do believe an improvement in relations and listening has occurred over the last five or so years I am extremely concerned over their ways of looking at major projects. "No" to the different Unions and a cutback in the number of police last year; "Yes" to a baseball team, all couched in the term of "for the good of the City". Just once I wish I had heard "for the good of the citizens of the City".

I also have concerns about establishing our own Town. That's a huge leap of faith into the unknown. I am fortunate I grew up in a small Massachusetts town which used the Town Meeting form of government so it is not a total unknown to me. The unknown for me revolves not around the financial issues but rather the larger issue of self government. The major gain in having our own town is that we as town members decide how, where and in what amount we want to spend our own property taxes. In a town, we ourselves know the.
A View From the Middle

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pressing issues that need to be addressed and through the town meeting mechanism we decide how best to solve them. On the other hand, it takes more involvement, self-discipline and time to be sure the issues are being properly framed, discussed and decided. That's work which right now we really don't have to do; for the most part it's done for us or to us.

For me right now, it is not an economic issue. The City council has openly stated they stand to lose approximately $800,000 if Peaks Island establishes its own town. In short, they have stated they receive $800,000 more in property taxes from us than they spend on us. Another way of stating this is they receive from us approximately $2,000,000 and spend approximately $1,200,000. Even taking into account additional expenditures they should be making but aren't based on our needs, I believe we can successfully operate our own town on an annual budget of between $1,600,000 and $1,800,000. I keep coming back to our own capacity for self-governing; the discipline, the commitment and the time it would take. That is unknown for me.

I'm still struggling with my own answer to the question of what do I think is best for us on Peaks Island over the next ten to twenty years. I want to stay here the rest of my life. I've traveled a lot of this country and have never found a place like it. I wish I had an answer for me today but I don't. More aspirin please!!

Rob Tiffany

Fire Protection?

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and I salute this. But Portland replaced it with a 1970 broken down work horse. 1970 wouldn't be too old if it were working in a rural or island department but it would be an understatement to say that this apparatus is tired now. You can form your opinion.

Please find next page, the proposal from the research committee from information gathered from the Peaks Island Call Department. Please pay special attention to our increased budget of $52,194.00 from the Portland budget of $12,000.00 We have to rebuild not only the material items, equipment if you will, but the spirit of the Department, which has been weakened by false promises and lack of support from the city.

At last I have to admit that, perhaps two years ago, I saw this (secession thing) as only a passing moment in Peaks Island history, that the movement would die another death. However, the more I learned the more I needed to know. At first it wasn't what I wanted to hear. What I have learned is that if we can get through the treatment plant situation, as I believe we can, and people start asking questions it will certainly clear the smoke generated by the people of mainland Portland and the town of Peaks Island will be as great as any other town in Maine.

Marty Burnette

Facts About Research Committee's Budget Figures

The union party has been questioning the credibility of the Research Committee's year old budget figures. This off the cuff attack largely by one individual lacks any basis in research or study. In my Opinion this kind of approach is not constructive, but it does have the positive effect of causing those committed to Self Government to re-examine and clarify their position. Let's look at some factual information - not innuendo, glittering generalities, and crystal ball gazing through rose colored glasses.

FACT #1 The Peaks Island Research Committee is finalizing its budget recommendations for 1994. As you might expect they differ in some areas from the 1992 document.

FACT #2 Real Estate Taxes are NOT the only source of revenue to a small town. Other funds are available such as - Personal Property Tax, Excise Taxes on Autos, Boat Taxes, Registration Fees, Cable TV Franchise Tax, Interest and Penalties, Highway Block Grants, Snowmobile Tax Refund, Education Block Grants, Revenue Sharing, Miscellaneous Reimbursements, and Community Development Block Grants.

FACT #3 The Research committee's 1994 budget does not anticipate any supplementary Revenues from Education Block Grants, Personal Property Tax, State Revenue Sharing, General Assistance Reimbursement, or Community Development Block Grants.

FACT #4 The Research Committee's budgetary research has been done by several individuals working independently in their areas of interest and expertise. The 1994 proposed budget is the result of this two year collective effort.

FACT #5 Sources of information for researchers have been the various departments in Portland City government, Departmental Reports, Portland's FY92 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Town Reports from several similar sized communities, individuals from other island towns, school officials and others from neighboring communities. The Town of Long Island, The Maine Municipal Association, several State Departments, Representative Herb Adams, City employees who work on the Island, the Volunteer Fire Department, Janine Blatt, Dr. Rudenberg, Municipal CPA Glen Kirsteen, and many others.

