

she

Shines™

SUMMER 2006 • FREE

celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women

THINKING WOMAN!

inside ...

one tough lady: Mama Unanana

hike a trail north or south

the light of Rose Island

is Title IX in trouble?

play ball

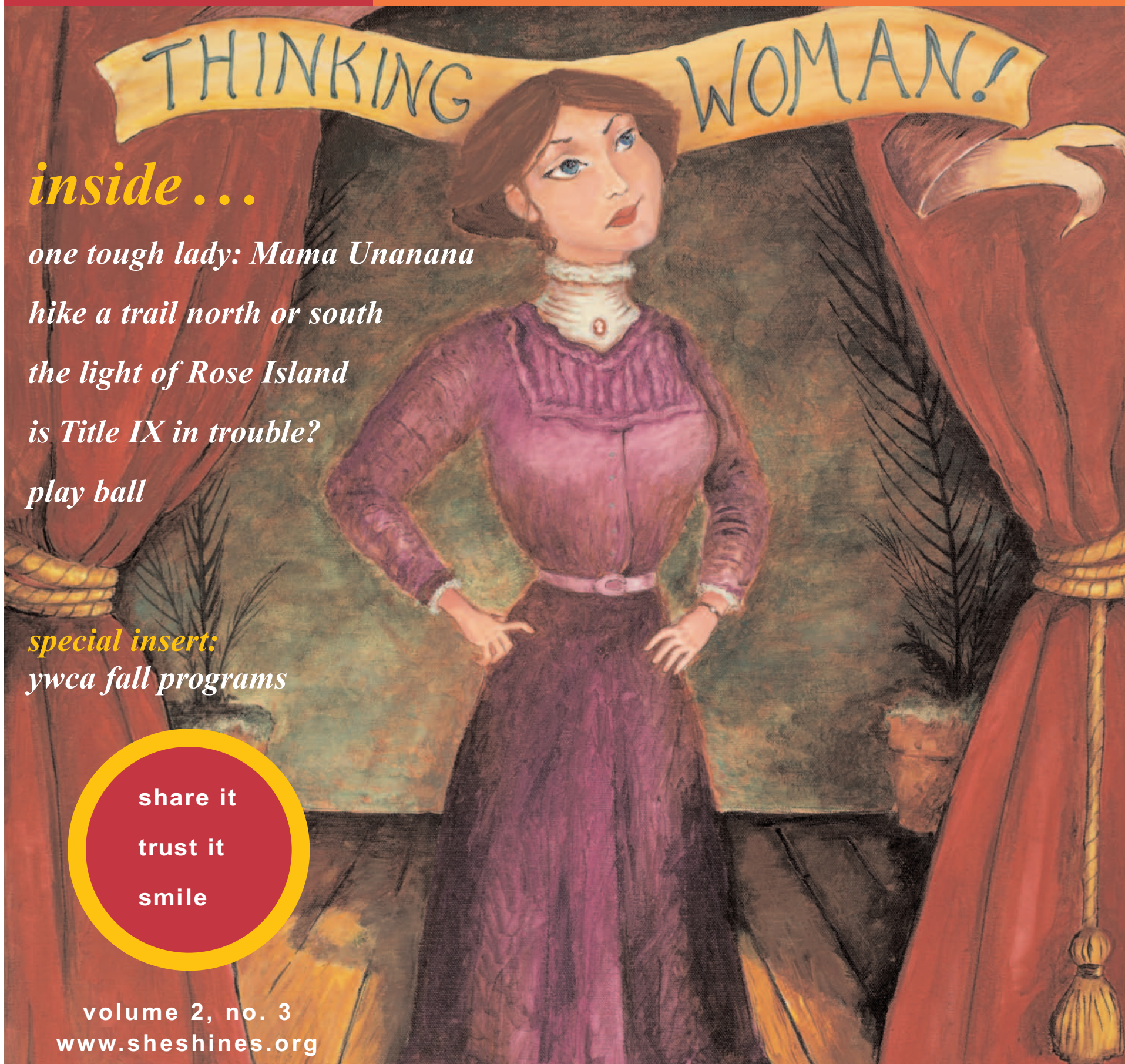
*special insert:
ywca fall programs*

share it

trust it

smile

volume 2, no. 3
www.sheshines.org



august

● **August 1 - Labor Day, Rose Island Lighthouse Tours:** 10am - 4pm daily. Call 847-4242 to reserve a date. See self-sufficient lighthouse and grounds, including 200 year old Ft. Hamilton restoration project. Ride the Jamestown-Newport Ferry. For more on lighthouse, see executive director Charlotte Johnson on page 19. www.roseisland.org.

● **August 4 - 6, 22nd annual Charlestown Chamber Seafood Festival:** seafood, arts and crafts, amusement rides, rock climbing wall, children's shows, and car show. At Ninigret Park in Charlestown. www.charlestownrichamber.com

● **August 6, Atwater-Donnelly:** musicians appearing at the Jamestown Summer Concert Series. Free. East Ferry Memorial Square in Jamestown. Rain location at the community center. www.jamestownri.net

● **August 16 - Sept. 3, A Festival of One-Acts:** short attention span theater (wave 3). At 2nd Story Theatre in Warren. All shows at 8:30pm. www.2ndstorytheatre.com

● **August 17, Gallery Night Providence:** sample the Providence art scene. www.gallerynight.info

● **August 19, Clambake at the Lighthouse:** 11:30am - 4pm. Bring your own blanket and sit on the ground clambake feast. Reservations required. Rain or shine. www.roseisland.org. For more on lighthouse, see executive director Charlotte Johnson on page 19.

● **August 20, Garden Tea and Tour:** costumed interpreters guide visitors through Slater Mill and its garden. www.slatermill.org

● **August 26, Triple Decker:** tale of Rhode Island immigration by and with storytellers Marc Joel Leavitt and Valerie Tutson. For more on storyteller Tutson, see *One Tough Lady* on page 17. www.valerietutson.com

● **August 26, Baubles, Bangles, and Beads:** Workshops explore ways baubles may be used in art-work and fashion. Admission and all activities are free on the last Saturday of the month from 11am - 4pm. Children must be accompanied by an adult. www.risdmsuseum.org

● **August 28, Preserving the Harvest:** Tips and techniques for pickling, canning and freezing to preserve fresh, local foods. 10am - noon at the 164 Broad Street, Providence YMCA. To register, call Southside Community Land Trust at 273-9419 x29.

august 26
women's
equality
day

sights and sounds for the she spirit



as Mama Unanana

Valerie Tutson, professional storyteller, retelling *One Tough Lady*. It comes from her tales of strong women collection. This South African folk tale appears on page 17.

Tutson has appeared in theaters, colleges, schools, churches, and libraries across the country. She has also performed in international festivals in Africa, Europe, and North America. Learn more about Tutson at www.valerietutson.com and through the Black Storytellers Alliance at www.blackstorytellers.com.

photo by Agapao Productions

september

● **Sept. '06 - June '07. Leadership Mastery:** Mentoring for Leadership Excellence is designed to connect women with mentors who can help them learn the ropes, cultivate their skills and learn from those who've blazed the leadership trails they seek to travel. Ten month program begins Sept. 8. www.leading-women.biz

● **Sept. 3, Last Night:** performed by Rhode Island Philharmonic in Bristol's Independence Park. Contact 253-7000.

● **Sept. 7, Women's Leadership Series:** 60 days and counting breakfast. Bringing together women running for General Assembly. Held in the State Room at the State House from 8 - 9:30am. Sponsored by RI Commission of Women and Leadership RI. Contact Lisa Pelosi at 273-1574.

● **Sept. 8, Light:** opening reception at Imago, a gallery of Art and Fine Craft, Warren 245-3348 (Aug. 29 - Sept. 16). For more on ceramist Pat Warwick, see page 9.

● **Sept. 9, 7th annual Providence Street Painting Festival:** artists create chalk pictures and designs on the floor of the Bank of America Skating Center. Rain date Sept. 16. www.providencestreetpainting.com

● **Sept. 9 & 10, Secret Garden Tour:** tour private gardens in Newport. www.secretgardentours.org

● **Sept. 16, Pet Walk:** 18th annual event. Bring your dog to the Providence Animal Rescue League's benefit walk, featuring vendors, dog games and contests, music, raffles. At the Temple to Music in Roger Williams Park, Providence. www.pari.org

● **Sept. 16, URI:** Great Performances with Valerie Tutson. For more on storyteller Tutson, see *One Tough Lady* on page 17. www.valerietutson.com

● **Sept. 17, Johnnycake Storytelling Festival:** in Peace Dale at 9:30am with Valerie Tutson. For more on storyteller Tutson, see

One Tough Lady on page 17. www.valerietutson.com

● **Sept. 17, Village Telling:** afternoon Neighborhood Block Party in Providence with Valerie Tutson. For more on storyteller Tutson, see *One Tough Lady* on page 17. www.valerietutson.com

● **Sept. 19 - 24, Mamma Mia:** musical comes to PPAC. www.ppacri.org.

