

editorials & commentary

Funds For Creativity

Even in hyper-inflationary times, \$1.2 billion can buy a lot.

Quite possibly even the vast improvement in public broadcasting proposed by the latest Carnegie Commission report. In case you missed or skipped over the considerable attention to that document in recent news columns, it surveys the present and potential of noncommercial television and radio and comes up with a clutch of recommendations for restructuring them to better serve the public and "help the creative spirit to flourish."

Key proposals include replacing the existing Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Public Broadcasting Service (themselves creations of a 1967 Carnegie Commission study) with two new bodies. A Public Telecommunications Trust would head the system with responsibility for administration and long-term planning. A Program Services Endowment, semi-autonomous of the trust, would underwrite programming.

Funding would be increased from the current level of less than \$500 million annually to around \$1.2 billion by 1985, with half to come from federal appropriations. A major source would be fees raised from licensing commercial broadcasters. Facilities would be expanded to reach 90 percent of the U.S. population.

As the Carnegie Commission sees it, the result would be a communications service for the viewing and listening publics that "can illuminate the dark corners of the world and the dark corners of the mind. It can offer forums to a multitude of voices...Above all, it can add to our understanding of our own inner workings and of one another."

Well, maybe. At the very least, the report's authors are certainly flourishing creatively. But without doubting their sincerity or dismissing the basic conclusions, questions might be raised concerning some points and assumptions.

Commercial television, for example, comes in for scathing criticism for its concentration on "audience maximization" and for denying Americans "what other societies consider vital: a flourishing public communications service uncensored by commercial imperatives."

No argument, but it should not be forgotten that the creative spirit has been known to flourish in commercial broadcasting, particularly in the early days when money was in shorter supply and commercial considerations were for that very reason no less imperative. Much that came out of that era is now considered classic—Sid Caesar's "Show of Shows," Ernie Kovacs, the long-run "Omnibus," the last perhaps yet to be excelled in bringing culture to a mass audience.

As for today's audiences, the Nielsen-computed multitudes who respond to the jiggle appeal of "Charlie's Angels" may not in the least care to have the dark corners of the world, let alone their minds, illuminated at whatever cost. The ultimate cost of pouring vast numbers of public dollars into expanded creative effort could be simply the subsidization of what continues to be a viewing elite.

And in the process, public broadcasting might lose something of present value—its diversity. The fragmentation of production among a large number of loosely linked stations may be an organizational weakness, but it is also a strength. There is a variety and freshness in programming originating from Boston and Philadelphia to Atlanta and San Francisco that the networks lack and public broadcasting might lose if restructured and centrally funded.

Particularly with federal funds. The Carnegie proposals stress careful insulation from government control, but this might be easier in the stressing than the achieving. With the bucks inevitably goes influence.

February Stands Cold And Clear

February is winter's professional month. The cold has matured and sharpened so that it stays longer and more firmly. In the North Country, winter weather is February's perfect identity. It is one of the less confusing months because we know that it is capable of doing and it generally does it. Winter is at its deepest point although spring is only weeks away.

February is a challenging month because it gives everyone a chance to do something daring simply by leaving the snugness of a warm house on a cold day. This may be accomplished by rushing along frigid streets or country roads, or by trudging through snow-entombed woods, or by zigzagging down alpine ski slopes, or by whatever methods one chooses which are conveniently available as long as they bring one face to face with the open air.

February is a grim month because it wants to stiffen, solidify and expand everything it touches. How fragile is much of the world to long periods of low temperatures. Little can flow without hiding under tons of insulation or is artificially heated. Any open channels where water moves fast surrenders some heat in a steamy breath and at night when temperatures drop much below zero may create a winter fog. In summer, the mists down from cool mountains.

