

The Walrus Says

By Jim Munro



When Jessie Dutra isn't being a wife, mother, and farmhand, she's a writer.

Her latest effort is a story in "Farm & Ranch Living" about life on Conanicut Island's last working dairy farm, where she lives and works with her husband, Joe, and their 3-year-old son, Joey.

In fact, everyone who lives on the island should read Jessie's article and learn about life on that farm up the road. Her words flow so well it's like having a conversation with her.

She writes that the farm dates back to Colonial times, when the property was owned by Rhode Island Governor Joseph Wanton. In 1917, it was purchased by Joe's grandfather, Joseph Furtado Dutra, who during the depression added enough acres to the original 40 to bring the total to today's 140.

Jessie explains that they have 110 Holsteins, 55 of which are milkers. The remainder are replacement heifers. She said that she and Joe are very concerned about the future. The number of dairy farms in the state is dropping dramatically.

In July 2004, the Rhode Island Dairy Farms Cooperative, to which the Dutras belong, introduced Rhody Fresh milk to the state, and it was an immediate success.

In the article, Jessie writes of the Conanicut Island Land Trust, and its efforts to preserve the ever-dwindling farmland by buy-

ing development rights on three farms including theirs.

Perhaps the most interesting portion of the article is a month-long daily diary from this past January and February in which Jessie shares with her readers the joys and not so joyous events of everyday farm life, from enticing a male cardinal to a new feeder to the death of Sudette, a beloved cow suffering from a twisted stomach.

Photos by Joe Giblin accompanying the article show the three Dutras, scenes from the farm overlooking the bay, Joey on his tricycle, and farm activities.

Most of Jessie's writing in the past has been poetry. Her entry into prose is taking her in a different direction. "I love words and I think this is a better way to use them," she explained. Originally from Warwick, Jessie was a member of the Writers' Circle. "I'm testing the waters. I started a novel, and then met Joe six years ago and got misdirected, wonderfully." She said her two immediate jobs are "working the farm today and saving the farm for the next generation."

We hope there's room in there for more of Jessie's writing.

The Gansett will re-open on Memorial Day weekend.

This is Jamestown's first year fielding a team for baseball's Babe Ruth League. Because of the poor condition of the baseball field on Lawn Avenue, the team



Fishing at sunset

Scott Parmenter and Dan Smyth took advantage of a beautiful sunset to wet a line in Sheffield Cove.

Photo by Vic Richardson

plays its home games at Cardine's Field in Newport.

The Town Council should be ashamed.

A photo in the May 1 Newport Daily News showed Pet Tip of the Week editor Dr. Joshua A. Hatch holding forth at Career Day activities at Middletown High School.

Kudos to Bruce and Ann McIntyre of Clarke Street, Barbara Wilcox of Howland Avenue, who said, "Blow it up," and the Washington Trust Company for their donations to the Rocket Dawgz for the July 4 fireworks display at Mackerel Cove. To celebrate the 230th anniversary of our nation's independence, send your contribution to Box 1776, Jamestown 02835 and we will blow it up.

So far, we have enough for a five-minute bang.

Let's go for the big K-BOOM!

The Boy Scouts of Troop 1 send their thanks to all the islanders who turned out for their annual Pasta Supper Saturday at

St. Matthew's church.

Some 300 dinners were served using 70 pounds of pasta and 500 meatballs.

That's a lot of mangia.

Jamestown School sixth-graders have been sending hard-earned money and corresponding with the children of Ugunja, Kenya, and islander Amara Murray and her husband have been on hand there reporting back the results of the students' efforts.

Former islander Carolyn Jaques, now residing in North Kingstown, writes to say she's been following the exploits of our sixth-graders and wondering if they might be able to help her. Carolyn sends pens to the children of Africa and so far has shipped out 7,660 of them.

"Since January, I've read about the couple who are in western Kenya. I'm going to send them a thousand pens to distribute to the children. I also read that some Jamestown children are pen-pals with some of Amara's children there. I was lucky enough to go to Kenya eight years

ago. I now realize the value of a pen. There are no CVS stores or Wal-Marts. We only found paved roads in the capital and two other towns. Most towns don't even have electricity. The kids have probably never had a cold drink with ice cubes. Where are they going to get a pen? The adults don't even have them."

Carolyn is asking islanders to donate a box of new pens. "The cheap stick kind, so they're all alike please. I'll get them there."

If you wish to donate pens to the African children, you can drop off your boxes at the Press office, 42 Narragansett Ave. and Carolyn will pick them up.

Great job!!

The Jamestown Community Theatre is inviting all islanders to its annual meeting June 8 at the Jamestown library.

Mark the date on your calendar and stay tuned.

After observing the little clumps of white fur marking trails across our carpets, we took our 9-year-old vallhund, Joshua, outside and combed him down. Wow, we got enough hair to fill a pillow.

Dr. Joshua Hatch of the

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