FACT #6 City Officials say the city of Portland will loose $815,617.00 if it were over the money it spends on Peaks Island if we form our own government. This substantiates the research committee's claim that we can reduce taxes if we govern ourselves.

It seems to me unreasonable that we should bear this tax burden in order to provide the city of Portland with a $815,617.00 profit.

FACT #7 The Peaks Island Research Committee has compared its figures with similar sized towns and found that its 1994 figures are conservative.

FACT #8 The research Committee will have its 1994 proposed budget ready for presentation within the next two weeks.

Russ Edwards
Have you had your child's blood lead level checked yet?

Probably you should. Lead in the soil, lead in the air from lead dust, or lead in the paint on your house—these are all a problem in our environment. Maryanne Amrich, the resident lead expert at Munjoy Hill Health Station notes that the "greatest source of exposure is in the house and water, then the soil. Renovations, no matter how carefully done (by nonprofessionals) will almost always cause kids blood lead level to go up." Although lead in the soil is not the most significant source of lead poisoning, it is important to consider as the digging and gardening season gets underway.

If your house was built before 1970, and painted, there is a very good chance there is a concentration of lead on it, in it, and in your soil, particularly the soil closest to the house. If other buildings once existed on your property, but have since burned down, the area where they stood is also likely to be contaminated.

According to Amrich, "the highest rate of lead poisoning occurs between 1 and 2 years old. It takes a much tinier amount of lead to poison young children." Lead may be accumulated inhaling dust from the windowsill, drinking water while playing at a friend's home, digging in the driveway, or inhaling the dust blowing up from your foundation. Take soil samples of your garden, exposed foundation soils, and 'playdirt' areas. Lead is accumulated over a period of time, and you will want to know if your children's play areas are safe, or if your food garden is contaminated. Call USM Extension Service for a test kit.

Safe levels are thought to fall under 50 parts per million. Anything over 200 parts per million should be of significant concern. Over 500 parts per million, you've got a serious problem. The State recommends all children under six, particularly between one and two years old, be screened for lead. It involves a simple finger stick. At the Munjoy Hill Health Station, Amrich says, "Nobody is going to be turned away because of an inability to pay." The test generally costs about $16.00. The test is not available at the Peaks Island Health Center, primarily because it is not a money maker. A Munjoy Hill Health Station nurse could be brought out to the Island to do a lead screening clinic. Interested persons will need to lobby the Health Center Board in order to bring this service to the Island.

What to do with contaminated soil? I've compiled a list of their suggestions. Which of these ideas you might use depends upon the severity and location of your problem, whether young children play in the area, whether the soil is bare or already covered.

Consult a professional if your soil is contaminated.

1. Plant some sort of perennials, or ground cover, so that you will not have to disturb the soil [again]. A well limed lawn is adequate for most situations. Limey soil will help to bind the lead in place, and prevent it from leaching out into the water, plants, or other areas of soil. Many families plant bushy foundation shrubs to keep their children well away from this especially contaminated area.

2. If you want to plant a vegetable garden, contaminated soil needs to be removed. The top six to twelve inches are hauled off to a special landfill (consult with a professional), landscaping fabric is laid down, and new soil is brought in. Makes you want to cry, doesn't it?

3. Or, if your level is low, you can get it even lower by mixing it in with lots of compost. This is a controversial recommendation suggested with hesitation by Boston Urban Gardeners. Make sure your soil is alkaline, work it only when wet (to avoid dust), and don't plant root crops.

Beware that we track lead into our houses on our shoes. I read sometime ago that we can reduce the lead content of our home significantly by removing our shoes at the foyer. PatJehlen, has sponsored a bill known as "Market Share Liability," which may make it possible in the Bay State to collect industry funds to help pay for the clean up. Industry knew at least as early as 1914 that their product was poisonous, as they lobbied against a law which would have placed a skull and crossbones on their paint cans. We should encourage our State Legislators to

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Proposed Fire Budget For Peaks

Increase Peaks Island Call Membership Role to 20 Members by year end 1994 and 25 to 30 year end 1995

Wages

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<td>Monthly Training*</td>
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** $9,344

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<td>$269/each</td>
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<td>7 Helmets</td>
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<tr>
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** Hydrant Fees***

| EMT Training | $265 | $1,060 | $1,060 |

** $21,790

TOTAL

** $52,194

* Includes False Alarm

** Due to the City of Portland's lack of attention and concern, with regards specifically to our goal to increase membership role to 25-30 members this combined 41st figure will return to $20,000.00 for immediate and future capital needs.