The most pleasant sounds of February are not those emitted from nature. More often they are directly to man combating this frigid environment. Once one has had water pipes freeze as tight as brittle candy sticks for days or

NORTH COUNTRY

EDWIN REID



even weeks the rhythmic gushing the faucet is a happy melody to hear when temperatures outside are 40 or more degrees below zero. What soothing music also when a miracle of combined ingenuity and inventiveness in the form of battery, starter, distributor, carburetor, spark plugs and gasoline resurrects a block of frozen metal and wires into a vibrating, purring motor of eager energy. The roaring and clanging of

snowplow patrols clearing sideroads as well as highways is a reassuring noise for worried ones that fear being isolated from the nearest road. Its a heavenly hum when the fuel truck pulls up to the house and the driver attaches its hose to your intake pipe and begins pumping the oily fluid into your empty or dangerously low tank. And if you are not burning oil the clucking of dry hardwood tumbling into the woodbox, with the knowledge that there is an ample supply on hand for the fiercest of February days, is a song of smug security. Perhaps, it is the slamming of a door, however, after emerging into a toasty room from the freezing outdoors, that is the sweetest and most comforting sound of all for we are always rushing indoors and quickly closing the door with great gusto.

I guess there is something in the people of the North Country that relishes the wild challenge that the cold of winter offers. To accept it as such is to acknowledge that you are a true son or daughter of the land. Why else are we here but to know that when spring comes we have earned every moment of it. And after spring, summer; after that, fall; each with its uniqueness and renewed expectations. The seasons travel to us, instead of us to them, unless one is free to chase the climate of choice by wing or wheel.

From Our Files

1934-Eben-One night last week someone entered M. Moore's barn and stole four tires off his truck, drained the gas out and took a pail of milk.

1934-\$12.90 for cows-Farmers not anxious to sell cull cows under a federal relief program.

1934-West Potsdam-Hiram Jebo and family are moving from the Forsythe house to Potsdam.

1934-September-Right on the dot-"The time will come," shouted the speaker, "when women will get men's wages." "Yes," said a little man in the corner, "next Friday night."

1934-Special-full size rolled edge mattress, \$5.95. Metal beds, \$4.95. Surprise Furniture Co. Fall Island.

1934-September-at the Rialto, Wallace Berry and Jackie Cooper in "Treasure Island."

1934-Parishville Center-Robert Riggs was home from his school near New Bremen over the weekend.

1934-F.A. Brown buys Coney Island. Plans extensive improvements.

1940-June-Ward Week sale-gloss wall paint, \$1.47 a gallon; batteries, \$2.97 with your old battery; dress shirts, 84 cents; full size sheets, 69 cents; two piece living room suite, \$54.94; garden rakes, 58 cents; mens' suite, \$17.88.

1937-Hotel in the South Woods-The subscribers would announce that they have purchased the hotel at Stark's Falls on the Rackett River and are prepared to furnish good accommodations on reasonable terms. Good boats always in readiness for fishing, hunting or excursion parties. Geo. Felsue and Son.

1937-The men who never told an editor how to better his paper recently married the woman who never looked into a looking glass.

1857-There is a wonderful babe in Ottumwa, Iowa, six months old, who frightened his mother the other night by distinctly calling, "Give me a drink of water." The choice of beverage astonishes the Iowans as much as the precocious use of language.

1867-Mrs. Lincoln's wardrobe-Due to the inadequacy of her income, Mrs. Abraham Lincoln offers for sale some \$45,000 worth of jewels and dresses. Some of the items are: one black center camel's hair shawl, long, \$1,500; three black lace shawls at \$1,500, \$500, \$300; one Russian sable coat at \$1,500.

1868-The High Flats School in the Town of Parishville will give their next entertainment at the school house on Friday evening. On the program, W.G. Willis, Miss Harriet Cowles, Miss Nettie Allen, Miss Ellen Hatch, R.E. Thurston, H. Swift.

