



ONE BOOK ONE ISLAND Calendar of Public Events

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30 6 pm

Art Exhibition Opening: "The Art Colony and The Sea"
Artists' Association of Nantucket, Joyce and Seward Johnson Gallery
19 Washington Street

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31 7pm

"Hemingway's Cuban Masterpiece: *The Old Man and the Sea*"
presentation by Hemingway Scholar, Dr. Susan Beegel
Coffin School, 4 Winter Street (light refreshments)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1 5pm

Giant Squid Exhibition Opening, A Smithsonian Institution Traveling
Exhibition, Nantucket Historical Association, Whaling Museum

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1 7pm

Family Film: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954, James Mason, Kirk
Douglas & Peter Lorre) Nantucket Historical Association, Gosnell Hall

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2 12 to 3pm

Family Sea Fair: Presentations by the Maria Mitchell Association,
U.S. Coast Guard, artist Katie Trinkle Legge, Nantucket Community
Sailing, scrimshanders, scallopers, surfcasters, and fly fishermen.
Cyrus Peirce Middle School Gymnasium

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3 8am

Shorebird Walk: hosted by the Nantucket Bird Club
(depart from High School parking lot)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3 1pm

Beach Walk: hosted by the Nantucket Conservation Foundation
(details to be announced)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4 7pm

Film: *Old Man and the Sea* (1958, Spencer Tracy)
Coffin School, 4 Winter Street

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5 5pm

Book Discussion: *Old Man and the Sea* Facilitated by Molly Anderson
and Page Martineau, Nantucket Atheneum, 1 India Street

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7 1:30pm

Book Discussion: *Old Man and the Sea* Facilitated by Fifi Greenberg
Salt Marsh Center, 81 Washington St. Extension

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7 7pm

Exploring the Science of Literature "The Marlin, the Mako, and Man"
presentation by Dr. Robert Kennedy and "Sailing a River in the
Ocean; Charting Santiago's Deep Blue Journey" presentation by Dr.
Sarah Oktay, Nantucket Historical Association, Gosnell Hall

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8 7 to 10pm

Valentine's Dance including Cuban salsa dancing, Nantucket Historical
Assoc., Gosnell Hall, Refreshments (\$20 members, \$30 non-members)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9 3 to 4:30pm

Sea Gam — "Stories of the Sea" Emceed by Maurice Gibbs
Maddaquet Admiralty Association, 15 Tennessee Avenue, Madaket

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10 3pm

One Book, One Island 2008 Finale: Live Music and Readings
with Local Artists, Nantucket Atheneum, Great Hall

One Book One Island is a collaborative project of community partners and sponsors on Nantucket which seeks to promote reading, literacy and community by encouraging the entire population of Nantucket to read, discuss, and reflect on the same book. In addition, the project is designed to foster the importance of life-long learning for children and adults and to provide multiple opportunities for cultural enrichment in the community.



HOME, SWEET HOME

When I leave the island, it is always with the intention of coming back. I am not generally of a superstitious nature but on the subject of returning to Nantucket, I am adamant. Thus, I am one of those who still throw a penny over the rail of the ferry as it rounds Brant Point on its way to America in support of the myth that it will assure my return. Even if I am riding on one of the fast ferries and the weather is howling, I will find my way onto the open deck just long enough to watch for the right spot and then toss the penny. Incidentally, the "right spot" — where the lighthouse and the walkway are lined up — was added to the myth by a member of the family who likes to put his own spin on things. Before he came along, you merely had to be in the vicinity of the lighthouse for the copper incantation to work.

I always look around to see if anyone is watching and, if I spot a gawker, I usually lean casually on the rail and release the coin with an almost imperceptible flip of the wrist. After all, I do not want anyone to think I am nuts. On the other hand, if someone else looks like he or she is about to do the same thing, I will give the penny a pitch as if I am on the mound at Fenway. Somehow, making a show of it is fine if I can share my obsession with a kindred spirit.

Thus, when I leave Nantucket by airplane, I always feel a bit uneasy. Penny throwing is simply not an option. First, in these days of noise abatement, it is unlikely that the plane will come within throwing distance of Brant Point. Second, it would be frowned upon to open the plane's door to dispatch the penny. Finally, I, for one, am so emprezled in the plane that finding a free hand or the range of necessary body motion is an effort beyond the pale.