● **Sept. 21, Tools of the Trade Luncheon:** celebrating the achievements of Rhode Island women in health care. Event from 11:30am - 1:30pm at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln. Sponsored by YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Visit www.womenofachievementri.org for ticket information and underwriting opportunities. Contact Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450.

● **Sept. 22 and 23, French Farmers Market and Woonsocket Arts Festival** at Woonsocket's River Island Park. Friday 5 - 9pm and Saturday 10am - 3pm. Music, art, and food. www.riverzedgearts.org

● **Sept. 29, Transitions:** opening reception at Imago, a gallery of Art and Fine Craft, Warren 245-3348 (Sept. 19 - Oct. 21). For more on ceramist, Pat Warwick see page 9.

● **Sept. 30, Greenway Challenge:** an adventure race: running, paddling, and biking. www.greenwaychallenge.org

october

● **Oct. 7 - Oct. 9, Scituate Art Festival:** 300+ artists, craftsmen, antiques, regional/ethnic foods, musical entertainment, and raffle. Free admission. Contact: info@scituateartfestival.org.

● **Oct. 18, Take Back the Night:** 5:30pm at URI Providence campus. International event against violence against women, in its 28th year. Hosted by Silent Witnesses of RI and Take Back the Night. Contact: Nancy Rafi nrafi@hotmail.com or Jodi Glass jlglass53@aol.com.

● **Oct. 20 - 22, Women's Wilderness Weekend of RI:** great food, heated cabins, classes, and entertainment. www.womenswildernessri.com

● **Oct. 27, Mosaic:** opening reception at Imago, a gallery of Art and Fine Craft, Warren 245-3348 (Oct. 24 - Nov. 25). For more on ceramist Pat Warwick see page 9.

Events are listed in the calendar as space allows. Submissions for the calendar may be e-mailed to sheshines@mac.com, faxed to 769-7454, or mailed to She Shines, 514 Blackstone St., Woonsocket, RI 02895.

artist prefers 'side show broadside' style

cover artist, Melissa Saint

Melissa Saint is from a family of artists, reaching back at least seven generations. Her first set of oil pastels were given to her by an aunt, before Saint was able to read.

Saint took part in the Woonsocket school system's program, Aspire, and studied art every day from seventh grade through high school graduation. In college, she majored in studio art and art history with a special focus on life drawing.

Her present style is "Side Show Broadside". These were the large canvas paintings that side shows hung up to attract customers. She finds the folk style of this art appealing, particularly admiring the work of Snap Wyatt.

Saint uses bright rich colors, distorted perspectives, and strange proportions to emulate the folksy flavor of the genre.

During the 1880s and 90s when the American "Side Show" or "Freak Show" was getting started, quality education for girls was

not the norm. In fact, there were prominent doctors and scientists advising against it. Parents were told to keep their daughters at home, away from all strenuous mental and physical activity.

In her painting, a completely ordinary woman in turn-of-the-century dress including restrictively corseted waist, is being displayed as an amazing freak of nature. The woman can "think" and her face registers annoyance and a touch of amusement. The smile is not meant to belittle the struggle of 19th century women to gain education. It is meant to be an acknowledgement of how far women have come, Saint says.

Melissa Saint, otherwise known as Missie St. Sauveur, teaches art classes to students age five to adults at YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Visit www.shecountscrows.blogspot.com to see more art by Saint. Her art is also online, on ebay under the name "SheCountsCrows".



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MD, FACOG

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Landmark Medical Center is pleased to announce the return of Dr. Laurie A. Curry to our staff as an obstetrician and gynecologist, with specialty in high risk pregnancy and gynecologic surgery. Dr. Curry was originally on staff at the hospital from 1996 to 2001, and for the past four years was Chief of Obstetrics at Thundermist Health Center in Woonsocket.

She received her undergraduate degree from Brown University and her medical degree from Cornell University Medical College, New York, NY. She did her residency at Northshore University Hospital on Long Island. She is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology.



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how to

contribute. She Shines welcomes letters to the editor, articles, poetry, stories, graphics, photos and calendar events. Please contact us if you have an inspiring story to tell or have a suggestion of someone to be featured. A self addressed, stamped envelope must accompany all unsolicited material. Only original contributions will be considered and may be edited due to space limitations. Include contact information including name, e-mail, address, and phone number. Images provided electronically must be high-resolution.

submit cover art. The cover is reserved as a gallery of art in keeping with the theme of She Shines. For consideration, please send in a photo by e-mail attachment or mail. This is a wonderful opportunity for local artists to show their work. A biography is published in conjunction with the "Artist Canvas" section of She Shines.

advertise. Visit www.sheshines.org to view the advertising media kit. She Shines reserves the right to refuse to sell space for any advertisement the staff deems inappropriate for the publication.

receive the magazine. She Shines is a free publication mailed to members and friends of YWCA Northern Rhode Island. To be added to the mailing list, a subscription form is available on this page and on the website www.sheshines.org. The magazine is also available at YWCA Northern Rhode Island and at various special events.

contents

- 2** *calendar/sights and sounds*
as Mama Unanana
storyteller Valerie Tutson
- 3** *artist canvas*
side show broadside: a painting by
Melissa Saint
- 5** *from the editor*
jump for opportunities: you will shine
- 6** *to the editor*
adoption: how to tell a child
a quote from herstory
Wilma Rudolph: a running spirit
- 7** *sense ability*
Title IX: the myths and facts
students speak
gymnasts set bar for future:
Bethany Kuhn and Heather Martinelli
- 9** *let's talk shop*
aquatic creatures come ashore:
Warren ceramist Pat Warwick
- 15** *health for her*
vibrant woman: Lee Ferrera, a surfer
and second degree black belt, shares
three tips to avoid violence
- 16** *on the rhode*
U.S. Women's Open: swings in Newport
- 18** *just sayin'*
dog days: benefits of exercise
- 19** *shining with*
Charlotte Johnson: lighthouse lessons

active women



Ready to hike the North South Trail? Follow Ginny Leslie through the route that passes through Rhode Island. An adventure for the hiker, mountain biker, or equestrian. See page 10 & 11.
photo by Deborah L. Perry

- 10 & 11** *she shines interviews:*
on the North-South Trail
Ginny Leslie leads the way
- 12** **archery is her game**
Westerly young woman, Amanda Spear,
with a clear shot
- 14** **playing hardball**
Pawtucket Slaterettes make history
- in her words:*
- 8** **southern solstice**
a poem by Cathleen Calbert, Rhode
Island College professor and author
- 13** **soul table**
Lori Giuttari of Barrington, discovers her
strength while refinishing a door
- 17** **one tough lady**
Valerie Tutson retells a South African
folk tale
- special insert*
YWCA Northern Rhode Island:
fall programs

subscription form ✂

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jump at opportunities, even if they're a leap

For me the moment was terrifying: fifth grade gym class. The last to go, I clambered up onto the trampoline. There, standing on the middle X, I froze at the idea of jumping up and having nothing but air beneath me. The whole class watched and yelled for me to jump.

The outcome: I cried. My fear was fully visible to my peers.

Later, my mom wrote a note to excuse me from that apparatus. It didn't matter. The humiliation had already happened.

Today backyard trampolines are everywhere, a reminder of my childhood and fear of heights. Coincidentally, my office sits opposite an overlook window into a gymnasium. When I see the gymnasts practice their stylistic jumps, I am awed.

Some opportunities don't present themselves twice.

During my last year of college, my family took a vacation to visit relatives in Italy. In front of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, I looked up. Even though it was an uneasy ascent, I started up the worn steps in the damp crooked stairwell. Reaching the upper floor filled me with pride.

She Shines Health for Her contributor, Lee Ferrera, says, "Do it." She embraces life and encourages others to do the same.

I agree. Though high places still are unsettling



A bird's eye view from the top of Rose Island Lighthouse. Photo above by Deborah L. Perry and photo below by Agapao Production.

to me, I try not to let that stop me from special opportunities.

On the edge of my parents' high porch, I observe the fireworks lit over the Town Beach in Wickford. Walking the Cliff Walk in Newport, I take in the strength of the sea and feel glory in the ocean spray.

While talking with Charlotte Johnson, she invited me to the top the Rose Island lighthouse. After initial reluctance, I concentrated on each step and slowly climbed the narrow ladder. Oh what a sight of the entire island and seascape. The rewards were plenty, a breeze across my face and a bird's eye view.

Sometimes our sense of limitation comes from within. At other times it surrounds us.

Hung on *She Shines* publisher Deborah Perry's office walls were newspaper articles of women portrayed as victims. On her desk were publications lacking the voices of women on issues and their faces in sports. Perry called me into her office. We discussed how to change this representation. Within a year, *She Shines* was launched celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women.

I hope the profiles of the dynamic women within this summer issue will inspire you to do it, whatever it is for you.

Johnson up against commercial development, fought for the environmental and historical preservation of Rose Island.

