

# Opinion

## LETTERS

### CHANGES ARE NECESSARY

This letter is intended to initiate a dialogue on the future of how town government is enacted by the voters of this community. Annual Town Meeting, as presently constituted, is in need of change. The present system is becoming inadequate to meet the growing needs of the evolving demographics and financial stresses facing Nantucket. While one of the aims of town meeting is individual participation, there are concerns that fewer citizens are making the commitment to evaluate all warrants presented.

The future for this community does not bode well if certain articles are weighted other than by an equitable representation of voters. At this past meeting, specific articles were voted based on individual supporters' emotional statements. While I strongly support this freedom of expression, the exodus of attendees after these articles weakened the spirit of the entire meeting. In addition, the marathon sessions did not foster objective discussions for articles called later in the evening.

Rather, debate was muted for the sake of finishing the meeting expeditiously. The following are a few suggestions that should be considered: 1. The re-establishment of the Government Study Committee, given a mandate to examine town meeting. This should include a serious discussion of alternate forms of local representative governments. 2. The consideration to alter the days when town meeting is scheduled to foster more citizen participation. 3. The consideration of a time limit per session in one day. 4. The consideration of bi-annual meetings, possibly with one specifically for zoning issues. 5. To investigate methods to improve communication and involvement of the town manager, planning director, town moderator, Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee in coordinating a town meeting agenda.

Town meeting plays a crucial role in how the citizens shape and mold this community. The time has come for our leaders to be proactive. Steps are needed to ensure that a proper forum can exist with equal rep-

resentation for all, without any loss to air all points of view. Nantucket has unique history of individuality that is evident in everyday life. Changes are necessary in how we govern ourselves to be sure this island keeps its self reliance. Please express your opinion on these issues to our town leaders.

— Matthew T. Mulcahy, D.M.D.

### LET'S FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

#### To the editor:

I thank you, the community of Nantucket thanks you, and our Mother Earth thanks you for your participation and sponsorships of Earth Day Nantucket 2008.

I was very impressed with all the attendance and the great information at everyone's tables. I am also very grateful for all the nice comments many folks had to say.

A special thanks goes to our Board of Selectmen who's vision in signing the ICLEI Resolution was a clear indication and refreshing step in having our local government take a leadership role in sustainable development and environmental responsibility. Special thanks also goes to Michele Whelan, from Sustainable Nantucket Green Council, for her persistence in setting the stage for this to happen.

Another special thanks to Jill Sandole and Bartlett's Farm for not only offering a wonderful venue this year but also for being so kind and helpful with all the little details.

And yet another special thanks to our Mother Earth for providing such a beautiful spring day!

We have some extra shirts left over and they will be available at Bartlett's Farm and Color Graphics for the next few days. If you did not get one or know anyone that would like one please let them know. All the money from the sales of the shirts is for the Small Friends LEED building. The printing of the shirts was paid for by the sponsors and a major part by Color Graphics.

Celebrating the Earth and bringing attention to the things we can do on a daily basis is vital to the most important issues of our time. I firmly believe that we, as an island community can be an example for the rest of the world to emulate in terms of our environmental responsibility and energy independence. Focusing on Solutions is the key to moving forward. We can solve this. Here is a great website for more solutions: [www.wecan-solveit.org](http://www.wecan-solveit.org).

So let's all keep moving forward with solutions, and please consider joining a simple solution by upgrading your home to solar energy.

Peace,

— Bruce Marshall-Jones

### To Our Readers

In June 2007, in keeping with a trend that has shaken the newspaper industry around the world, *The Nantucket Independent* became free to you, our readers. At the same time, we embarked on a business model that has worked well for 20 years for the *Martha's Vineyard Times*; that of mailing the newspaper to every address on the island.

We have learned once again what we always knew; that Nantucket and the Vineyard are not the same. On the other island there are almost no carrier routes. Just about everyone gets their mail in post office boxes. In contrast, on Nantucket there are extensive carrier routes, but many people also have post office boxes.

To address this overlap, the delay inherent in reaching readers through the post office and the difficulty in timing the seasonal ebb and flow of the population with updated mailing lists available only once a month, effective with the issue of April 30, we will discontinue mailing *The Independent*.

At the same time we will step up very substantially the "drop" distribution, so that you can pick up the newspaper in a timely manner. As noted in an announcement elsewhere in this issue, *The Independent* is available at more than 50 year-round locations and another 30 or so in-season. We will continue to add distribution points, as well as increase deliveries to places like the real estate offices where we already drop off extra copies of the *Nantucket Real Estate Guide*.

As the distribution process evolves, we welcome your comments and questions. Please email me at [drake@nantucketindependent.com](mailto:drake@nantucketindependent.com) or call me at 508-228-1654. We understand that the decision not to mail the paper will disappoint some, but we also believe that many of our staunchest supporters will welcome the decision.

We greatly appreciate the welcome the newspaper has received from our readers and advertisers. As the result, of that support, in less than five years *The Nantucket Independent* has become the island's most trusted and widely read news source.

Without question, *The Independent* will continue to be free — every Wednesday!

— Daniel W. Drake  
Associate Publisher

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## GREY MATTER by James Cennamo



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The Nantucket Independent is the island's weekly newspaper for all segments of the community. Its main focus is to provide relevant and current environmental, economic, real estate, political and development news. The Independent's in-depth journalism explores trends and issues affecting the island in all segments of community life. It profiles businesses and individuals, and celebrates successes. At heart, The Independent is dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of Nantucket's character. Our mission is to be the best, most reliable and relevant weekly newspaper for Nantucket and its residents.