This is a very big deal.
Submitted by proud principal, Karen Loiselle Goodwin

At an assembly held in the gym right before our holiday break and the traditional Reindeer Games, our many alumni students began chanting repeatedly, “We’re number one!”. Although it was basketball season, that’s not what the shouting was about!

We cheered because Fishers Island School ranked number one in both of last year’s high school Regents science classes.

• All 13 Fishers Island School (FIS) grade 9 and 10 students who took the Living Environments (Biology) Regents test last June earned the #1 average score of the 681 districts in New York. In addition to having the top average score, FIS was the only school in the state in which 100% of its students scored in the highest band of 85-100. And,…

• The 11 Fishers Island School grade 11 and 12 students who took Chemistry last year also scored #1 of the 657 New York districts who offered that course last year.

When I shared this information with our sole science teacher, Carol Giles, she beamed with pride and praise for her young scientists. “Our students work so hard,” she proclaimed, “I am really proud of them for this wonderful achievement!”

When I attempt to commend Carol on her role in this remarkable achievement, she emphatically disagrees. Carol deeply believes that the results are only a reflection of her students - but we all know better. A large study on teacher effectiveness sponsored by The Center for American Progress, led by respected researcher Linda Darling-Hammond, concluded that, “Parents, practitioners, and policymakers agree that the key to improving public education in America is placing highly skilled and effective teachers in all classrooms.”

I love that quote because I love thinking about the teacher as a key - unlocking our students’ limitless potential with high expectations, engaging and challenging lessons, and individualized support.

I reached out to longtime Island math guru and retired teacher, Dave Denison, to learn the probability of our school scoring first in all of New York in both of our Regents science classes. From his winter home in Jupiter, Florida, Dave shared with me the following analysis:

“There is no doubt that Mrs. Giles is one of the top science teachers anywhere. FI School is so lucky to have her. As for the probability of being #1 in two categories, it would be tough to calculate. To use a little ‘math-speak’, if the two events were independent (that is if knowing that one event happened did not change the probability of the other happening), you’d just multiply the two probabilities: 1/681 • 1/657 = 1/447417, about 0.0002%.

“These events aren’t really independent though since both courses had the same teacher (and the same great school!). So, it would be a little more likely to happen because of this. That said, you can be sure that it’s extremely unlikely - and something of which you...
January 20, 2017

Dear Members of the Fishers Island Community:

I’m writing to inform you that my role at Fishers Island School (FIS) will be changing next school year. Beginning July 1st, I will be solely serving as the district’s part-time Superintendent. The Board of Education will be conducting a national search for a new principal and has hired an exemplary search consultant, Dr. Mary Broderick of the CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE). I have worked with Mary in the past and know that we could not have found a better individual to help us hire a dynamic and highly effective new principal for our remarkable students and school community. I am thrilled that I’ll be able to remain involved by working with the Board to manage the business and policy aspects of the district to allow the new principal to focus on getting to know our students, staff, families and community. I also look forward to working closely with the new principal to support his/her transition to the school and island.

My five years at the helm of Fishers Island School has been the highlight of my career, which made the decision to retire an especially difficult one. I love my job, but now need to be able to spend more time with my husband, aging parents, children and six grandchildren.

Because FIS is such a special school I am certain that we will attract a superb new principal. Dr. Broderick will be coming to Fishers Island on Thursday, February 23 (new date), to meet with the Board and then separately with students, staff, parents and community members to seek input regarding the criteria the Board should use to select our next school leader (see attached details). She will also conduct an online survey for those individuals who may not be able to meet with her.

Rob and I love living on Fishers Island and hope to forever maintain our connection here. We appreciate the strong support and friendship we’ve experienced and look forward to spending time on our sailboat in West Harbor during the warmer months.

I deeply appreciate that I can continue to work in partnership with you to support the success of our students and am excited to remain actively involved in the island’s many nonprofit groups.

With respect and gratitude,

Karen Loiselle Goodwin

—

all can be extremely proud.”

The Board of Education is pleased to now have access to comparative student achievement data as yet another measure of our school’s effectiveness. The reports demonstrating our astronomical achievement were provided to us by School Meter, a powerful data analysis tool offered by the Center for Educational Leadership. School Meter features comparative views of New York State assessment performance, employing subgroup data to highlight how districts are meeting the needs of all students. What surprised me in reviewing the rather hefty spreadsheets is the fact that there were 26 other New York districts with class sizes of 20 students or less.

At our December 22nd school assembly, we recognized the following hard-working, exceptional students and alumni who were members of last year’s Living Environments and Chemistry Classes.