Ferrera isn't letting breast cancer stop her. She is fighting the illness hard. At the same time, she continues living in her own vibrant way. Her advice, "Never say should of, would of, could of. Do it."

And when you do, smile. For you too shine.

Lisa



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when and how to tell children they're adopted

Dear Editor:

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2000, 1.6 million, or 2.5 percent of all children under 18 were adopted. With the number rising, especially in international adoptions, many parents are in more need than ever for guidance on when and how to tell their children that they are adopted. Throughout the adoption and transition process, new parents must consider the emotional and physical needs of the child.

Parents should tell children that they are adopted immediately. Obviously, a 1- or 2-year-old is not going to comprehend the complicated facts of adoption, but he or she can start becoming partially aware of their special identity.

Parents need to be authentic with their children from the very beginning because this breeds trust. From the moment that they are capable of understanding, parents should begin telling their children what they can developmentally comprehend.

One way to approach a young child is to explain how babies come into the world, and how an adopted child's situation is different. For example, using whatever language comes naturally, a parent can explain that babies grow in a woman's pelvis, pointing out familiar adults who are pregnant as examples.

Parents shouldn't fear saying the "right thing" either. There is no correct language or method to use when telling a child she is adopted. You know your child best, so approach the discussion in the way that you feel is most appropriate.

Parents might consider using the following explanation: "You didn't grow in mommy's tummy. You have a 'birth mother' and you grew inside her. She loved you very much. She couldn't take care of you herself but she wanted someone to take good care of you. Now, you are my child and I am so lucky to be your mommy."

Children may only understand a very small fraction of what has been explained, but, as they age and are able to understand more detail, parents will be able to build on an existing foundation. This way, a child's adoption is never a shock or a surprise. Instead, it is a part of his identity and a natural part of his life.

Don't approach discussions with children about adop-

tion like it is a "big deal." Children are very astute and know when their parents are upset. They react to adults' emotions and may feel that the topic is something that they should feel upset or ashamed about.

When raising any child, differences and similarities should always be celebrated. The individuality of any child, adopted or not, should be embraced. It is important for children to know what makes them different and unique, as well as how they are similar to the family and what their role is within the family. Even though your child is not biological, it is okay to talk about how they are similar to you—how they look like you, behave like you, have the same interests, etc., as well as how they are different.

If your child is of a different race or culture, celebrate those differences as well. Encourage the exploration and celebration of the art, language and culture of your child's country or ethnic background. If possible, introduce your

child to people of the same background. By not embracing the cultural differences of your child, you send the message that you are not accepting of them.

Parents should also talk about connections.

Explain to your children that connections, like the bonds of love and family, are not dictated by biological factors or bloodlines. For older children, offer an example to which they can relate. Maybe they have a friend that they love very much and explain how that love is not predicated on factors like biology.

Throughout the adoption process, the family will undergo many transitions. Addressing change can help the child to better adjust long-term.

Particularly in international adoptions, it's important for parents to not only celebrate and learn about a child's cultural and ethnic differences, but also to help the child adjust to their new culture. This is especially important with older adopted children who have a keen understanding of their native cultures.

It's essential that an adopted child receive specialized care to address the emotional needs that arise in their unique situation. For example, when a 10-year-old child from Russia has lived in an orphanage for her entire life, she may have difficulty understanding not only the American culture, but the culture of a family and a home.

"Explain to your children that connections, like the bonds of love and family, are not dictated by biological factors or bloodlines."



Editor's note: Wheeler and Skurkovich write a follow-up to the spring issue of *She Shines*. The theme for that issue was motherhood. Kristen Magnacca contributed an article on infertility and Rose Weaver answered parenting questions.

The goal of the international adoption clinic at Hasbro Children's Hospital is to provide parents who are contemplating international adoption with the best pre-adoption medical advice and consultation, as well as similar services after the arrival of the adopted child.

Along with the emotional concerns, parents need to be aware of the various medical issues that arise in children from other countries.

From getting the proper vaccinations to identifying medical risk factors or developmental delays, adoptive children need special medical attention to adjust and live healthy lives in their new homes. A child who is born in another country may be prone to certain infectious diseases that are prevalent in her country, or she may have a learning disability or developmental delay. All of these factors need to be addressed individually, with special consideration knowing that the child was adopted from another country.

Elizabeth Wheeler, MD, child psychiatrist at Bradley Hospital and Brown Medical School, and Boris Skurkovich, MD, pediatrician and director of the International Adoption Clinic at Hasbro Children's Hospital and Brown Medical School

Letters to the editor are welcome. E-mail it to info@sheshines.org, fax it to 769-7454, or mail it to She Shines (514 Blackstone Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895). Include your contact information including name, e-mail, address, and phone number.

a quote from herstory

Wilma Rudolph
(1940-1994)

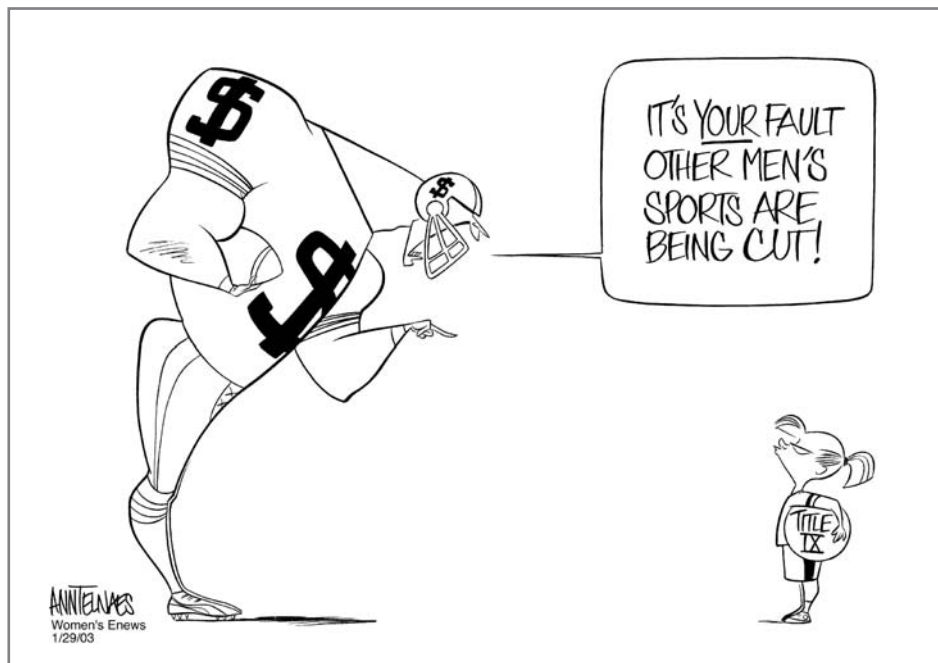


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"I ran and ran and ran every day, and I acquired this sense of determination, this sense of spirit that I would never, never give up, no matter what else happened."

In the 1960 Olympics, Wilma Rudolph won three gold medals. Remarkable for a woman that wore metal leg braces as a child. At her victory parade, Rudolph united people of all races in an integrated event held in her hometown of Clarksville, Tennessee.

Jone Johnson Lewis. "Wilma Rudolph Quotes." About Women's History. URL: http://womenshistory.about.com/od/quotes/wilma_rudolph.htm. 5/10/06.



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Title IX in trouble?

According to the National Women's Law Center, the Department of Education has created a gaping hole in Title IX's standards by issuing a clarification in 2005. Title IX's critics seek to dismantle it saying it's job is done.

Supporters say the Department of Education should rescind the policy and instead focus on enforcing the law.

In 1972, the federal government passed a law, Title IX, that required gender equity for boys and girls in all federally funded educational programs. This includes programs in elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, and universities.

Although athletics is the most known area addressed by this law, other areas include: access to higher education, career education, education for pregnant and parenting students, employment, learning environment, math and science, sexual harassment, standardized testing, and technology.

myth. There is gender equity in education. Title IX's job is done.

fact. Examples of what girls and women face in schools throughout the country:

81 percent of students surveyed have experienced sexual harassment in public schools.

Only 21 percent of colleges and universities have women as full professors.

Of every dollar spent, sports for males receive 65 cents compared to 35 cents for females in athletics at the Division I and II levels.

myth. Other college athletics programs are financed from men's basketball and football revenue.

fact. More money is spent rather than made in most men's basketball and football teams.

myth. Women aren't interested in sports.

fact. After Title IX, women's participation in college sports rose by almost 5 times the rate prior to the law. During a thirty year time period, that represents a change from fewer than 32,000 to over 150,000.

Read more at the National Women's Law Center at www.nwlc.org (*Report confirms clarification weakens Title IX*, March 20, 2006). Other resources include www.savetitleix.com or www.titleix.info.

gymnasts balance past, set bar for future

Bethany Kuhn, 2006 graduate of Bellingham High School

What have you gained from taking and teaching gymnastics? *"Confidence and determination. You never learn something on the first try. You have to keep trying. Gymnastics is a perfect example of that."*

What is the biggest challenge for students in high school? *"Getting along socially with everyone and peer pressure. There are so many groups of people, it is hard to get along."*

How did you persevere? *"I tried not to be labeled in one group."*

Do you have any advice for current students? *"Be yourself. If you don't, you won't have any fun."*

Who or what has been the greatest positive influence in your life?

