

Tiverton's Good News

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Tiverton Town Hall
343 Highland Road
Tiverton, RI 02878

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Civic-mindedness a reality for Chris Cotta



Chris Cotta worked without a break from October to mid-January, wearing three work hats. One of them was a voluntary filling of the town administrator post until a replacement could be found.

In a 1902 speech in New York, Theodore Roosevelt said that the first requisite of a good citizen was that he should be “able and willing to pull his weight.”

What would Roosevelt have thought of a man pulling two and half to three times his weight in civic responsibility?

When former town administrator James Towers precipitously left office in mid-October of 2003, the town was left facing a unique situation that the Charter fathers had never thought to put in writing. Chris Cotta, budget chairman, said he felt he knew the town well enough after 10 years on the budget committee and “I thought I could make a contribution to it,” he said.

For weeks on end, Cotta moved seamlessly between his fulltime job as an investigative auditor for Atty.

Cotta, Continued on page 2

In Praise of Cotta: People speak out, lauding the interim administrator

Claudia Linhares, Council president:

“When Jim (Towers) quit, which was a big loss to the town, and Chris stepped in, he was like an angel from Heaven, and the town kept going. The town didn’t miss a beat. He is very well appreciated by 99 percent of the people in the town, and he did this with no pay and balanced two jobs.”

Jack Fernandes, Council member

“He did a very good thing. He saved the town money. He did an outstanding job under pressure, he had two jobs. I wanted to get him out of that spot as soon as possible before it affected his health or his other job or his family.”

Manny Cabral, Council vice president

“I can’t say enough about Chris Cotta stepping up to the plate on this matter. He accepted this job for no pay and has put his own life on hold for the sake of this town. I have nothing but the highest respect for him as a person and for his devotion to our town.”

People speak, Continued on page 2

Cotta, Continued from page 1

General Patrick Lynch, and volunteer, non-paid work as interim town administrator. “Tiverton is my home, and I couldn’t see it go into turmoil,” he said. He worked with his boss to get vacation time to use when he had to, such as a number of Fridays, and spent nights and weekends working to move the office’s duties along.

“The attorney general has been gracious with this, letting me use vacation,” he said.

Pauline Sisson, administrative assistant, said Cotta did a phenomenal job, given that he was a volunteer and spent hours and hours of his time on the job and already had another full-time demanding position.

**“Tiverton is my home,
and I couldn’t see it go
into turmoil.”**

Chris Cotta

She said she was often disappointed in the reaction of townspeople who expected instant service and return of telephone calls from a man who was doing his best to fill the needs of the town on his own time.

Cotta said he first thought it would take about a week or two to get acclimated, but never imagined how long it would actually take. “I’ll transition with whomever they pick,” he said of



Cotta spent long hours at the town administrator’s desk, paying bills and making sure the town’s busi-

ness then impending appointment of a permanent town administrator. “I’ve offered this to the Council; that’s only fair.”

At the Jan. 26 Town Council meeting, David A. Souza, a former Personnel Board and Budget Committee member, was chosen town administrator in a 4-3 vote.

Cotta said that “a number of councilmen had called to see if I had interest, or would consider the job,” he said, noting that he had once applied for the position several years ago. “But I was so much farther along in my (auditor) career that it was not worth while doing it.”

Cotta is modest about his temporary tenure, saying only that he wanted to get the

Editorially Speaking....

“Tiverton’s Good News” is a newsletter for and about the residents of Tiverton.

We invite you to participate in this newsletter by providing good news of interest that will enhance the lives of those who read it. Photographs—digital or prints—are welcome, and can be sent to the addresses below. The editor also will consider taking a picture of a special event. Newsletter hours of operation are:

By phone: (401-846-5169) between 10 a.m.-6 p.m., any day.

By email:
SMatuschka@WhateverEditorial.com
and by “snail” mail to:

Whatever Editorial Services, Inc.
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Middletown, RI 02842

We have undertaken this venture with eagerness. We particularly want to point out the great help extended to the town by **Paul Terceiro**, who voluntarily maintains the town’s web site and who graciously has agreed to add this newsletter each month so residents can download it (see page 4).

Copy deadline for next month: Feb. 25!

town “over a burden and save them some money.”

He sees himself as only one of many town volunteers. “I was one of the privileged few, I was just able to contribute a little more than the others,” he said.

People speak, Continued from page 1**Lori Doyle, Council member**

“He did an outstanding job. Here’s a guy who’s working full time, he was in there till midnight every night. I’m so happy we had him, and I’m sad to see him go. I think he did an excellent job, we couldn’t have asked for better. He was constant. I bet he worked 20 hours a day. The whole town owes him a thank you.”

Janice Gomes, senior center mgr.

“I think it was wonderful that he took the position. I think he would have made a wonderful town administrator. He’s a great asset to this town, an all-around good person.”

He has honor if he holds himself to an ideal of conduct though it is inconvenient, unprofitable, or dangerous to do so.

*Walter Lippmann,
“A Preface to Morals,” 1929*

Tracy Connors, Council member

“We could not have gotten a more qualified or civic-minded interim town administrator than Chris Cotta. He was preeminently qualified and conducted himself with great professionalism, as he always has. One of the real blessings of this town is that—like Chris—we have a corps of very dedicated volunteers who are knowledgeable and their agenda is what is best for Tiverton.

He has many years of service on the budget committee and he stepped up to the plate and continued this service.”

A town treasure: Union Library



The Union Public Library at Tiverton Four Corners is the oldest in Tiverton and the second oldest in Newport County. It was founded in March, 1820, when some young men gathered at the Seabury Store for the purpose of establishing a social library. As a result of this meeting, a social library, known as the Union Society, was formed, and this society grew to be the Union Public Library.