*** Hydrant fees under Public Works Budget

(PIRC proposal submitted to Marty Burnette)
Secession or Union! Another Opinion

To date, the discussion on self government has focused almost exclusively on financial issues. The secessionists have put forth a proposed budget. The unionists believe that this budget does not accurately reflect the costs of running an independent town. Both sides may or may not be right. There is no way to predict exactly what the monetary costs of self government will be. The figures put forth by both sides are only “guestimates” based on information currently available to us. Only when the terms of a separation agreement with the City have been negotiated will we be able to determine the financial feasibility of self government.

A more important issue, one shared but not articulated by many islanders, is how can self government work in a community that is divided unto itself. A town meeting form of government requires the cooperation of and communication between all factions in the community as well as long term commitments from a great many people. No professional town manager is equipped to manage a town alone. Many volunteers are needed to serve on boards and committees which support him/her. Given that family and work responsibilities place time constraints on all of us, would there be enough individuals with the time, desire and commitment needed to take on these added responsibilities? Anyone involved with community organizations on Peaks Island or anywhere else knows how difficult it has become to find volunteers.

A third issue which should be considered concerns our summer residents who are an important and vital part of our community. Our summer residents pay a large share of our property taxes. They support our churches, our businesses and our community organizations not only with their money but with their time and talents. Many have put down roots here, returning summer after summer, generation after generation. They may not be able to vote but they do have a right to be kept informed. This is their island too! As the summer season approaches, all of us - secessionists and unionists alike - need to make an effort to inform our summer friends and neighbors of the pros and cons of self government. Their support is essential regardless of what type of government we ultimately choose.

Finally, there is the issue of change. There are those who say that islanders are afraid of change. Not true! Historically Peaks has undergone numerous and diverse changes - from a fishing village inhabited by a few families to a major, turn-of-the-century resort replete with some fifteen hotels, three summer theaters and an amusement park to a military installation during World War II to what we are today, a bedroom suburb of Portland. Islanders have always adapted to and fully participated in these changes. The few who couldn’t or wouldn’t simply left. But will we be able to adapt this time? Prior to World War II our year round residents were, by and large, descendants of the island’s original settlers, a homogeneous group who shared similar values, hopes and dreams. During the past few decades a large influx of new people has diversified our year round population to the point where, as John Curran has so eloquently pointed out, most of us don’t know many of our fellow islanders. We seem to have become a community divided into numerous and diverse groups, each with a valid cause but, for some reason, unwilling or unable to communicate with one another. Clearly, this is the reason why, as a neighborhood within the City of Portland, we have been unable to make our collective voice heard at City Hall. Can we realistically expect this divisiveness to disappear should secession occur?

Perhaps it is time to put aside our differences and get to know one another. Only when we begin to communicate openly and honestly can we begin to deal effectively with the problems and concerns that are unique to our island community. Until that time arrives, I am afraid that I will have to vote no on secession.

Kim Erice MacIsaac

Testing Blood Lead Level

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sponsor a similar bill for Maine.

Treatment for lead poisoning involves finding the source of the lead poisoning, and then keeping yourself and your family away from it. A vitamin and mineral rich diet may help your body to eliminate the lead slowly over time; lead will also collect in the bones. Symptoms of adult lead poisoning include high blood pressure and kidney damage. Growing children severely poisoned by lead suffer nervous system damage and learning disabilities.

Dirt on clothes, dust on the old porch and window sills, even a cool drink of water (if your pipes are joined with lead solder) threaten our health. It’s hard to believe lead solder is still on the market. It’s a Brave New World; tone up your street smarts, and get those children tested.

Jeany Yusi
May /June 1993

I’ve listened to many discussions over the past two years involving our emergency medical services and needs on the Island. Almost all of them involve a lack of understanding of what the designation EMT means.

EMT’s are part of the statewide Maine Emergency Medical Services. This organization was created by the Maine Legislature “to promote and provide for a comprehensive and effective Emergency Medical Services system to ensure optimum patient care...with standards for all providers.” It is the mission of the Maine EMS (Emergency Medical Services) to provide emergency patient care, enforce minimum baseline standards and encourage optimum standards.

Based on the document titled Maine EMS Rules effective March 6, 1992, there currently exist seven levels of licenses issued (moving to six levels as of January 1, 1994). The different levels of licensing cover seven levels of training and testing and seven levels of increasing responsibilities in delivery of emergency medical services. The seven current levels are: First Responder, Ambulance Attendant, EMT, EMT-BOA (combining with EMT as of 1/194), EMT-Intermediate, EMT-Critical Care and EMT-Paramedic. The hours of training required for each of the various levels before an individual can sit for the licensing exam ranges from 22 hours for the First Responder to 34 hours for the EMT to 54 hours for the EMT-Paramedic.