"My grandmother. She has always been there to talk to. She has great advice."

What are your plans for school and/or work? *"I will be majoring in exercise science at Cape Cod Community College. I'm hoping to continue teaching gymnastics at a gym near school."*

Heather Martinelli, 2006 graduate of Blackstone/Millville Regional High School

What have you gained from taking and teaching gymnastics? *"Gymnastics gives you tolerance. I had to keep my grades up. It was a privilege. And you have to work hard to move up in levels."*

What is the biggest challenge for students in high school? *"Clicks. You find out who your true friends are by the time you graduate."*

How did you persevere? *"I kept to myself. Tried to tell people [only] what they needed to know. I found my true group of friends."*

Do you have any advice for current students? *"Set goals and try to keep to them even though you have other things going on. Remember good grades."*

Who or what has been the greatest positive influence in your life? *"This last year has been a really tough one. I still did really good [in school]. My sister helped me out a lot and my friends."*

What are your plans for school and/or work? *"Going to U Mass Lowell, majoring in physical therapy. I plan to continue teaching gymnastics on the weekends."*



During a class for 4 to 7 year old children, Kuhn spots Hilde on the uneven bars. photos by Deborah L. Perry

At age 13, Bethany started taking gymnastics classes at YWCA Northern Rhode Island. She began teaching gymnastics there in 2003.

Thinking about your future, what is most exciting? *"Pursuing my career [as a personal trainer]. I've wanted it for so long."*



Demonstrating her skill on balance beam, Martinelli has been taking gymnastics since she was 4 years old.

At college, Heather wants to be a cheerleader. Her career plans are to work in sports.

Thinking about your future, what is most exciting? *"Getting out of high school and doing my own thing. It's my life now."*

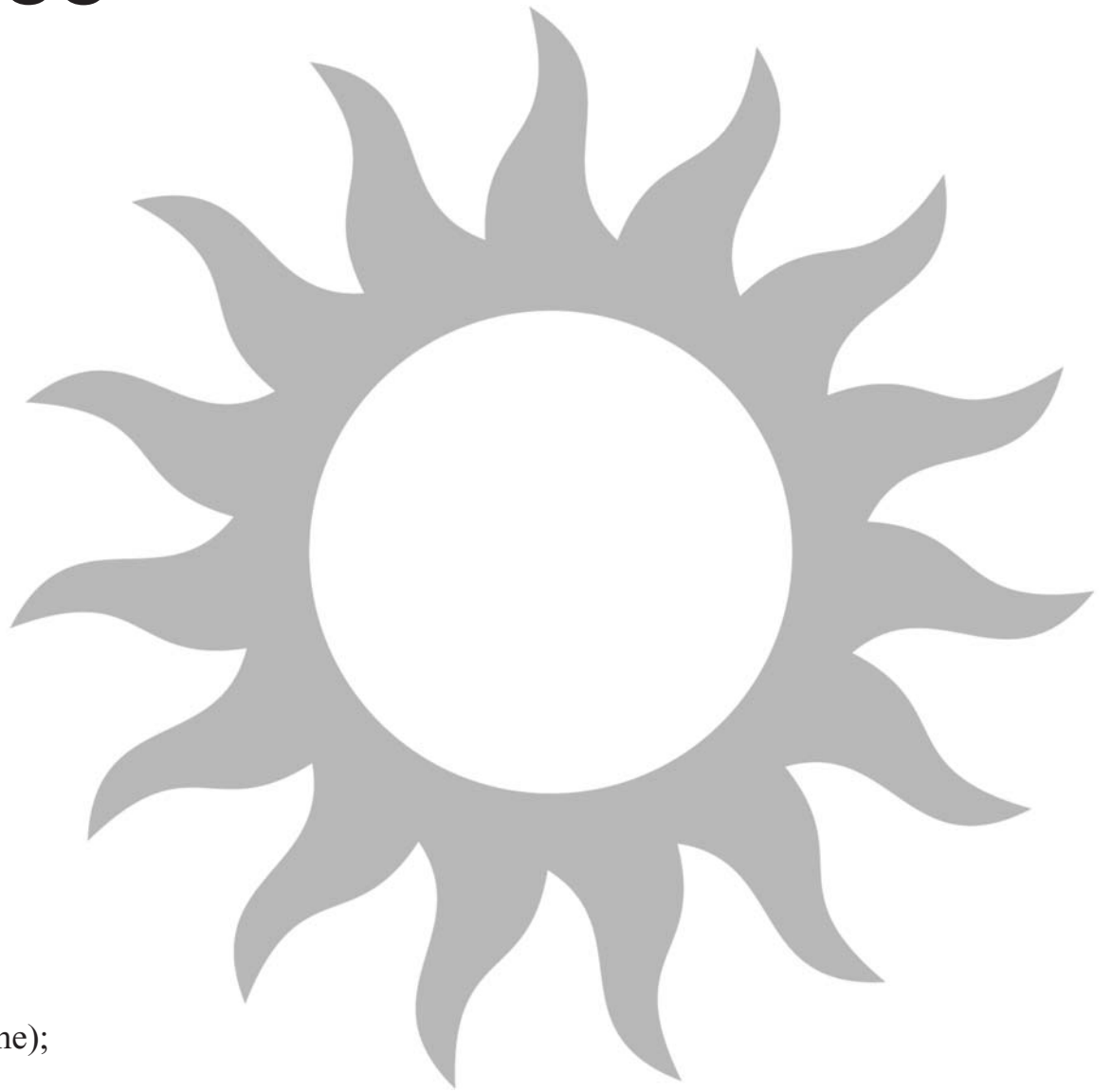
- Lisa Piscatelli

southern solstice

by Cathleen Calbert

I've been lucky enough
to discover blue-eyed grass,
purple passion, beggar's blanket,
witch's candle (potent charm against demons,
love potion too), Quaker-ladies,
Mayapple, wild mandrake
(which is not a mandrake),
raccoon berry (edible if bitter
as are many things),
heartleaf, which will save me
from the pains of childbirth
or prevent pregnancy
(whatever way the wind's blowing),
dandelions with the puffballs
that decide something
(number of lovers or babies—it varies),
the daffodil that tells me
what I know already:

I love not only butter
but all that's bad under the sun
(eventually this will kill me);
pressing the stem to one's neck
under moonlight summons madness
as might the silvery cinquefoil,
which wise women rub on their brows
to view the world with divine eyes
and others to ward off witchery
(everything being its opposite),
yet if one throws in delphinium
and American bittersweet,
lethal brews can be made with it,
so there's goldenrod to heal,
to make whole, for camouflage
Solomon's seal (which I'll give to you,
secretive and faithless lover),
plus my personal favorite,
evening primrose, who unfolds
only a few petals that will fall
as she closes at sunrise,
having stayed open the entire night
on the off chance that a stray insect
will come along and do the trick. ❄️



Cathleen Calbert is the author of two books of poetry: *Lessons in Space* (University of Florida Press) and *Bad Judgment* (Sarabande Books). She is a Professor of English at Rhode Island College, where she directs the creative writing program. "Southern Solstice" will be included in Calbert's third collection of poems, *Sleeping with a Famous Poet*, forthcoming from WordTech Communications in 2007. More of her work can be found at www.cathleencalbert.com.

photo provided by Calbert
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aquatic creatures come ashore



Pat Warwick sells ceramic tiles, mirrors, trays, and furniture. Custom installations for the home or office are available. Contact Warwick at (401) 247-0779 or visit www.patwarwick.com.

photos by Agapao Productions

Ceramist Pat Warwick makes a splash creating a natural world for her home and beyond

by Lisa Piscatelli

Climb the stairs in the tower entrance of the historic Cutler Mills building in Warren and follow the wide corridor. Enter Pat Warwick's studio. This bright and breezy artistic space is where custom ceramic surfaces are created.

There are fishes, crabs, octopus, snakes, dragonflies, bees, lizards, and more. These aquatic, insect, and lizard themes are all on textured surfaces alive in color and form.

Warwick's closest work associate is a friendly little dog, Nutmeg.

"It's tiring. There is the business part and the art part. It is like two or three full time jobs," says Warwick, a one-woman show, full time artist and business owner.

She graduated from Rhode Island School of Design studying not ceramics, but graphic design.

Her first jobs were freelance graphic

design work while living on and sailing an old schooner. Six years later, Warwick found herself doing graphic design and illustration for the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. These early experiences were the inspiration for her creatures.

It all came together when Warwick redesigned her own kitchen, making tiles with aquatic images. She used unglazed tiles and painted them. Then she started making them in clay which she found to be a less restrictive process. It just evolved.

