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## Readers' views

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# Missing the meaning of Easter

## Daily News coverage trivialized most important Christian holiday

To the Editor:

Suppose the Newport Gulls semi-pro basketball team was brought back to Newport with great enthusiasm. The Gulls' opening game at the Rogers High School gymnasium draws more than a thousand cheering spectators. But The Newport Daily News ignores the crowd and the game and only reports on the Gulls mascot, who was seen hopping around outside the gym to the great delight of all the kids who were bored by basketball.

If that were really the way The Daily News reported local news, not many of us would continue to subscribe. Fortunately, most important events in Newport do not receive that kind of coverage. But there is one curious exception.

A week ago last Sunday was

Easter, the most important day of the year for Christians, far more important than Christmas, for example. It celebrates an astounding — you might even say an earthshaking — event. Christians believe that on that first Easter morning, the stone-cold body of Jesus Christ was changed back to a living, breathing, resurrected Savior.

This is what Easter is really about. But do you remember the coverage of Easter 2005 in The Daily News?

"Fresh off a night of delivering jellybeans and chocolate treats, the Easter Bunny hopped over to Easton's Beach ..." That lead sentence gives you the flavor of The Daily News' treatment. The rest of the article was about children meeting the Easter Bunny at the Easton's Beach carousel

and hunting for Easter eggs. It was accompanied by four photos, two of the Easter Bunny and two of the Easter egg hunt.

There was not a single word about what actually took place in churches on Aquidneck Island, or about how local, adult believers celebrated Easter. For example, The Daily News said nothing about the Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunrise services at various churches, or how some churches scheduled extra services on Easter for overflow crowds, or the special musical offerings by choirs, soloists and instrumentalists at some churches.

Nor was there anything in The Daily News that would enlighten readers about the different ways some denominations celebrate Easter. For example, St. Spyridon

Greek Orthodox Church did not celebrate Easter with other Christians on March 27. Their Easter will be on May 1 instead — five weeks later. How come?

The treatment of Easter in The Daily News trivializes Christianity's most important religious holiday. It may be unintentional, but the message is that local religious issues are not worth serious treatment in the newspaper, even if many of its readers take their faith seriously.

The Daily News should decide what is newsworthy based on objective standards — how many people were involved, for example — and not assume that religious issues and institutions are irrelevant to its readers.

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