

Editorials and Commentary

Rec. Committee must flex its muscles

Now that Mayor Hayes has appointed his five member Recreation Committee, we feel that the time has come for the committee to take the initial step and begin to walk and perhaps even run.

For far too long there has been a void in the recreation programs offered in the Village of Potsdam. Individual groups have sprung up to help fill the void, but to date the Village still does not provide proper activities for its residents.

There is a real need for programs that people beyond the hockey and softball only would find appealing. Last winter volleyball was initiated but after citizens lobbied for its inception. Despite the fact the hockey does enjoy extreme popularity here there still is a definite need for the Recreation Committee to look into other forms of recreation that may or may not be in the realm of athletics.

The Village and the Town of Potsdam must stop talking about how nice it would be to have a single Recreation Commission. We should not have to wait until 1977 to see an active Commission at work. Open meetings should be held so that public input can be felt.

At the present time four organizations sponsor activities for village youth. While we feel that in principle all of these organizations serve a need, we feel that some have become a bit too overbearing and have lost sight of their original goals. One of the prime jobs of the Recreation Commission should be to bring together all of the recreation organizations and offer advice, whether it be criticism or praise, on their past and future plans. Incorporation papers or not, public facilities are being used, and organizations should be at least responsible to the public.

A final note...Potsdam has perhaps the finest athletic and performance facilities in the county, yet there are rarely ever any programs sponsored by the community to raise funds. Both Ogdensburg and Massena utilize their arenas for amateur and professional wrestling matches, and car shows. Money is the name of the game. If monies can be raised without raising taxes the people of the Village and the Town will be better off.

There is a lot that can be done.....will it?

Three stages in problem drinking

If an alcoholic is someone who pawns his intelligence for a drink...what is alcoholism?

In the simplest terms available, alcoholism is an illness resulting in an UNCONTROLLED intake of alcoholic beverages.

Generally, it can be said that there are three stages in alcoholism.

In the first stage a heavy drinker promises to quit drinking often...and breaks those promises. As a result-perhaps of his inability to quit drinking he may drink more to relieve the "tensions" of day to day life. In many cases these "tensions" are manufactured by the alcoholic to provide an excuse for drinking. In other cases these "tensions" are a result of guilt feelings brought on by an inability to quit drinking.

The alcoholic also increases his tolerance for liquor and goes through a personality change of some kind.

In the middle stages of alcoholism the alcohol abuser frequently tries to deny that he drinks; he may even attempt to conceal his drinking.

The signs of his drinking, however, are usually more noticeable-especially at his work.

Drinking becomes a daily necessity in the middle stages of alcoholism, and it becomes harder and harder to "get feeling good."

In the final stages of alcoholism the alcohol abuser begins to suffer acute feelings of guilt. He becomes isolated from his friends and family, anyone in fact who may want to help.

His personality goes through yet another change and he may begin to get the "shakes."

Finally, he gets weak from malnutrition and in many cases he begins to hallucinate.

That's also what alcoholism is.

And, despite the use of the editorial "he," it also happens to work the same way for women.

And teenagers.

Courier & Freeman

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Out of the closet-- another tall tale

By Victoria Levitt

Funny, but I never thought of Erma Bombeck as being short. But she came out of the closet the other day and in her jeremiad she challenged tall girls to do the same. It was as if she had flung her gauntlet in my face-or it would have been if she could have got the toss up that far.

I don't see that she's so bad off. Remember "Five-foot-two, eyes of blue"? I haven't been five-foot-two since I was twelve. There was a pipsqueak named Felix in my music class who always chose me for a square dance partner during the folk music unit. He would invariably lean backward, shade his eyes with one hand and, drawing on the sum total of his savoir faire, he would drawl, "Heheey, how's the weather up there?" I blew my only chance for a sixth grade social life the day I hoisted him up by the armpits and said, "Well, you're up here now. How is it?"

These days, if there's any lyric that comes close to describing my physique it would have to be "Five-foot-eight, overweight."

Actually, I went on a diet so I could wear a bikini this summer-any two pieces I wear is a bikini, like it or not.

Those slinky one-piece suits do have a sort of advantage for me though. Once I've got one on I look a lot shorter because I can't stand up straight.

The trouble is, I always look dowdy, especially in pants. No matter what length is fashionable, mine are always peal numbers.

I do generally present a very prim appearance in theaters but that's only because there isn't enough room to cross my legs. And things get worse when I have to slouch down in my seat so that people behind me can see. Did you ever try slouching while keeping your legs demurely crossed at the ankles?

Theater managers have made a lot of

money on me though. I've had to pay the over-twelve admission since I was nine.

I walk a lot. I always have. When you're tall you have to be either a contortionist or a masochist to get out of the back seat of a volkswagon more than once.