"I started making fish. With them there is lots of movement and you can make them in any color," says Warwick. At the same time, she thought, "Stop with the fishes." But, they kept coming out and she knew she had to make them.

"Sea creatures sell," she says with a mix of pride and surprise. Her art has also gained quite a following in the scientific community.



"I started making fish. With them there is lots of movement and you can make them in any color," says Warwick. At the same time, she thought, "Stop with the fishes." But, they kept coming out and, Warwick says, she knew she had to make them.

Warwick has an ongoing interest in the natural world and with primitive designs. She incorporates these elements onto the ceramic surfaces and has developed her own process for this fine craftsmanship. Her life experience and travels have deep influence on the designs.

Literally she has been to Timbuktu and back, traveling to developing countries, and hiking around. "The more exotic the better. I climbed and trekked in Nepal. They are all so different, but Africa is amazing," she says. Next she hopes to visit friends who recently retired in New Zealand.

A collection of blankets is from her travels, giving her a new geometric influence for her pieces. "Africa is from the mud cloths," and she unfolds a blanket. It is easy to see how this all adds inspiration.

Back in Rhode Island, much happens within her studio. Warwick has a palette of shells and a nature collection. There are large tables for sketching. Around the corner, clay is ready in bags.

Her technique includes a roller, templates carved out of linoleum, shelves of imprinted clay that dry under newspaper for about a week, and a kiln.

The clay is hand painted. A sample has around 12 or 13 colors, though only seen through the artist's lens. Her process: Fire the clay; apply a glaze. Fire it again. Now the surface reflects a full spectrum of color.

The studio entrance displays finished tiles. Some are square. Some are circular. Her favorite image is of the "crane fly," the mosquito eater. "Here is a fun one," and she pulls out an intertwined lizard. These tiles sell as trivets. "Useful art for the table," she says.

As you look around, the artist's work is fully evident. On the walls are custom trays and mirrors. The floor has one-of-a-kind furniture.

Hanging is an illustration of an octopus. Set low is a table with an octopus' ten-

tacle outreaching the boundary of the tile and extending into the wooden surface. The grout in the ceramic surface is curved like the tentacles.

Warwick has a desk and a couch that sit opposite in the large open room. Work is all around in different stages.

She does custom installations for both residential and commercial customers. A large drawing of many fish will be tile on a kitchen wall.

A puzzle of pieces is part of a snake table. Soon it will be similar to the one in the corner. The customer loved the table, but needed it 2 inches taller. Warwick works with a fine furniture maker in the building.

"I love Warren. It is unbelievable as a community," she says. Warwick is a founding member of Imago, a co-operative art gallery. She came to Warren in 1997.

Recently a new benefit has surfaced. In 2005 it was established as an art district.

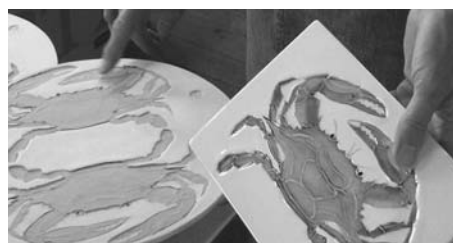
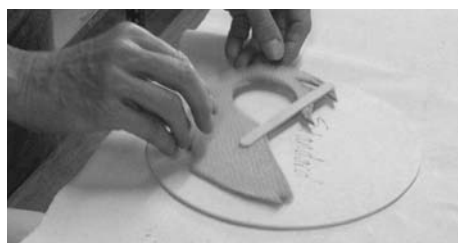
Is there life outside the studio? "This is it," she says, smiling.

She is renovating a little house that includes forming the whole garden. In her ceramics, she once tried images of flowers. "They didn't sell," she says.

Advice for new artists? "Keep doing your art. Keep your mind open. Try not to have too many preconceived ideas of where it's going to go. Follow it and let it lead you." She then laughs, "That doesn't necessarily mean there is going to be money involved."

In her work though, Warwick has created success. She comments, "I guess it's making a business that I can be proud of, out of my art. I guess I just stuck with it. It crept along. After years of questioning what I was making, people are liking it."

Below: Warwick shows a tile. Process includes using a template, drying the clay, painting, and more.



“I’m pokey, I just want to stop and sit here and look at the water.” - Ginny Leslie



Ginny Leslie leads the way

On the North-South Trail

by Deborah L. Perry

In 1992, when Ginny Leslie was a senior planner at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, she was assigned the task of coordinating the physical creation of the North-South Trail.

Completed in 1998, the trail traverses 78 miles through the rural, western part of the state. From the Massachusetts border near Burrillville to Blue Shutters Beach in Charlestown, it passes through eight state-owned wildlife management areas, two state parks and nine towns.

Hiking the North-South Trail, it’s clear the project was a labor of love for Leslie. Here she stops to smell mountain laurel beginning to bloom, there she skillfully tackles muddy, slick mossy rocks along a stream bank. Stopping to notice a toad crossing the trail, she’s careful not to disturb the natural order of things. Climbing a substantial rock outcrop to get a better look at a pond, she says, “I’m pokey, I just want to stop and sit here and look at the water.”

Although Leslie no longer works for the state, her commitment to the trail remains. She is president of the North-South Trail Council.

Leslie gathers 75 people every spring to hike the entire trail. They cover around 12 miles a day over the course of several weekends, passing historic villages, family farms, old cemeteries and other treasures of western Rhode Island.

Leslie says many people have yet to discover western Rhode Island.

“It’s the most beautiful part of the state,” she says. ❖❖❖

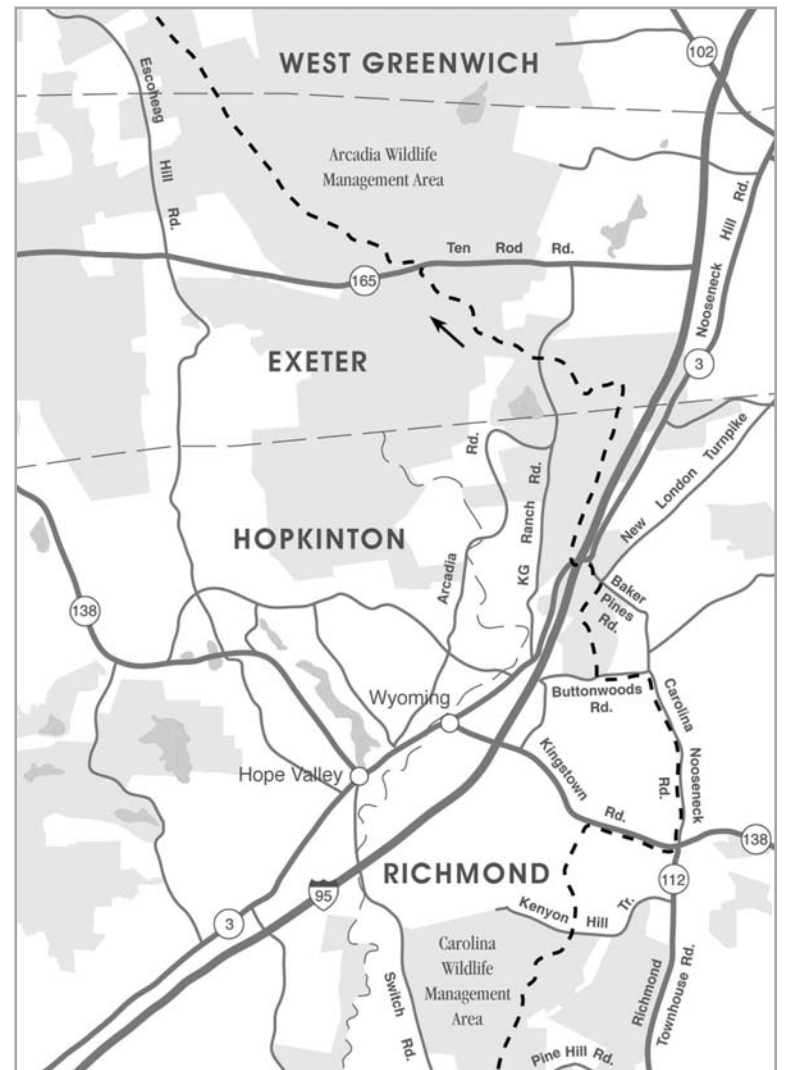
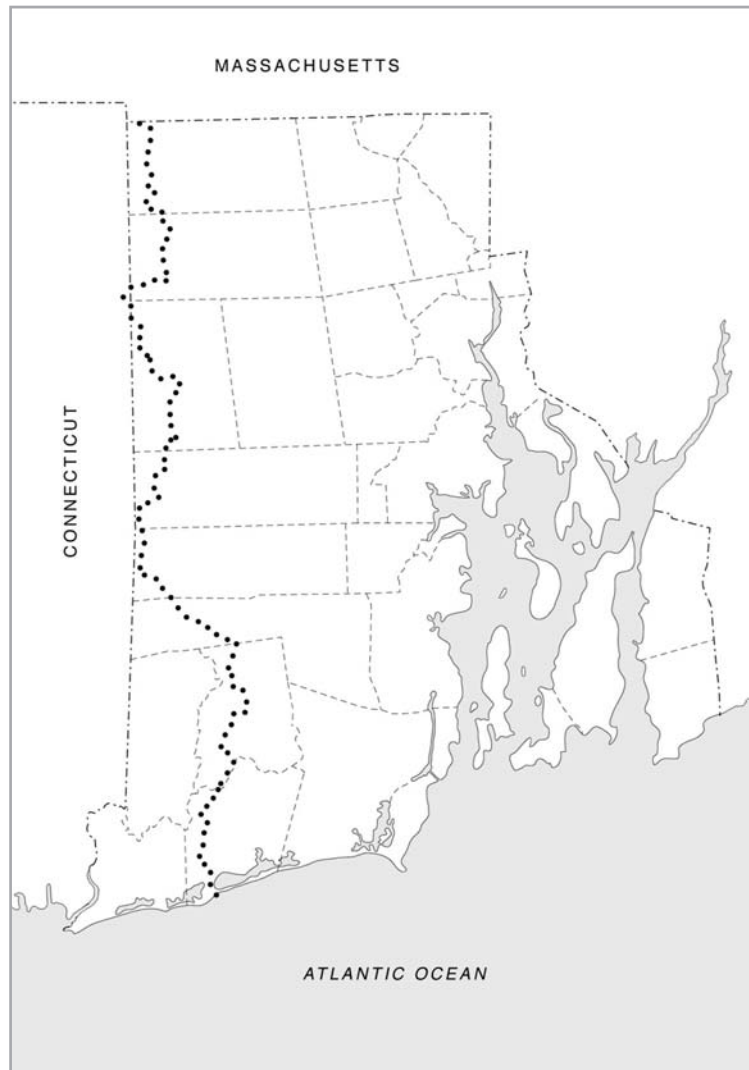
See maps of the North-South Trail on page 11.