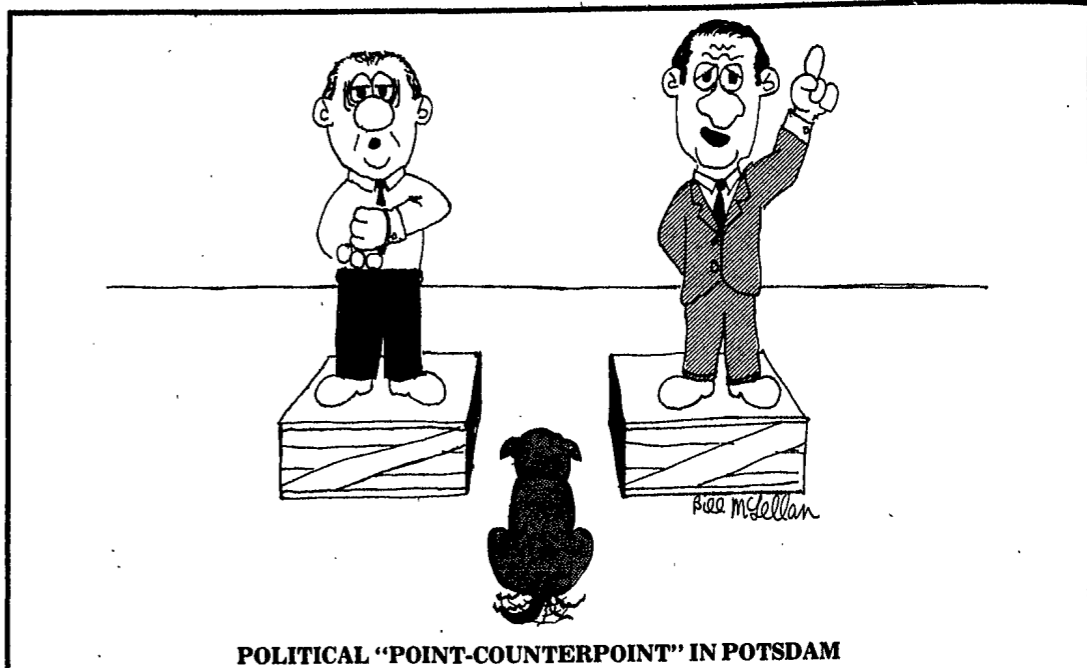
Compiled by Earl Pattison

Courier & Freeman

A Park Newspaper

HAL STOKES, Editor
MABEL MAXFIELD, Business, Circulation
DOUG GILSON, Advertising
PAULLASHOMB, Production

Published every Tuesday by the Courier & Freeman, Inc. (USPS 135-460), 71 Market St., Potsdam, N.Y. Member of the New York Press Association, the National Editorial Association, and Audit Bureau of Circulations. Subscription rates: carrier home delivery in Potsdam, 20 cents per week. By mail outside Potsdam in St. Lawrence County, \$8.50 per year and \$9.00 elsewhere in United States and Canada. Entered in the post office at Potsdam, N.Y., as second class matter. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Courier & Freeman, Inc., 71 Market St., Potsdam, N.Y. 13676.



POLITICAL "POINT-COUNTERPOINT" IN POTSDAM

Letters

Candidate Looks At Potsdam Tourism

To the Editor: The following, written by Village Trustee Candidate Eleanor Senf, is being run as a letter to the editor.

I would like to offer some ideas concerning the necessity for controlled economic development within the Village of Potsdam as well as some comments on tourism as an industry and how it could benefit us. But first, some personal history.

In the Fall of 1976 I made the decision to leave my Congressional employment in Washington and return to Potsdam to open a wine and cheese shop which I did, a year later. In doing so, I deliberately sought to locate my business in downtown Potsdam because of its accessibility and compactness, its tradition of small, individually-owned shops and, most important, its potential for offering the growth and development that is essential to any business, new or established.

Economically, culturally and socially, the downtown business area has much to commend it. It draws on a wide variety of consumer groups, representing many income levels and myriad tastes. Its tradition of small, personally owned businesses contributes to a sense of community and economic interdependence. Its compactness and accessibility makes it easy for the consumer to shop either on foot or by car.

The historic architecture of the buildings bespeaks the village's longevity and lends an aura of assurance and stability to the commerce in its streets. Its breathtakingly scenic river reflects the visual appeal of the buildings, contributing to the enjoyment of the moment's activity.

Yet, with all these assets, downtown Potsdam does not thrive. And, as many people as are asked, there are as many answers as to the reasons why. Traffic, patterns and congestion; too little parking, too much parking, Merchant apathy; poor selection of merchandise; lack of quality. Economic conditions, both national and local. And so on. While there is validity in all of these criticisms there are none which cannot be changed if there is a determined, coordinated effort from all levels of the community to effect it.

Leadership must be forthcoming and our local government is in the best position to offer it. For example, a concerted effort could be made to attract new small businesses to the downtown area. The village, under its Community Development Block Grant and Small Cities Programs has access to federal programs that are specifically designed to assist new businesses in

many different ways. The village board could pass a resolution providing for tax exemptions for new businesses coming in to the area. This law would be in accordance with a state law that allows individual communities to pass such local laws if they desire to. Village government could act to coordinate the resources of such county agencies as the Industrial Development Agency, Planning Board, Cooperative Extension and Chamber of Commerce, as well as State University's Sea Grant Program, the Small Business Administration and local Chamber of Commerce as well as any other public or private groups to form a clearinghouse of information for individuals or organizations interested in locating a business in Potsdam. Village government could initiate cooperation among civic, commercial and financial institutions to begin an out-of-area promotional and advertising campaign on the desirability of doing business in Potsdam.

The Community at large should be made aware of the economic consequences of the loss of small business. An obvious consequence may be seen in a diminishing supply of commercial goods and services. A more sinister consequence is the accompanying erosion of the tax base and a decrease in the supply of government services, like snow removal, or recreational and cultural programs.

Unless our local tax base becomes more diversified in its business component, and increasingly larger share of the tax burden will be borne by Village residents. Potsdam is a community and as a village should begin now to put its economic house in order. It should eagerly assist new business to come into the area. It could also take advantage of a business that is already here; namely, Tourism.

Did you know that tourism in New York State's second largest industry, after agriculture? Are you aware of all the tourist attractions located within the village limits or of which we are a small part in a large whole? The first thing that comes to mind are the Winter Olympics in Lake Placid. Then there are the Seaway Trails, winter carnivals and summer festivals, scholarly institutes of study and major musical and cultural events.

The establishment of a tourist information center to provide accurate, up-to-date information about area activities to tourists and residents alike could prove a tremendous boost to our local economy. Perhaps that's even an idea for a "new" business.

Eleanor Senf
Potsdam

Make Trustees Respond On Depot

To the Editor: In connection with your editorial "Too Late to Save the Depot," Jan. 22, I submit the following comments:

Politicians are congenial spenders. Give these siphons of inflation one whiff of the public purse, their nostrils flare, their adrenal pumps, and eager minds burn and churn with countless plans to garner a slice of the treasury pie. Recall the episode urban renewal. A litany of dubious payoffs, ripoffs and laundered checks and a legacy of gaping holes euphemistically called parking lots and one single story, half-occupied, modern slum. Never fear, the politicians cry. Holiday Inn will soon be here, with thirty dollar rooms, two dollar cocktails and a positive enthusiasm for joining the tax rolls about the turn of the century.

The latest plan to outwit the feds involves bypassing the Rusty Nail, Kinney's and White's Hardware with a high flying river overpass and has been recommended to us by our present Village Board of Trustees, Garner, Chapple and Claffey. Alas, this tireless trinity now informs us that because of regulations of curve and camber that state sandstone tavern known as the Depot, the old railway station, will be sacrificed to the bulldozer's blade. Rumor even has it that the merry mayor herself plans to cut the ribbon and signal the destruction to begin. May the foot of Bacchus prematurely engage the clutch!

On the issue of children's movies, let me assign point to attendance. The Roxy Theater can not afford to show movies to a near empty theater. If we want more children's movies, we must be willing to support them.

Continuing in this vein, I would like to extend a public thank you to Ernie, John and Sam for the help they extended to the St. Lawrence County Heart Association in promoting children's movies this past year. Their generosity in time and accommodations deserves to be recognized.

Once again, during the mid-winter school break, the Roxy Theater in conjunction with the Heart Association will be presenting a matinee. Captain Nemo in the "Underwater City". This G rated science fiction film, along with cartoons, door prizes and free popcorn will be shown beginning at 2 p.m. Feb. 23, 24, and 25. If you are interested in appropriate children's entertainment, and at the same time wish to help fight American's number one killer, let your children attend.

Sincerely,
Terry Mullen
St. Lawrence County
Heart Association
Potsdam

Mrs. Royal J. Lyman
(Susan C. Lyman)
Norwood

In Defense Of Local Theater

To the Editor: I read with interest two letters in recent months that reflected negatively on the Roxy Theater here in Potsdam. I would like to offer a different view. We must consider that they are a business, not merely a public service. They offer a service dictated by the public who are their customers.

To those who are astonished by the lack of good, clean family movies, I must point out, they are not always economically realistic. Since the motion picture industry is a business, we can hardly expect them to produce movies people will not attend. It is our own tastes and standards that determine the movies. The costs reflect two factors: an astonishing spiral in production and distribution costs and a decline in movie attendance. If better movies with G ratings become financially rewarding you can be sure that the Roxy and all other theaters will provide them.

On the issue of children's movies, let me assign point to attendance. The Roxy Theater can not afford to show movies to a near empty theater. If we want more children's movies, we must be willing to support them.

Continuing in this vein, I would like to extend a public thank you to Ernie, John and Sam for the help they extended to the St. Lawrence County Heart Association in promoting children's movies this past year. Their generosity in time and accommodations deserves to be recognized.

Once again, during the mid-winter school break, the Roxy Theater in conjunction with the Heart Association will be presenting a matinee. Captain Nemo in the "Underwater City". This G rated science fiction film, along with cartoons, door prizes and free popcorn will be shown beginning at 2 p.m. Feb. 23, 24, and 25. If you are interested in appropriate children's entertainment, and at the same time wish to help fight American's number one killer, let your children attend.

Step Forward, Please

To the Editor: May I, through this section, ask that the person who struck and damaged my 1976 brown Maverick while legally parked in Potsdam please stand up and be counted as a responsible citizen. I have no intention of filing a complaint. My purpose in asking this very reasonable step is that your insurance company will pay to repair my car (with less than 18,000 miles) otherwise, I will have to pick up most of the tab and as everybody knows, senior citizens do not have much money.

Each time I visit my very sick husband, I wonder if I will find a repetition of that unfortunate incident. Sincerely,
Mrs. Royal J. Lyman
(Susan C. Lyman)
Norwood

Wounded Hunter Thanks Local Mailman

To the Editor: On Jan. 24, 1979 I had been fox hunting with my dogs on the Sweeney Road in the Town of Potsdam. When I decided to start home I was accidentally shot by one of my dogs in my jeep.

While I was struggling up the road to the nearest house to call for help, Jim Crowley (a local mail carrier) came along and stopped. I got in his car and asked him to drive me to Potsdam Hospital. I explained to him that I had been shot. He was probably terrified at the sight of me, as I was bleeding through my mouth, nose and wounds. He drove me directly to Potsdam Hospital as fast as he could possibly go.

In my estimation this took a lot of courage, good judgment and understanding on Jim Crowley's part. I feel he should be recommended for "Mailman of the Year" as he saved a man's life on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 1979, because I was bleeding to death. God bless you Jim.

My heartfelt thanks,
John (Bick) Leimer

A total
Coholy
Scholar
seniors
in the
The
1979-80
ship ent
\$250 pe
study a

Sled

To the
The
Hannay
who do
Annual
weeken
Haven,
raising
Lawyer
Cancer

Chief

Polit

To the

With

suspens

chief o

crimin

politic

this is

other

esteem

artifici

absolut

village.

whip lo

the arr

don't yo

whom t

Let's

a law v

highest

cellent

20 year

a letter

been

some m

simple

just sit

coffee,

derstan

with mu

Anywh