I admit that there can be advantages to being tall. For example, I can reach high cupboard shelves that no one else can reach. So I'm in great demand to reach things, usually just after I've got settled into one of those nice bean bag chairs that are modeled after the back seat of a volkswagon.

Of course, tall girls are supposed to make good fashion models. But if that's true, how come the rest of us can't ever find anything to wear that isn't too short or so place?

I don't really know if I'd make a good model or not. Whenever I look into a full length mirror all I can see is my midriff.

And what about chorus girls? Height can be an advantage there. I recall that before Nancy's time, Henry Kissinger was photographed with a young woman described as statuesque. I guess I'm statuesque too, if someone who looks like a cross between Olive Oyl and Bluto is statuesque.

There are some very glamorous actresses who are tall. Although I didn't have much in common with Judy Garland-she was more Erma's type-all those "nice young men" my mother was always encouraging me to be friendly with looked a lot like Mickey Rooney.

None of my mother's "arrangements" worked out. I just couldn't feature going through life with a leading man who always has to stand on a box.

Still, if I had taken my mother's advice, I would probably be living a life very different from the one I'm living today.

I would probably be married to either a jockey or the mayor of New York.

The soap box

By Lillian Lepage

I seem to be developing a distorted sense of reasoning lately, but let's see if we can straighten things out to some degree.

I will take Ruth Garner's letter piece by piece and attempt to show that I am not out to damage anyone or anything, and am just trying to do my little bit toward keeping my country and my countrymen from being damaged.

She implies that my reportage of the press conference was inaccurate. What I reported was almost word for word what our staff reporter said of Bella Abzug's comments and I did not know what he was going to write. It was not inaccurate.

My commentary? That's another thing. Distorted? I don't think so.

My beef about Abzug's abortion stand was that she simply went along with it. You've just got to agree that legalized abortion, as it is practiced today, is immoral. It is degrading to womanhood. Its aftermath, both physically and mentally, has become of grave concern to deep thinkers. It fosters corruption and does not correct any maleficence.

Had Abzug said, "I find it deplorable, but that is the way the cookie crumbles," we would have at least understood that she felt she was dealing with a hopeless situation.

But it seems, she has to make us feel that she knows all the answers, so she doesn't speak out against it. Instead, to her, it is what people want, that's what she is for.

I think our representatives should do more than go along with the immoral wishes of the people. If one loves his country and its people, he should speak out against the things that harm it.

Abortion is a sick nation's way of saying that it doesn't know one thing about bettering society. There are fewer births, which should, according to the experts, make life better for the people who are here. Instead, every facet of our lives has gone on eroding.

No matter how you look at it, legalized abortion is a symptom of our nation's weakness.

On the Child Care Bill I stand adamant.

I have no doubt in the world that Potsdam Day Care Center is a well-run place. But I think those who run it would prefer to get financial loans to set up operation, and charge parents whatever is necessary to make it a paying project rather than to get grants from the government. This way the government would have to keep its nose out of their business and they would be free to give the care they want to give, and the care the parents would expect them to give.

Day care centers should be neighborhood establishments. They should never become large institutional businesses. Our children are not cattle. Only by keeping the centers small can each child be kept an individual. Look what has been happening to our children since schools have become centralized. Teachers do they best they can, but they would be among the first to tell you how much their hands are tied by government.

The phrase, "people less fortunate than ourselves" made me smile. I raised six children by the most meager means. My husband's steady job was a reasonably good one. We just had a few too many kids. I learned to make every crumb count; nothing was wasted. I made neat, warm quilts from every inch of old sweaters, cottons. Pillow cases were often made from the worn skirts of cotton dresses, braided and crocheted rugs from scraps of cloth left over.

We couldn't afford beer, so we didn't have many parties. The kids had to get along with a minimum amount of junk food, and they were the healthiest kids in town.

With the exception of one summer in the spinach fields, I stayed at home and cared for my family. I knew that if I went to work I would be buying all the things I was making and my children would not have their mother to come home to after school.

Only after the last child was in high school did I enter nursing school. I studied journalism and began taking countless courses in adult education.

And I scrutinized the governments of the world.

We were poor, but not for a minute did I consider us unfortunate. The challenge to overcome obstacles and the good feeling of accomplishment in everyday living kept the bloom in my attitudes.

I've done private duty nursing in fabulously wealthy homes. I learned of problems on every level. I never felt that I was missing anything.

I know that there are some women who have to work, and for those a good neighborhood child care center is a must. But God forbid that they turn their children over to governmental regimentation for the sake of an extra T.V., car, or whatever else they think is so important in their lives.

On Taiwan, Absug said she "regretted..." I think "regret" is the most overused word in a politician's vocabulary. All it seems to say is, "Let's pass that one over."