photo by Deborah L. Perry


maps: North-South Trail

The North-South Trail runs through Rhode Island. Maps are provided by Cliff Vanover, author of *The North South Trail*. Vanover, an avid hiker and conservationist, lives in Rhode Island. He recommends this route passing through Richmond, Exeter, and West Greenwich. His book is a publication of the Great Swamp Press and available in many local book stores.

See page 10 for “On the North-South Trail”.



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Rhode Island does not have a procedure for certification or recognition of specialization by lawyers.



Left: Amanda Spear in her Westerly backyard preparing for a practice shot at a life-like figure of a ram. photo by Deborah Perry

Below: Amanda Spear and her father, Mark, assist a beginner archery class at a Women's Wilderness of RI retreat weekend held at the University of Rhode Island's W. Alton Jones Campus. From left, Lynda Beaulieu, Theresa Tally, Mark Spear, Jennifer Newman, Leslie Scott, and Amanda Spear. photo courtesy of Cherie Calabrese

on target

At 15, Amanda Spear has succeeded at more things than most people have tried

by Deborah L. Perry

Like most teenagers, Westerly High School sophomore Amanda Spear loves to ride bikes, play with her dogs and swim in her backyard.

Unlike many of her peers, she is a world champion archer.

At first glance, Spear's backyard appears filled with wildlife: a bear, a wolf and a ram. But these are only the lifelike figures Spear uses - along with the more familiar concentric-circle targets - during training.

Being a competitive archer requires regular practice to maintain technique and style, Spear says. It involves standing up for long periods of time and shooting. According to Spear, some archery competitions can last eight or nine hours and begin as early as 6:30 in the morning.

"Your whole body has to be strong, beginning with the core," she says.

Spear stresses that strength and

steadiness are essential. And withstanding the pressure of competition requires mental fortitude.

At 15, Spear has proven she has what it takes to compete at a world-class level. In seven years of competition, she has earned three world records, three world titles and seven national titles.

Spear, who is coached by her father, Mark, and has trained with the South Korean national women's coach, is currently taking some time off from competition. She plans to return to competitive archery next year. But in the meantime, she's teaching. She especially enjoys teaching young people and women, she says.

Her accomplishments are not limited to archery. She has a black belt in karate, she fishes and she hunts.

"I enjoy hunting pheasant the best," she said. "You don't have to sit still and you don't have to worry about making noise."

If pheasant and other game are cooked correctly, Spear says, they are delicious, adding that pheasant is sweeter and more tender than chicken. Her mother, Sandra, also a hunter and archer, suggests marinating it in Italian dressing.

Spear knows eating wild game is not to everyone's taste.

"Some people think it's like eating green ketchup," she says.

Spear excels in the classroom too. She maintains a 4.5 grade point average and takes advanced placement courses. Science is her favorite subject. She's looking forward to studying anatomy and physiology this fall and she is beginning to think about college and careers.

"I would like to be a medical examiner," she said.



“Never did I anticipate a table, a thing, could influence so deeply the way I feel. It reflects so beautifully what I have become.”



Giuttari in front of her symbolic door. She refinished it, adorned it with rocks collected from her therapeutic walks along the beach, and converted it into a table.

photo provided by Giuttari

soul table

by Lori Giuttari

Once heard that you can tell a lot about a person by what they collect. I collect rocks, so what does that say about me?

I have been admiring rocks for as long as I can remember. I love their color, layers, strength, and roughness or smoothness depending upon where they reside in their billion-plus years of life.

For sanity's sake I walk, preferably on the beach, gathering beautiful stones and smooth sea glass of all colors. After years of this type of therapy I have small piles of beach rocks strewn about my house.

I started walking because I chose a path that felt like I had pushed myself off a cliff. My decision to end a difficult marriage left me questioning and begging the universe for a reprieve. Walking kept me grounded, hoping for my own personal safety net in an unfamiliar and strange abyss. I believed I could live closer to who I really am.

In the midst of utter misery and pain, I dragged a very old door up from the basement. Its face was mostly small glass panels. I never had much interest in this door. It moved with us from a previous house.

The door was skeletal, mostly glass, dirty, and not very sturdy. But somehow it was brought out of the dark basement and laid across two wooden horses in the back yard.

There was no plan, design, or notion of what the door would become. It still surprises me that the door even came out in the first place.

I started cleaning it with soap and water from the backyard hose, then steel wool, paint stripper, and a scraper until it started to show its natural wood and clear glass. I spent hours meticulously taking every small speck of old paint or discoloration away.

Every other weekend when I was separated from my children, the door became my ally. It offered me entry into hopefulness and romanticism. It became what I did when I was alone.

I began to look forward to it, learning how to be with myself. It also let me spend entire days in solitude on the threshold of my new life, only to eat, shower, and fall dog tired into bed.

The door became my crutch, my excuse not to go out with friends, and my reason for isolation. Myself and the door were surprisingly being transformed into beautiful pieces of art with tons of potential.

Each small window embraced a handful of beach rocks. Sturdy, wooden legs were stained and added so I could use the door as a table. Windows were

cleaned to pristine clarity and sealed with epoxy. It became an amazing, multi faceted object, nothing like it was originally.

During this transitional time, relatives and "friends" exposed themselves with guidance and opinions such as: "You have chosen this path. You'll end up poor, driving a bad car. You better sell your house. I hope you survive."

I did know that as long as I continued to recognize and register groundless fears, I was surely doomed. The only information I could possibly tease from those comments of "concern", was that others were hoping to see me crash. My life could be their own personal soap opera.

Over time while gaining strength and learning to set limits and boundaries, I have allowed myself to reject those negative notions. I learned that time, age, and observation bring me strength and wisdom from experience.

I can now enjoy my free weekends without creat-

ing endless, unrealistic scenarios that might satisfy everyone else. Judgment without knowledge is worthless.

I have emerged holding my head high and without any desire for an encore.

Never did I anticipate a table, a thing, could influence so deeply the way I feel. It reflects so beautifully what I have become.

Never did I anticipate that this table would travel and change with me, through the toughest days of my life so far. And while I know that beauty and substance come from within, in this case it just happened to be the surface that needed to be cleaned in order to reveal a powerful source.

Lori Giuttari lives in Barrington with her two children, Alexandra and Jordan. She has over 12 years of consultancy experience with individuals, small businesses, and nonprofits. Giuttari is a certified life coach and may be contacted at LGiuttari@cox.net.

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playing hardball



Players in the Pawtucket Slaterettes' minors division are pitcher McKenzie Hofknecht, 9, of Hord Crystal, left, batter Francheska Kelly, age 9, of the league sponsored Slaterettes team, and catcher Katie Faria, 10, also on Hord Crystal.

Below, league president Deb Bettencourt says she always encourages her players to give back to the organization for the opportunities they've had.

photos by Deborah L. Perry



This league is their own, and a part of baseball history

by Deborah L. Perry

The year was 1973 and 9-year-old Alison "Pookie" Fortin of Pawtucket wanted to play baseball.

When she tried to join a local Little League team, she was told the sport and the league were for boys only.