In the spring of 1860, the old Union Society was reorganized. Under the new constitution, the name of the society was changed to Tiverton Union Library.

In 1896 the library made its last move. In that year the association rented Good Templars' Hall, and in 1914, the surviving members of Pocasset Lodge, Independent Order of Good Templars, sold the building to the Union Public Library for one dollar. In 1922 or 1923, the building was moved from its original position close to the road to its present site.

The Union Public Library houses approximately 12,000 books. In 1965, the library affiliated with Essex Library and in 1971, the three Tiverton libraries consolidated. Under Tiverton Library Services, Union is now classified as a reading center.

NOTE: Information about the Union Library was taken from the library website, which houses a wealth of information about these wonderful town institutions. Please visit this website, which is found at: http://www.clan.lib.ri.us/tiv/tiv_lib.htm

Senior Center Notes

AARP Tax Assistance for the elderly and those of low income will be available beginning Wednesday Feb. 4, and every Wed-Fri. through April 15. Times are 1-3 p.m. Wednesdays, and 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

A talk—"Should You Pre-Arrange Your Funeral?"—will be given by Deborah Almeida and Christian Hood of the Pocasset Memorial Funeral Home, Inc., on Friday, Feb. 13. at 10:30 a.m.

A hypertension workshop, including information on heart disease and stroke, will be held Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 10:30 a.m., given by Mary Clayton from the Visiting Nurse Association of Southeastern Mass.

A new **line dancing class** will be held Feb. 25 at 2 p.m. Connie Desaro will be the instructor.

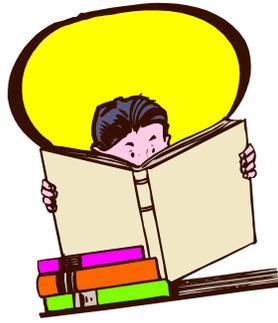
The **Alzheimer Support Meetings** will resume Wednesday, March 3 at 6 p.m.

The Union Library is open 15 hours a week—on Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

According to Cheryl Maraj-Aboudola, library director, the small library is "a fast resource with homework, internet assistance and best sellers—and they have interlibrary loan access as part of the system. There is a section of the community that cannot buy books or computers or the internet, and they come here to do their homework and research or participate in book discussions."

She noted that "anyone who takes a book from anywhere in the state can return it to either the Union or Essex Library."

Literacy volunteers come to Tiverton



The Newport County chapter of Literacy Volunteers has a new outreach to the Tiverton area. Volunteer tutors will be trained to help adults who want to improve their basic literacy skills or their conversational English.

Tutors receive instruction, materials, technical assistance and on-going support. They focus on the needs and interests of the adult learners, such as educational progress, employment, reading to their children, reading for enjoyment, and improving their spoken English. Tutoring takes place at mutually convenient times and in such places as libraries, community centers, agencies, and places of worship.

The training for new tutors in the Tiverton area will be held February 26 and 28 and March 2, at Sakonnet Bay Manor.

Literacy Volunteers is an accredited affiliate of Pro-Literacy America.

To find out more about becoming a tutor or an adult learner, please contact Eileen Browning in Tiverton

New arts organization debuts

The Tiverton Arts Council (TAC) and The Friends of the Arts in Tiverton (FAIT) will have an inaugural fundraiser—titled “A Leap of FAIT”—on Leap Day, Sunday, Feb. 29, from 4-7 p.m. at the Tiverton Four Corners Meeting House.

Donald Machado of Coastal Roasters, chairperson of FAIT said the initial event is “hopefully one of a whole series of events and fundraisers throughout the year with the mission to build community through the arts. We are actively seeking businesses and artists to contribute and get involved with art in the community,” he said.

FAIT is a non-profit organization, and donations are tax deductible.

The money raised at the inaugural event will benefit the Tiverton Library Summer Teen Arts Program. The fundraiser will feature a silent auction that includes works by local artists, goods and services from area businesses and a 50/50 raffle. Local chefs will present hors d'oeuvres, and wine, beer and soft drinks, as well as desserts and coffee will be available. Local performers will add entertainment.

Admission is \$10. Anyone is welcome to become a member of FAIT. Interested persons are asked to contact Helen Nadler at 624-9974 with donations, RSVPs, questions or assistance.

Town Hall Exhibits works by Tiverton High School and Middle School Faculty



“Magnolias,” by Elizabeth (Zib) Burns, who began to learn art in 3rd grade visiting a Tiverton resident, Emily Reucker.

Eight area artists—faculty at Tiverton’s High School and Middle School—are currently exhibiting their work at the Town Hall. The works are varied and interesting, and worth a trip to view.

The eight artists are:

Cathy Aprea; Elizabeth Burns; Liane Burns; Wayne Collins; Gerri Feldman; Lizabeth Holbrook, Charles Marshall and Sue Spicer.

Viewers can read comments of the artists about their work. The comments are placed in a folder to the left as you enter the Town Hall. Getting a glimpse into how the artists feel about their own creations makes the viewing experience much more enriching.



“Whetstone, Newport, RI,” by Gerri Feldman, who loves panoramic water views and has painted on location for the last 15 years.

We’re on the web!

www.tiverton.org

If you can access the internet and the Tiverton web site, you can access a copy of Tiverton’s Good News. It will be in the Adobe Acrobat format. To download and read or print a copy, just double click the newsletter.

NOTE: If you do not have an Adobe Acrobat reader, it’s easy to get it and it’s free. Just go to

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> and follow the directions.