As for her excellent record, Democratic Senate hopeful, Abe Hirschfeld, doesn't think it's so great. He named off a few boo boos in a recent television interview. An excellent record is nice, but I don't think anybody ever gets that good. Like people, instead, who just keep plugging away toward better things with the good of the nation in mind.

And by the way, if Democrats want somebody who can make a good showing in the senatorial race they should get Abe on the Northern New York circuit. A New York Times executive, he has some common sense ideas about helping the economy without downgrading anybody and without giving people government handouts.

And I'll bet he wouldn't be reluctant to come up here in the sticks as Bella Absug reportedly was.

My statement about wishing she were on our side seems to have been slightly misunderstood. I admitted she was the kind of woman I would like to look up to. I simply meant I wish she could see things the way I, and the many others who share my views, do.

You know, a far-fetched dream I'd like to see come true is for Abe and Senator Jim Buckley to join forces for the good of the country.

Abe's ideas for employment are sound, and when I think of Jim Buckley's "we-the-people" attitudes I feel much safer than I have felt in a long time.

These two could really change our country for the better. But the likelihood of it happening is remote, indeed.

With the Republican convention coming up, the abortion and Taiwan issues will be brought to the fore. I don't know if this is just meant to arouse people and get votes, or if they really intend to do something about it if they win.

But it will be up there and discussed, and if nothing else, it will bring out the goodness in people once again.

Lately I have stressed to both Democrats and Republicans the necessity of making sure they put their very best people up for candidacies. Americans are getting rather fed up with politicians who are interested only in feathering their own nests.

It is beginning to look like good characters will become an important factor in future elections.

And that makes things look a little brighter all around.

TOO YOUNG TO SMOKE

Expectant mothers, who smoke limit the flow of oxygen to their unborn babies, hindering their growth, the American Cancer Society says. For everyone, it increases the risk of getting lung cancer as well as raising blood pressure, blocking the lungs' filtering capacity and increasing the level of artery-clogging fatty acids.

The voice of PAT

POTSDAM AREA TAXPAYERS, INC.
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Voice of PAT

The 1976-77 school budget reflects a tax rate increase approximated at \$10 to \$14 per \$1000. Because much of this increase was unavoidable due to the very unfavorable teachers' contract negotiated in 1975, PAT did not actively oppose this budget. However, we feel this tax rate represents the maximum bearable tax burden on local property owners in the foreseeable future. PAT would therefore have to actively oppose any budget reflecting further rate increases. In particular, the figure of \$100 per \$1000 should be considered as an absolute ceiling on local school taxes (based on present assessment levels) under any circumstances.

Too early to be talking about next year's budget? Not at all, for the following considerations:

(a) Because the teachers' contract requires one year's notice to eliminate any position, sound fiscal policy requires that notice of termination be given prior to Sept. 1, 1976 for all positions that might conceivably need to be dropped in 1977-78. We recommend the following:

One position in administration, The entire dental hygiene program, Present driver education program, at least half the guidance program, Nearly half of program, some of the language program, selected teaching positions by attrition.

(2) We calculate that approximately \$25,000 plus fringe benefits have been saved in 1976-77 teachers' salaries because of retirements and replacements at lower levels. Sound fiscal management dictates that this money should either be added to the Planned Balance or used to reduce the 1976 tax rate. In no event should it be used to fill any personnel positions or otherwise be spent in 1976-77.

(3) Public opinion indicates that any future teacher or other personnel contracts should be made fully public prior to any school board vote on such contracts so that the public may have an opportunity to make their views known to board members. Further, the school board should make strong efforts to finalize such contracts prior to the budget vote so that the public can know whom they are voting on. It might be noted that both school board candidates in the recent election supported this policy.

In view of the basically responsible attitude of the Potsdam School Board, (with a few notable exceptions) in this trying year of 1976, we are trusting the board to continue an attitude of fiscal responsibility which will enable the working man and his family to survive.

Two weeks ago we listened to Dave Martin, candidate for the Assembly, and for a change heard some sensible views. Among other things, he expressed a deep sense of commitment to the people of this Assembly district, a commitment long overdue.



TAKING A BREAK from trenching out Pete Baker's barn foundation so he can replace rotten sills, these youngsters seem resigned to the drizzle in which they worked. They are participants in the Early College Training Program (EXCEL), which allows outstanding high school students to spend six weeks on the State University College campus earning six hours of college credit. Baker, who is director of the program here, said the kids volunteered to help him out before the program ended on Friday. (Victoria Levitt Photo).

Editor's note...



A GIFT OF LIFE

Your contribution to the American Cancer Society in memory of your loved one will help support a program dedicated to the conquest of cancer. Your memorial gift will not only do honor to the dead. It could help provide a gift of life.

Memorial gift funds may be sent to your local American Cancer Society office.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY