

# village view

by Andrea Leonard

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VILLAGE ADVERTISER

People who read a lot may be writers; people who write must be readers. It's possible to be an avid reader and never write a line, but the reverse can't be done.

You may wonder sometimes where people who write get inspiration; mostly it comes from reading what someone else has written. What was said can be quoted and expanded or refuted, with all the reasons for the opinion expressed.

Living experiences are food for articles; someone has a stroke of good luck, or someone else's enthusiasm about a new or different vocation or hobby is contagious.

Something delightful happens: a child brings you a bouquet of wild flowers; a friend remembers a day that's special to both of you and makes a call or sends a card; someone you love lets you know the feeling is mutual.

Something infuriating occurs. A neighbor's dog runs through your garden destroying your vegetables just before harvest. A stray hound chases your cat - not up a tree - but onto the hood of your car, scratching the paint.

Or you're right on the edge of falling asleep when what sounds like a string of huskies mashes beneath your window, barking, snarling and yipping, in hot pursuit of some small nocturnal animal. Snatched to sudden wakefulness, you never completely relax again the rest of the night.

There are the eternal inevitables: time, tide and taxes.

Columns about times long gone never fail to find an appreciative audience. Not everyone enjoys them, of course; some people not only don't remember how it was, they don't want to be reminded of the past.

A present problem is sometimes a popular subject, especially if it touches upon someone else's favorite pleasure or pet peeve.

Almost anything anyone writes about nature intrigues Cape Cod readers. The sea, ponds, animal life of the waters, swamps, bogs and marshes, plant life all around us here on the Cape, make good copy.

Taxes are a sure bet as long as you're kicking, yelling and screaming. Anyone who writes anything complimentary regarding taxes is asking to be clobbered.

What good things might be said? Well, just for example, it could be argued that without taxes we'd have no government. While it may have been nothing to brag about in the recent past, it's still better than any other government available.

If we don't agree, we're living in the wrong country.

Nothing worthwhile is free. We get what we pay for, more or less. Okay, less. But still more than it would buy in any other country.

The time would come, even with these subjects, a writer might run dry of ideas if he weren't constantly being stimulated by reading.

Recently a new publication was born; writers love these. This one is now around three months old and beginning to get a handle on the group it intends to serve, the farmers and farm communities of Massachusetts.

While farmers on Cape Cod aren't a sizable portion of the population, people other than farmers may be able to use this publication. Every two weeks its four pages are crammed with information.

The current issue lists major fairs: agricultural, industrial and grange fairs; county 4-H, and beekeepers' fairs, the livestock and flower shows scheduled through September 20th.

There's an alphabetical list of sixteen farms where you can pick your own apples. It gives name of farm, addresses from Amherst to Whately, and telephone numbers, as well as the dates and hours pickers are welcome.

There's a free classified ad column offering for sale equipment such as a tractor (complete with hydraulics, sickle bar, gang mowers and wheel weights), a truck (with small aerial lift bucket and 2500 watt generator, ideal for apple picker or painter, 30 foot lift), and a truck with mower and sulky.

Blacksmith tools (anvils, portable forge, swage block, hammers, blower, hood for forge, with stovepipe, slack tent, and eight bags of soft coat) are for sale.

Shredders, Roto-Hoe tillers, sprayers, plows are advertised.

In addition, there's live-stock for sale. Horses include a bay mare and a Morgan gelding. Under "Cattle" there're an Angus heifer and bull, Guernsey calves, a Charlois purebred cow described as very gentle, a Devon cow, a Holstein heifer and a Hereford bull.

Five piglets, 12 weeks old, are on the block at \$40 each.

Poultry includes pullets, ducks, geese, bantams, guinea hens, pheasants, wild turkeys, pigeons and, of course, hens.

There are goats and sheep described as Corriedale, Dorset, Cheviot, Hampshire and Suffolk.

Produce ranges from tomatoes and apples to carrots and peppers. Cabbages, peaches and canning pears are listed, along with dig-your-own potatoes on a farm in Southwick.

Among the miscellaneous items are cordwood, two 20-quart stainless pails now belonging to a man in Sandwich, hay, honey in-the-comb and by-the-pound, baby rabbits, and ammunition boxes to use as tool chests.

In the Wanted column are tractors, plows, harrows, graders, trailers, a honey extractor, a cordwood saw rig, and one ad that reads: "Wanted: locally grown organic produce, also pickles, cider, jams and other products suitable for year round marketing from my refrigerated warehouse in Gardner.

"I will pick up and intend to provide organic farmers with a dependable outlet for their produce, and Bostonians with a continuing year-round supply of organically grown produce and processed foods."

The current issue describes three farms that welcome vacationers by the day or week: one in Shelburne, one in Greenfield, and one in Huntington. Rates run around \$100 a week per person, include board and room, and guests are invited to participate, if they so desire, in the operation of the farm.

For 26 issues of this gem of information about what's going on down on the farms of Massachusetts, the regular subscription price is \$8 a year, but there's a new-subscriber-special in effect right now.

If you'd like to receive the publication, send your \$5 check along with your name and address to The Massachusetts Farm Bulletin, 80 School Street, Acton, Mass. 01720.

It's a relief to read something that makes you feel there's still some stability out there in the hills politicians refer to as "the grass roots."