**Members of the 2015-16 Living Environments Class:**
- **Grade 9:** Isabella Basile, Nicholas Oickle, Charles Scala, Gabriel Sparen
- **Grade 10:** John Baez, Devin Kucsera, Hunter Kucsera, Craig Mrowka, Brooklyn Redo, Alexi Switz, Caroline Toldo, Benjamin Weber

**Members of the 2015-16 Chemistry Class:**
- **Grade 11:** Thad Allen, Emma Cypherd, Molly Cypherd, Kyler Hanson, Charles Snyder
- **Grade 12:** Alan Eastman, Keaton Hanson, Elias Kane, Gabrielle Krysiewicz, Arrianna Reyes-Suarez, MacKenzie Switz

FISHERS ISLAND SCHOOL WE’RE #1 CONT. FROM PAGE 1
Members of the Fishers Island Fire Department and their guests celebrated at the Annual Installation Dinner, hosted by the Fire District where the Commissioners swore in the new officers, on Saturday, January 21, 2017.

There are 41 active volunteers currently serving (many in several roles) as department officers, fire personnel, pump operators, ambulance squad EMTs, and Sea Stretcher captains and navigators. Additional members serve as advisors, drivers, radio control and in other important capacities. Founded in 1927, Fishers Island Fire Department members work closely with Dr. Chris Ingram, the Island’s year-round doctor, and the Island Health Project.

Members serving on duty ‘in the field’, in their primary volunteer positions, break down this way for the 2017 Roster:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fire personnel</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Sea Stretcher</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS Personnel (10 are EMTs)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The age range for 2017**

| Under age 40: 7 members | 57 Fire calls |
| Age 40-60: 26 members | 48 EMT calls |
| Over age 60: 8 members | 44 Sea Stretcher runs |

Life Members are those who have served for over 20 years in the department. Of the 42 current Life Members, 14 are on active status. Thank you to each and every one for their volunteer service. The complete list of officers, volunteers, present and life members, may be found at www.fishersisland.net/celebrating-welcoming-volunteers-fire-department/

The Commissioners, officers, and members welcome new volunteers to the department at any time of year. For more information please contact a District Commissioner or Department Officer.

All are welcome to attend the monthly Fire District meetings. The dates are posted on the community calendar among other places. The next two are February 13 and March 13, 2017.

Find more photos at www.fishersisland.net
It would be a “novel” idea to call this seal Earl Gray. And, with a romantic notion, I will remark on the propitious timing – even synchronicity – of its stranding here on Fishers Island. The reporter and community member in me too, rallying behind the fact that we Island residents are stewards of our own “lands”, will be certain to jot this story with its deserved essence of pride.

Sunday afternoon January 22, 2017, School Principal Karen Goodwin sprinted across the airport runway to my neck of the woods, Silver Eel Cove. She had been out for a jog across the Sanctuary of Sands south side parallel to Elizabeth Field airport. Literally stumbling across a seal pup, she asked if I would come quickly to assess the situation. It has been a rare occurrence to find Harbor seals on the southwest side of the Island, and remembering a Gray seal pup was found on Isabella Beach on January 31 last year at this time, I began to imagine it was perhaps the same species.

And as with all small islands and supposedly little events, timing is huge – even remarkable. Just as a washed up Curvier’s beaked whale a few years back would help to announce the importance of community-based monitoring (Citizen Science) for our Island and residents, so too, a Gray seal pup can draw much-needed attention and public awareness to several important areas of concern and interests here as well.

Fishers Island should be proud of its surrounding lush Eel Grass meadows. Both the Fishers Island Conservancy as well as the Henry Ferguson Museum bridge closely with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Nature Conservancy, Long Island regarding the state of surrounding sea grass. Southold would agree we are a “gem” with healthy habitat between Sounds – a refuge too; so it would certainly appear this very day.

Both Karen and I remarked that the exact proximity of this young seal’s “landing” were the very coves and sands that the School and Conservancy see as a future sanctuary and stewardship classroom with an afterschool program launched this year and science classes that embrace this very location.

Over the years it is difficult not to notice, though, the misuse and degradation of such cherished sites on Fishers Island. Often defaced with deep ruts of tire treads, the drivers of vehicles upon this sandy stretch must be made aware of the opportunity and demand to be respectful of returning wildlife. Only by enjoying this quiet shore by foot will anyone see pairs of nesting Oyster Catchers in summer, our local Snowy Owl in winter along with now a stranded Gray seal pup.

Marine debris is also a constant along these shores and quite honestly the entire circumference of Fishers Island. There is a big need for public awareness on Fishers Island, a bigger need for stewardship all year round.

Finally, the naturalist in me is very proud to report always on our community efforts out in the field within this unique marine environment. Islanders on call and coming together to volunteer; in this case collaborating as a team of first responders with the Greater Atlantic Region Stranding network and Mystic Aquarium.

I would like to think of this chain of events as a unique expression of a Stewardship chain of command which unfolded so “naturally”.

From Karen’s first observation and knock on the door, to my bridging photo documentation with Aquarium staff, to science teacher Carol Giles’s charge of logistics along with Greg Thibodeau’s truck, Louis Horn’s donated kennel, several concerned Islanders back and forth on cell phones, students teaming up and lending support. Within 2 hours of the discovery, this Gray seal pup was headed across the Fishers Island Sound aboard the Fishers Island ferry Munnatawket in the back of Capt. Mike Conroy’s own truck, and ready to be picked up in New London and transported to care and rehabilitation in Mystic at the Aquarium.

As soon as I returned home Sunday evening I received an email from Janelle Schuh, Stranding Coordinator, “A huge thank you for each and every one helping to rescue this little seal”.

UPDATE from Justine: On January 25th I received this update from Mystic Aquarium and will continue to keep updating. It is my hope too, that this wonderful example of Stewardship might even come full circle with the release of the Gray seal pup back here on Fishers Island after he has fully recovered.

“The gray is doing well. It is a male around 16kg in size. He has some infected puncture wounds on one of his rear flippers that are requiring daily wound care and antibiotics. We are also swimming him in salt water each day (our pools are normally fresh water) in an effort to heal those wounds quicker. Finally, he started eating fish on his own which makes taking care of him far easier!”
The Board of Commissioners of the Fishers Island Ferry District is very pleased to announce the appointment of George B. “Geb” Cook as the new District Manager.

Geb emerged from a long and intensive search as a highly qualified candidate based on his years of management experience and his leadership abilities, as well as his extensive knowledge of Fishers Island.

Mr. Cook will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the ferry service, management of the various Town of Southold properties, employee and ferry customer relations, and communication with the Town among many other duties. He will report directly to the Board of Commissioners.

The Board of Commissioners warmly welcomes Geb, who will assume the position on February 1st, and encourages all Ferry users to introduce themselves to Geb as he will be eager to meet and hear from our customers.

Thank you to Austin McPhail for taking the time to refinish the American Legion’s shuffleboard table!

The Celebration of Life for Carol Hirschfeld will be held Saturday, January 21 at 11:00 AM at the family’s church Cornerstone Hills Campus, 2 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills, FL 34465.

Family and friends that will be traveling, please feel free to message Hannah on Facebook for details for traveling arrangements if needed. There are plenty of beds and cars to pick people up from the airport.

Carol’s family appreciates everyone’s support, prayers and condolences at this hard time for the family. She is missed so much already.

Donations in her memory can be sent to Joseph Hirschfeld, 9107 N Bertin Drive, Citrus Springs, Florida 34434. The family will decide shortly what they wish the donations to go toward.

WEDDINGS

Jake Guimaraes & Anna Jarashow
Brooklyn, NY on Oct. 15, 2016

Mimi Anthony and Jamie Cushing
New York, NY on January 28, 2017

ENGAGEMENT

Nick Malinowski and Jennie Encalada
December 22, 2016 in Brooklyn, NY
FROM MÉLIE’S GARDEN

I think that February is my favorite winter month because it is the beginning of ten hours of daylight, which is the signal to our plants to start a new growing season. You can resume watering your Clivia and begin to bring the bulbs you have forced into the house. It is also the month to check houseplants for bugs and give them a good cleaning in the shower. And, for extra insurance, spray them with insecticidal soap, if necessary.

February is also the time to start ordering seeds and planning your garden. Just recently the rusty-patched bumblebee (Bombus affinis) became the first bee in the United States to be protected under the Endangered Species Act to prevent its extinction. The native bee is an important pollinator of wildflowers and food crops. The Xerces Society stated that their numbers have decreased by 87% due to “factors like disease, habitat loss, and insecticide use”. How can gardeners help turn around this decline? The Xerces Society recommends the following to create a habitat for healthy bees:

“Plant Native forage flowers for adult bees from early spring through fall; A bee-safe yard that doesn’t have diseases or pesticides on flowering plants; A secure place for bees to build their nests and over winter.”

“Several different plant species flowering at the same time; A combination of appealing bright colored plants that bees love should definitely help.

Many of us will not have the space to plant “blocks” this large, but putting together a combination of appealing bright colored plants that bees love should definitely help.

