

sports & outdoors



COURTESY OF JILL SANDOLE

The Nantucket Marine Mammal Stranding Team lends a hand — so can you. Call Andrew to sign up.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Here at *The Nantucket Independent*, we pride ourselves on the family-like atmosphere that Don, Dan and Co. have managed to create. We've got Sharon up front, playing the part of loving matriarch who isn't afraid to smack a few knuckles when the situation calls for it. We've got the sweet and generous grandfather in the back office doling out the gifts twice a month. And we've got Shep and Peter, part of the *Independent's* non-pareil sports section (a brotherhood that also includes yours truly).

And just like any family, we've been known to send a few young 'uns out into the world to find their true purpose in life after giving them all the training we can. One such bird who left the nest is our very own Chris Edmonds, former sports editor-turned-future law school student. Young Chris, it seems, has returned to the nest, in the way that 20-somethings do when times get tough.

But it's not quite the Prodigal Son-esque story that you might be thinking it is. You see, kids, our father figure, otherwise known as Don, is on a well-deserved vacation with the family, thus leaving vacant the corner office. Young Chris, in true future lawyer fashion, immediately seized upon the opportunity and offered to temporarily fill the vacancy.

In addition to being an ace reporter and top-notch sports editor, Chris was the person immediately responsible for hiring yours truly a few years back, an act directly preceded by his premature departure from the staff of the paper. I'm sure the two incidents were merely a coincidence, though. But now that our friend is back and in the big boy seat, so to speak, we're going to have to see how he handles the pressure. And given that he spent his time here in the sports scene, I'm going to offer my own little pregame analysis of how I see Chris handling the pressure.

Long story short, kids, I'm worried.

You see, Chris is a nice guy and all, but this is the big time. This is full-blown, top-of-the-masthead, act-like-you've-done-this-before kind of stuff. Being the editor of a newspaper is not for the timid or the meek of heart. So let me just say now, folks, that if you find any spelling errors in this column, it's strictly the fault of our stand-in editor.

Above all, however, Chris Edmonds is a true professional. Editing — be it sports or otherwise — requires major oversight and quality control. You know the sort of people I mean, I'm sure. Doctors, lawyers, that kind of thing. And another group that comes to mind is the Nantucket Marine Mammal Stranding Team.

I could see directly into the eye of the great fish. Mammal.

Whatever. It's a segue.



Friends and neighbors, recently a pair of juvenile dolphins were found swimming in the cove behind Millie's Bridge out at the head of Madaket Harbor, and one of the dolphins appeared to be sick or injured. Almost instantaneously, the Nantucket Marine Mammal Stranding Team sprang into action. People left their day jobs to help an injured sea creature in need, an act that is itself commendable. And in addition to the MMST folks, a great number of spectators gathered on the bridge to watch the action.

Many of us no doubt remember "Flipper" episodes, where the cute and cuddly dolphin would do cute and cuddly sorts of things, and I'm guessing I'm not the only one out there who thought that that kid had pretty much the coolest life in the world. But we've all got to remember that these animals are just that — wild animals — and they're not pets. They're not trained circus acts or television stars. And only trained professionals should be trying to help them.

In the past, there have been a host of incidents where well-meaning souls have tried to help injured marine life. Case in point, baby seals are, without question, some of the cutest things you'll ever see (excepting baby Andrew, but I digress), but it's a bad idea for you to go out and try to pat one or help it back in the water. We've got a group of dedicated, trained volunteers who know exactly how to respond to these incidents. Call them if you see a marine mammal that looks like it's in trouble. Don't try to do their job for them, no matter how good your intentions are.

The MMST has been around since 1981, and they've got the training and the know-how to help these animals. In the case of the ailing dolphin last week, a marine veterinarian team was called in from the Cape and they had to make the unfortunate decision to euthanize the dolphin, which they suspected was suffering from a respiratory illness. But this is a decision that was made by trained professionals, not you or me, and those trained professionals need to be allowed to do their job.

So if you do see an injured mammal, call the MMST at 228-1212, and then stay out of the way. Stand back and let the pros do their job. And to those of you reading this who are members of the MMST, thanks for all that you do. ■

Tight lines.

From the

SKATING AND EATING, BUT NOT AT THE SAME TIME

Nantucket Ice will host a Pizza Skate Party for N grades five, six, seven and eight this Saturday, March 8, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Admission is \$4. Skate rentals are free while they last.

Call 228-2516 for more information.

RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

The Sea Grille will hold a live auction and silent auction this Sunday, March 9, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. to raise funds for the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Boston and to help Adriene and Travis Lombardi run in the Boston Marathon in the process. The Lombardis plan to run as part of the Spaulding Rehabilitation team in the April 21 road race. The \$20 donation includes hors d'oeuvres and door prizes. Call the Sea Grille at 325-5700 for more information.

GET ACTIVE, PRESIDENT SAYS

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is launching the first National President's Challenge — a six-week physical activity challenge to encourage Americans to be more active. Registration is now underway for the challenge that officially begins March 20.

Many people remember the President's Challenge, which began in 1966, as the youth fitness test they did in school. This is the first time in its history that the President's Council is issuing a challenge to all Americans to be active 30 minutes a day, five days a week. To complete the challenge, adults 18 and older need to be active 30 minutes a day, while youths aged six to 17 need to be active an hour a day.

To register, participants can go to www.presidentchallenge.org.

The challenge kicks off March 20, the first day of spring, and concludes May 15.

BRANT POINT RUNNERS

Results for Feb. 26: Lou Gennaro, 25:04; David Glidden, 29:04.

Runners meet Tuesdays, rain or shine, at 7:45 a.m. at the corner of Beach and Easton streets for an 8 a.m. start. The 5K (3.1 miles) run is on paved roads over a mostly flat course that is accurately wheel measured, with one hill and some moderate grades. Runners of all abilities, from beginners to veterans, are welcome. There are no entry fees. For information, call 228-0206.

PATERSON

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enth Nantucket basketball player to attain the milestone and, incredibly, the second player from the island to do so this year. Her counterpart on the boys' squad, Jordan Ferreira, scored his 1000th point on Feb. 1.

Paterson, however, reached the mark faster than any other player in school history. She is the third Lady Whaler to net 1,000 points, following Adriene Harvey, who reached 1,000 in 1999, and Kari Harvey, who followed suit in 2003.

Paterson finished the game with 14 points and added to her total point accumulation by scoring 22 in Friday's quarterfinal thriller against Hull.

Coach Willis Ferreira has been on the bench for all three Lady Whalers 1,000-point scorers.

"I think it is awesome," he said. "All three are dedicated to the game of basketball. They deserve to be up there (on the banner)." ■