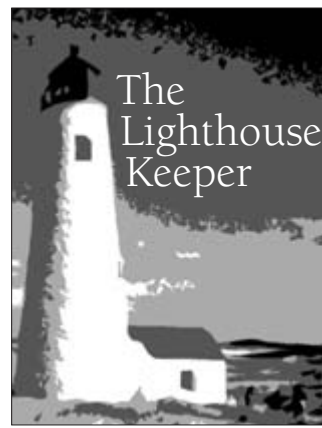
However, the airport must have heard about my plight, because it has come up with a means of assuring my return. It has reinstated the \$20 per night parking charge for winter residents who park at the airport for more than three consecutive nights.

A couple of years ago, Town Meeting adopted an article requiring the airport to give a break on parking charges to island residents during the winter months. The airport commission responded by selling island residents a \$15 pass, which allowed a resident to park for up to three nights. If one was gone for longer than three nights, one could buy another package, to cover the next three nights. Thus, overnight parking cost \$30 for 4-6 nights.

No longer! Effective with the current off-season, one cannot purchase consecutive packages. Now a parking stay of 4-6 days will cost \$35-\$75. At five days, the airport parking cost is just about a break-even with the round trip taxi fare (including tip) from the nether reaches of the island where I live. For six days, it is off the charts.

When I left last week for five days and went to purchase my parking pass, I considered telling the good person that I needed two passes, because I was going to be gone for a couple of nights and then for a couple more. I tried wording my request in different ways, but, it, ultimately, I could not bring myself to perpetrate a fraud on the airport, no matter how deserved. So I paid for my three day pass and mentally budgeted the additional \$40 charge that would await me on my return.

Oh yes, I would be back. Otherwise that daily charge would accrue come hell or high...snow.



BY DANIEL W. DRAKE
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

The trip combined business of sorts, pleasure and grandchildren. It was to that part of the world where "sure" is spoken with at least two syllables and "Yes, ma'am" (of innumerable syllables) is the phrase that no child can pass their sixth birthday without learning.

Duplin County, North Carolina, lies in the eastern part of the state. It is rural and, with the decline of the tobacco industry, it is very poor. It is a

place which people pass through on their way from the cities of the Research Triangle and the Piedmont on their way to North Carolina's wonderful coast. In most respects, Duplin County is about as antithetical to Nantucket as one might find.

There are about 15 schools in the county school system — unlike Nantucket with its three — and by general agreement, the schools are pretty well broken. They are among the worst performing in the state. Results on standardized tests are poor, SAT scores are well below the state average and teacher turnover rates exceed norms. Is this beginning to sound familiar?

Last week, I was fortunate to hear a brief presentation by a professor at the business school of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who has gone in to take a 360 degree look at the Duplin County schools to try to figure out what needs to be done to turn them around. Every aspect of the school system is being examined from the curriculum to hiring practices; from student life to teacher training; from governance to community support. At this juncture, this holistic approach may be the only one which provides hope of a solution to the system problems which have ground down the Duplin schools.

The study is not complete, and the professor offered only a few tidbits of what he has found thus far. One, which was particularly striking, is that there are no apartment complexes in Duplin County. No apartments. There is no place for young teachers to live!

How ironic, that as different as Nantucket is from Duplin County, it shares some of the same school issues and at least one of the causal effects. Do we need an in-depth, holistic examination of our schools?

Coming back on Monday, I was aware of the snowstorm, but it didn't become a reality until learning that my flight from Logan, and all flights from anywhere, to Nantucket were indefinitely delayed. Wanting to keep all my options open — and painfully aware that if I didn't make it back that night, I would incur another \$20 in parking charges — I took the bus to Hyannis. Fortunately, the planes started flying about 5 p.m. on Monday afternoon and I was soon back at our snow-covered airport.

As I waited for the inch of ice on my windshield to defrost so I could free the wipers (and find the airport's little white envelope) and contemplated how to get through the snow plowed up against my car and still avoid backing into a large truck, I mused about how the airport has magically guaranteed my return by converting my penny into its \$20 bill — without anyone seeing me fork it over. ■

The "Lighthouse Keeper" reflects the views of the author and does not represent the editorial position of The Nantucket Independent. Please send any ideas or comments to drake@nantucketindependent.com.