Spring: Flowering Fruit Trees, Crocus, Daffodils, Tulips and Lilac
Summer & Fall: Peony, Wisteria, Honeysuckle, Asters, Black Eyed Susan, Bachelor Buttons, Bee Balm, Cosmos, Gaillardia, Golden Rod, Loosestrife, Nepeta, Sedum and Sun Flowers
Vegetables: Broccoli in flower, Tomatoes and all the squash family
Herbs: Basil, Lavender, Mint, Sage and Thyme
Berries: Blackberries, Strawberries, and Raspberries

The Xerces Society has put out a book, 100 Plants to Feed The Bees, which can be a guide to all of us. Happily, Fishers Island has many plants growing in the wild that pollinators love, but we all should encourage them to come into our gardens, even if we only plant containers that will attract them. It is also of vital importance, with our hotter and drier summers, that we provide a water source like a birdbath. But remember, the water should be replenished regularly to prevent the breeding of mosquitos, an insect that nobody wants to encourage! If each of us does our part, I am sure the number of native pollinators will increase on our Island.
LIBRARY OPEN DURING CONSTRUCTION!
While the front room is being transformed, the back room is open for business! Popular and classic titles available for circulation, along with DVDs, children’s books, puzzles, magazines and more. And, we are starting to move back into the new front room. Our Librarian Ann Banks would like to thank the community members and the students who have put up with the construction inconveniences of the past few months but it will be totally worth it! We are here so come on by! Just come up the ramp on the right side of the building.

NEEDED: IPP MORNING PROGRAM COUNSELORS
The Island People’s Project is looking for energetic, caring and creative teens to be counselors for the Morning Program this summer. Working as a counselor not only gives you the chance to earn some money over the summer, but also to make friends with other people who love Fishers Island, and gain experience working with children. Learn more at fishersisland.net/ipp-morning-program-needs-counselors/

LADIES “CRAFT-N-COFFEE” AT THE LIBRARY
The 1st one was fun so we’re doing it again Sunday, February 26 @ 2:00. If you knit, crochet, embroider, quilt, scrapbook, bead, needlepoint – or do any kind of handiwork – bring it to the Library for some social time while working on your craft! The idea is for Island ladies to get together, share ideas, get inspired, and work on projects! We have coffee, tea, and hot cocoa at the Library for all. This will be a casual gathering and if those interested can’t make it, please stop by or call to let us know. We would like to start this as a monthly gathering and can adjust days and times so that it works for everyone!

SEEKING A LETTERHEAD DESIGN FOR UNION CHAPEL
Union Chapel is seeking a volunteer to create a new letterhead design for our church. The design should be simple and contemporary in feel, and incorporate our name, contact information, and a small rendering of the church (provided) as a logo. Please contact Diane at the church for the information and the graphic to be used. Preference would be for a design compatible Microsoft Word documents.
We are grateful to anyone in our community who could help us with this need! We wish to have something to the printer by mid-February. If interested please contact is at Union Chapel, 631/788-7898, fichapel1@gmail.com

VALENTINE MAKING PARTY
Fishers Island Community Center
Arts and Crafts Room
Sunday, February 5 4:00-6:00

CHECK OUT THE CLASSIFIEDS
Many job openings and items are listed on FishersIsland.net (in Classifieds at the top right). Full-time, seasonal and part-time opportunities are listed from a wide variety of companies and island organizations – for all ages. Please check them out and spread the word!

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER!
Tuesday, February 28
5:30 – 7:00 pm
Union Chapel
Shrove Tuesday (aka Shrovetide Tuesday, Pancake Tuesday and Pancake Day) is the day preceding Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. Shrove Tuesday, a moveable feast, is determined by Easter.

SUPER BOWL
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5
AMERICAN LEGION POST 1045
NE Patriots vs. Atlanta Falcons
OPEN @ 4:30, KICKOFF @ 6:30
Bring a dish to share or chip in for CHESTER’S BBQ
Dear Members of the American Legion and Veterans:

January 26, 2017

The Legion’s new night for meetings is the first Thursday of the month, meaning the next meeting will be Thursday, February 2 at 5:30 pm. We have a lot of things on the immediate agenda, including nominating and formally installing our officers.

If your membership is associated with the New York State chapter, please consider filling out the paperwork to transfer your membership to the Alfred R. Grebe Post 1045. Tim Patterson, Post Adjutant, can provide the paperwork as well as accept your annual dues of $35. If you can’t arrange to meet up with Tim, please just drop your dues off at the bar, and manager Deb Doucette will coordinate with Tim.

If you are a veteran associated with Fishers Island, please consider joining the Fishers Island post and actively helping with our mission.

This winter, I was able to work with Lee of the Newington VA to establish myself as the first veteran in the Connecticut system to qualify for VA Choice under the 40-mile distance rule, which includes excessive travel burdens such as ferries and planes. As I don’t have private health insurance, this would allow me to call HealthNet (the VA’s partner for non-VA appointments) to schedule non-specialty appointments with Island Health Project, rather than travel to the New London VA clinic. Di Shillo, IHP practice manager, is working with me and our VA Choice contacts in the Newington VA to ensure that HealthNet will accept Dr. Ingram as a Choice provider. Any veterans interested in discussing this further are welcome to find me at the Community Center.

Liz Burnham
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Tim Patterson
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