Her family decided to challenge that policy in court, and while her case was making its way through the legal system, a group of parents decided to start their own girls baseball league. They called it the Darlington Pioneer League.

Two years later, as the league grew, the name was changed to the Pawtucket Slaterettes. It became a place where 5- to 18-year-old girls could compete in America's favorite pastime.

Today, well over 150 girls and women play in four divisions: tee-ball (age 5-7), minors (8-10), juniors (11-13) and seniors (14 and older).

League vice president and former player Sarah Feeley has one daughter in the minor division and another about to enter tee-ball. When asked why she played when she was younger and why she encourages her daughters to play,

Feeley said, "It's real. It's great to find other girls who love playing the game. You become lifetime friends, you learn about working with others, you learn about teamwork and you learn to support one another."

The Slaterettes recently were inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., as the oldest girls' baseball league in the country.

At an annual girls baseball clinic in February, the Florida Amateur Athletic Union Women and Girls in Sports Day, players demonstrated baseball skills and techniques for younger girls.

"I always stress to the girls that you need to give back for the opportunity that you've had," said league president Deb Bettencourt, a Slaterettes' alumna.

One footnote: Although Alison "Pookie" Fortin lost in court in 1973, Little League baseball amended its rules and allowed girls to participate nationwide the following season.

The three younger divisions of the Pawtucket Slaterettes play Monday through Thursday at fields at McCarthy Park on School Street in Pawtucket. ❖❖❖



"You have one chance at life. Enjoy it. I have no regrets," Ferrera says. She is a surfer and second-degree black belt. photos by Agapao Productions

vibrant woman

Lee Ferrera will strike if necessary

by Lisa Piscatelli

Lee Ferrera teaches girls and women how to surf with the Shred Betties program at Narragansett Parks and Recreation. She has been surfing for 26 years in Rhode Island, California, Mexico, Caribbean, and Hawaii. She says, when a storm rides in, the surf in Rhode Island is the best anywhere.

She is a member of the Ichiban Karate Surf Club and a second-degree black belt at this same studio. Ferrera trains two or three times a week in the Shorin Ryu Shidokan Karate-Do style.

She started karate 10 years ago as a "DARE." Meaning she was a volunteer with drug abuse resistance education.

Ferrera loved karate. It's part of the family. Her husband, Jerry, and oldest daughter, Erica, are first-degree black belts. Her youngest daughter, Elana, is a second-degree black belt.

What is stressed at the studio is to avoid fighting and the importance of safety. The instructors, Renshi Ken Berdeen and Renshi Chick Gavitt, practice what they preach. "They are respectful," Ferrera says.

Karate gives her self-confidence. "I can defend myself," she says.

One of the principles students learn as a black belt is indomitable spirit, and that has been tested.

Ferrera is battling third-stage breast cancer. "It didn't show up on a mammogram. I found it myself,"

Karate has helped her persevere. "You can do it," she tells herself.

She's from a family of fighters. Her mom's a cancer survivor. Lee Ferrera's plan, "Sometimes you have to accept it, but look to the other side of the rainbow and get there."

As a woman working in the medical field, she goes into it with her eyes open and is not afraid to ask questions. She's had chemotherapy and is starting radiation.

Ferrera is a clinical leader in the emergency room at South County Hospital. She has been working in trauma for six years. The fast pace suits her style.

"Life can change in a second. I like to make the patients feel more at ease," Ferrera said.

Her earlier career had similarities as a firefighter and EMT in California. She went back to school at 24 and graduated with honors from the nursing program at Palomar College. In 1979 she moved to Rhode Island.

Her husband is a physician assistant at Newport Hospital. They have a ying yang relationship, she says. He loves the land and she the sea.

In the side yard of her 1895 Dutch colonial home in Peace Dale, a cement gargoyle watches over a small pond. Yellow yarrow grows at its shore. Adjacent, flat rocks gathered from local beaches are carefully arranged in a circle path. They surround a sundial.

In her own life, she is surprised at how well she has done. Ferrera grew up with a mom wanting her to be a nice Jewish girl. "Girls didn't do what I did," she says recognizing the importance of opening up gateways.

With her daughters, Ferrera welcomes opportunities to take them places. "Let's go [to Maui]," she agreed when her girlfriend invited them on an adventure. She acknowledges that doing activities with her children is a great way to talk and share common interests.

At 47, Ferrera does a lot. With Gidget as her nickname, crafting is her hobby and business, done with a friend. Part of Gidget & Widget, together they sell products from here to Hawaii working with clay and beads.

She's into music, playing the flute and piano.

Along with karate and surfing, she snowboards.

"I like to do it all," she says.

"You have one chance at life. Enjoy it. I have no regrets."

Lee Ferrera's mantra, "Never say should of, could of, would of." "Do it." ❄️

enjoying life

Ferrera includes a proactive approach to avoid violence and injury

1. plan ahead - basics are everything

parking:

Pick a strategic place (i.e. under lights).

Go with someone.

Carry a cell phone.

Keep keys in hand.

Don't carry pepper spray, it can be used against you.

going on a trip:

Keep cell phone charged.

Bring blanket, water, and a working flashlight.

Pack well. Better to have it and not need it, than to not and be without.

a threatening person:

Don't panic.

Walk away, toward a crowd or a lighted area.

Don't be afraid to yell.

Fight like hell. It doesn't matter with what or how. Your inner self will take over.

If they want your wallet, hand it over. Don't be a hero.

dating or out with friends:

Ask parent. Tell who, what, when, and where.

Go out with a group.

If not safe, call parent.

If with an unsafe driver, ask them to pull over.

Do not be coerced. Don't be afraid to say no to sex, drugs, and unsafe activities.

surfing:

Take a professional lesson to learn water and board safety.

Wear a wet suit.

Know your limits.

Watch for warnings.

2. take a self defense class

Even one class will help you learn skills.

3. stay fit to fight

Take care of yourself both physically and mentally. It helps with anything you do - health, job, and life.



RESOURCES:

Rhode Island Department of Health
Safe RI: Violence and Injury Prevention Program
www.health.state.ri.us/disease/saferi/index.php

Ichiban Karate Studio
Wakefield, RI (401) 789-3380

U.S. Women's Open



For the first time ever, the U.S. Women's Open was held in Rhode Island.

Sue Green, left, volunteer and 11th hole captain, supervised 60 marshals during the competition. Below, Pat Hurst watches her second shot on the 10th hole during the playoff of the 2006 championship. Annika Sorenstam, far left, defeated Hurst in the 18-hole playoff round.

Sorenstam and Hurst photos by ©USGA/John Mummert

all other photos by Agapao Productions



The United States Golf Association's Women's Open was held at Newport Country Club, June 26 to July 3. Annika Sorenstam, top, won the championship. At right, Val, who preferred not to give her last name, works on final preparations before the competition begins. Below, John and Claire Castillo, She Shines' photographer John Castillo's parents, ride the shuttle to the course.



one tough lady

folk tale - Mama Unanana

retold by Valerie Tutson

Long ago in South Africa, there was a woman named Mama Unanana. She was One Tough Lady.

One day Mama Unanana searched for a place to build a new home. She found a spot in the middle of the bush where two roads crossed. Her friends said, "Oh, Mama Unanana, you don't want to build your home there, because if you do, wild animals will come and swallow up your children."

Mama Unanana had two beautiful children, a boy and a girl. Her niece Nombali, the babysitter, lived with her too.

But, Mama Unanana was One Tough Lady. She said, "I am not afraid of any wild animals. If I want to build my home in the middle of the bush where two roads cross, that is where I will build my home!"

Guess where she built her home?

Every day she left the children with Nombali while she gathered firewood. After chores the children drew pictures in the red dirt. They looked at the clouds and made up stories, and played hand-clapping games.

One day, the children heard a noise in the bush. They turned and looked. There they saw a gigantic baboon with big red eyes and a bare behind. Looking at the children and licking his lips, he said, "Whose children are those, with their shiny eyes, and their chubby cheeks? Those children look good enough to EAT!"

The children were terrified. Nombali said, "Baboon, please don't eat these beautiful children. They belong to Mama Unanana."

Hearing that, Baboon said, "Oh! I have heard of Mama Unanana. I know she is One Tough Lady! I won't be eating these children." Baboon scurried away.

Nombali said, "Whew!" wiped sweat from her brow, and the children went back to their game.

Soon, they heard a noise from the other side of the yard. Jumping out of the bush was Springbok, who said, "Whose children are those, with their shiny eyes, and their chubby cheeks? Those children look good enough to EAT!"

The children cowered. Nombali said, "Springbok, these beautiful children belong to Mama Unanana. Please don't eat them."

"Oh! I have heard of Mama Unanana. I know that she is One Tough Lady! I won't be eating up these children." Springbok jumped back into the bush.

Nombali said, "Whew" and the children went back to their game.

Nombali started inside to fix the children lunch when she heard, "ROOAAAR!" She turned around to see Lion coming out of the bush. His tail was going back and forth. Licking his lips and looking at those children, he said, "Whose children are those, with their shiny eyes and their chubby cheeks? Those children look good enough to EAT!"

Nombali trembled. "Lion please don't eat these beautiful children. They belong to Mama Unanana!"

Suddenly Lion turned into a great big scaredy cat! "Oh! I have heard of Mama Unanana. I know that she is

One Tough Lady!" Lion turned and ran back into the bush. Nombali wiped her brow, "Whew!" The children returned to their game.

Soon lunch was ready. When Nombali carried the mealies outside, she nearly dropped everything. There was the biggest Elephant she had ever seen. He was 27 times taller than the tallest tree. He had a long trunk and one terrible tusk. He was licking his lips and looking at the children, "Whose children are those, with their shiny eyes, and their chubby cheeks? Those children look good enough to EAT!"



Nombali shouted, "Elephant, please don't eat these beautiful children. They belong to Mama Unanana."

"I'm not afraid of Mama Unanana, but I do want some food in this belly of mine!" Elephant took its trunk and wrapped it around the children. Next, he opened his mouth and swallowed them!

Seeing that, Nombali ran inside and hid until Elephant left. When Nombali came back out, she didn't know what to do. She climbed to the top of a small tree and stayed there until sunset.

Mama Unanana returned from gathering firewood with a big bundle atop her head.

"Nombali! Children! Woza! Come!"

She heard crying and looked up. "Nombali! Why are you crying? Where are the children?"

"Oh Mama Unanana, a great big Elephant came and ate the children."

"Well, did he chew them up first? Or swallow them whole?"

Nombali wailed, "I don't know!"

"Nombali, no time for tears. We must make a plan to get the children."

Using her wood, Mama Unanana started a fire and placed a pot of beans on it. When the beans were ready, she put the pot on her cloth-covered head and said, "Nombali, stay here. I'm going to get my children!"

Mama Unanana walked hard and fast. Without a doubt, she was One Tough Lady!

Baboon saw her first. "Mama Unanana, you must be looking for your children. Keep going." He pointed to the right.

Springbok was next. "Mama Unanana, you must be looking for your children. Keep going." He pointed to the left.

There was Lion. "Mama Unanana, you probably think I ate your children. No. It was Elephant. He sleeps underneath a great big tree."

Mama Unanana rounded the bend and saw the huge Elephant, sound asleep, snoring!"

"I am not afraid of any wild animals. If I want to build my home in the middle of the bush where two roads cross, that is where I will build my home!"

Mama Unanana marched up to Elephant and lifted an eyelid. "Elephant! You swallowed my children. I want them back right now!"

Elephant opened his other eye. "Those children were an appetizer. Now I see the main course!" Elephant wrapped his trunk around Mama Unanana and swallowed her with the pot of beans on her head!

Mama Unanana slid into the Elephant's belly and looked around. She found cows, goats, chickens, sheep, cats, and dogs. She saw friends she hadn't seen in ages!

Mama Unanana discovered her children crying on the other side of the Elephant's belly. "Oh children, you are hungry. Don't worry. Mama has brought you some food!"

She took the pot of beans off her head and fed her children. She shared the leftovers with her friends, neighbors and even the cows, goats, chickens, sheep, cats, and dogs.

Then Mama Unanana said, "Now, who wants to be free?" Everyone said, "We do!"

Mama Unanana clapped her hands and started to dance. Every one joined in singing, "We're gonna dance. We're gonna give this Elephant a belly ache. Come on and dance."

Elephant moaned and groaned.

Mama Unanana said, "Let's tickle!" Everyone helped using fingers, feathers, or tails. Elephant started to laugh.

They tickled inside Elephant's mouth.

They tickled inside Elephant's nose.

Elephant let out a colossal SNEEZE!

Things flew out of his mouth, including cows and goats; chickens and sheep; cats and dogs; neighbors and friends; the boy and girl; and Mama Unanana. Who said, "Elephant, my name is Mama Uooooooooooooonana. I am One Tough Lady! I was nice to you this time. I won't be next time. Get out of here. Leave my family and friends alone!"

Elephant ran so fast, he didn't leave any footprints behind!

Then, Mama Unanana and the neighbors and friends divided up the cows, goats, chickens, sheep, cats, and dogs.

Mama Unanana took her children home. They lived happily for the rest of their days.

You may have noticed Elephant doesn't eat meat. Now you know why. ☺☺☺

Valerie Tutson graduated from Brown University with a Master's Degree in theatre arts and a degree in a self-designed major, storytelling as a communications art. She has been telling stories in schools, churches, libraries, festivals, and conferences since 1991. Tutson draws her stories from around the world with an emphasis on African traditions. Her upcoming performances are listed in the "She Shines Calendar" on page 2.

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dog days



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by Deborah L. Perry



shining

with
**Charlotte
Johnson**

**executive director
of Rose Island
Lighthouse Foundation**

influences

Where did you grow up? *“Spent all my life on the water. Grew up at Cedar Tree Point. Best place to grow up. I had two sisters and a brother and never lacked for friendship.”*

Who or what was influential? *“My mother. Conservation. We went out collecting on throw away day.”*

Tell about your adventures? *“Built a tree house. Started taking the doors off in the basement. Mom put a stop to it and took us to the lumber store. Do you know what the best tree is for a tree house? An apple tree. Ammunition.”*

How was your school experience? *“I didn’t like school.”*

What did you want to be? *“An oceanographer. I was told that I could be a secretary of an oceanographer.”*



favorites

Favorite creature from the sea? *“Partial to stripers.” Johnson explains that they’re good as a fillet plus you are guaranteed a lobster using the remains as bait.*

Favorite show? *“Swiss Family Robinson. The lighthouse has become that for me.”*

Favorite 78-rpm record? *“Danny Kaye.” It is played on the Victrola in the lighthouses’ first floor museum.*

interests

What interests you? *“I have always been interested in old things.” In her personal life she admits to living much like in the lighthouse, embracing a resourceful way of life. She did the restoration of her house in Newport.*

Describe your involvement with Rose Island? *“I’m an environmentalist that got a hold of a lighthouse. When I get to stay here I giggle myself to sleep.” She devised the system and stays over there a few times a year to be sure everything works.*

Is there a part of the island that you don’t know? *“It’s fascinating, when you are intimate with something you know all the faces.” Johnson is one with Rose Island. She studies old photographs to see how things have changed; directs the planting of a butterfly garden, fruit trees, and evergreens; manages invasive species such as the multiflora rose; and plans for the restoration of Fort Hamilton.*

What does Rose Island mean to you? *“It’s been part of the family. Both [my] kids got married here.” She wants to retire at the end of next year and is planning how she should withdraw. She compared it to when a child leaves home - when it’s time, change is necessary for both the parent and child.*

rose island

What saved the island? *“Fort Hamilton.”* As a historic barracks, there are few coastal fortifications left in the country. In 1981 there were plans to build a huge marina with 850 slips. Citizens with an environmental perspective protected the island.

Environmentally what is at stake? *“Nesting birds.”* No access is allowed on the Rose Island Wildlife Refuge from April 1st to August 15th, to protect the habitat for migratory birds. Recognizing the American Oystercatcher by the cry before it was seen in flight, Johnson explained that bird counts are conducted regularly on the island.

Are there mammals on Rose Island? *“No fresh water.”* But last year a mink and coyote swam out and really affected the nesting birds. Harbor seals are winter and early spring visitors on the east side of Rose Island at Citing Rock. Sir Wiggins of Rose Island, Johnson’s dog, is a welcomed guest. Wiggins has a water bowl and doghouse that double as a lesson. How do you give a dog clean water? Next you witness the lighthouse’s water system, rainwater gathered into a cistern.



lighthouse

Who can become a keeper? *“If you can read you can be the keeper. You become part of the history of the site.”*

Has there been a funny moment at the lighthouse? *“A lady didn’t want to leave. ‘I ain’t going’, and she duct taped herself to the railing. People get so attached to this place.”*

What are the goals of the Rhode Island Lighthouse Foundation? *“A capital campaign is underway with the goals of restoring the fort and lighthouse.”* The Rhode Island Lighthouse Foundation balances the island’s historic significance, environmental importance, public access, and educational value. Johnson’s first priority, *“people’s safety.”*

Museum overnights, keeper for a week, and tours available. www.roseisland.org



timeline

- 1788-1800 Fort Hamilton built
- 1870 Rose Island Lighthouse first lit
- 1971 Newport Bridge placed on navigational charts and beacon extinguished
- 1984 Rose Island Lighthouse declared surplus and non-profit Rose Island Foundation organized to restore and operate lighthouse and grounds
- 1993 Beacon re-lit and fully automated
- 1999 Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation purchased the Navy’s 15-acre lot with task of protecting island’s environment and restoring Fort Hamilton
- 2003 Rhode Island Lighthouse Foundation purchased Starfish, 32-foot Jarvis Newman lobster boat, for transporting overnights and volunteers

interview by Lisa Piscatelli and photos by Deborah L. Perry

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