All levels of licensed individuals may provide basic emergency medical treatment within the scope of their training. The EMT level additionally can treat for shock, administer oxygen and maintain (not start) non-medicated IV’s. The EMT-Critical Care and EMT-Paramedics can deliver medications in addition to all the support listed above. Paramedics are allowed to deliver a wider range of medications. The Paramedic level also can provide more assistance with heart problems than the Critical Care level.

On the Island, our emergency medical needs are met by a combination of EMT’s, the Fireboat and Medcu (staffed with Paramedics). Through the 911 service, the on-duty police officer arrives at the scene, assesses the situation, calls the Fireboat if necessary and has Medcu personnel sent to the Fireboat if necessary.

Between 1977 and 1982, the personnel on the Island were part of the Island Services Division. We were provided with two person coverage twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. All of the personnel were trained in police and fire services and EMT certified/licensed. In 1982, the Island Services Division was ended and the personnel merged into the Portland Police Department. We are extremely fortunate in that a core of original Island Services Division personnel are still with us on the Island. However, through attrition the police officers we see as replacements do not have the full training of fire and EMT certification once available to us. Today, most of the time we have an EMT licensed individual available to us. We do not have the availability of an EMT-Critical Care or EMT-Paramedic personnel except through the services of Medcu. I have a concern for the future as the existing core of triple trained personnel leave or retire. What will be the level of training for those replacing them?

If Peaks Island votes to establish itself as an independent town, one of the decisions we will make through the Town Meeting would be the level of police and emergency medical services we want as a community. There are many possibilities.

Police coverage could be made available through contracting for services with the Cumberland County Sheriff’s office. We could decide to contract for two individuals per shift around the clock around the year. For a higher cost, we could have these individuals be EMT certified. For significant cost savings we could have two individuals per shift around the clock for the months of May through September and only one individual per shift around the clock between October and April. We could increase our emergency medical service capabilities by providing EMT and EMT-Intermediate training courses on the Island and establish a separate Volunteer Emergency Medical Services organization similar to the existing volunteer Fire Department we have today.

Coupled with this organization could be an Ambulance Boat moored right at the Island. Duffy & Duffy Custom Yachts in Brooklin, Maine in 1992 built a 42 foot full displacement vessel with a “Maine-style” hull for better handling in rough seas, powered by twin 3208 Caterpillar diesel engines. It has a cruising speed of about 22 knots with top speed reaching about 28 knots and an enlarged cabin fully equipped under ambulance defined standards. With an Ambulance Boat such as this moored right on the Island, the time between a medical emergency and arrival at any of the local Hospital’s Emergency Rooms could be cut in half.

Also on the horizon is the availability of a helicopter service based at the Portland Jetport providing medical evacuation services to the southern Maine area. This service would provide an on-board nurse and EMT-Paramedic for emergency medical needs. This service is expected to commence in mid to late May. While having the fastest speed between the Island and the local hospitals, questions still remain as to the landing sites since none of the local hospitals currently have landing pads. Their costs per flight and the amount of time it would take to gather the personnel before departing from the Jetport still need to be determined. It is a service with distinct possibilities but until they are operational, all the questions cannot be answered.

I believe we can improve the emergency medical capabilities we currently have. I’ve outlined several possibilities. Others may have a different “vision.”

As an independent town, the decisions would be ours.

Rob Tiffany

What Level Emergency Care?
**ISLAND HOME**

**Bulletin Board**
I would like to talk to anyone who is doing or has done the course in "Miracles". Robin 766-2185.
AA Meetings - Open - 6:15 pm Wednesday evenings. Brackett Memorial Church
Island Herbalist Spring Tonics Workshops, Saturday May 22, 9-12 am. Identifying and preparing fresh herbal infusions, decoctions, and tonics. Includes lunch. For more information, call or send for our brochure: 7 Central Ave. Extension Peaks Island, ME 04108 766-2604.

**Household Hints**
To prolong the life of your broom, store it upside down, or hang it so it does not rest on its bristles (S. McCain)

To help keep dogs, cats, and chickens out of your garden: Lay a few raspberry canes across the surface of the soil, especially new seed beds. (J. Yasi)

**Recipes**
**Ellen’s Tabouli**
1 cup cracked bulgur wheat
1 1/2 - 2 cups hot water
parsley pinch of mint (if desired)
onion 2/3 cup lemon
tomato 1/3 cup oil
garlic (if desired)

Soak wheat in hot water for 1 1/2 - 2 hours. Drain. Layer parsley, onion, tomato. Pour lemon/oil mixture over. Let set overnight in refrigerator.

**Correction**
April/May Sponsor Billie Johnston’s [jazz/tap classes] phone number is 766-2751.

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