

editorials & commentary

Think Twice

Potsdam village officials should think twice about their plan to charge a \$100 annual fee for video games, pinball, foosball and pool games within the municipality.

Included in the plan is a \$50 fee for live entertainment in taverns and an increased per-lane fee for local bowling alleys.

If they had deliberately intended to irritate almost everyone, village officials probably couldn't have made a better choice than the proposed "games tax."

At last night's public hearing, opposition to the plan was heard from quite a cross-section of the community. Speakers included business people, residents, vendors, university personnel and others.

Not heard last night was the one strong voice of approval — the one voice to say, as did Professor

Harold Hill in "The Music Man:" "We've got trouble, right here in River City." Village officials have downplayed the "protect our children from the video game" theme, focusing instead on the financial benefits to the village from the proposed tax.

But some speakers last night suggested that the loss to local businesses would outweigh any financial benefits. And one vendor of video games said he would work with village officials if they felt regulatory measures were needed to protect younger members of the community.

The bottom line for the village appears to be finances, the need to increase revenues. But this proposal seems ill-conceived, ill-timed and likely to alienate not only the business community but devotees of live jazz, bowlers and the younger set, who will one day be voters.

ASSESSORS:

Hearings Slated On Training Regulations

The State Board of Equalization and Assessment has announced that nine regional public hearings will be held in November on proposed rules covering the certification and training of both elected and appointed assessors.

The proposed rules are based on a bill passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Hugh L. Carey last year, effective July 1, 1982.

The legislation requires the State Board of Equalization and Assessment to establish or re-establish minimum qualification standards for appointed assessors and a certification and training program for both appointed and elected assessors, persons seeking certification as eligible for appointment to the office of assessor, and county directors of real property tax services.

This legislation, now designated as Chapter 33 of the Laws of 1982, also amended the Town Law to provide for four-year terms for all elected assessors. There are approximately 1,500 elected assessors, excluding villages, and 475 appointed assessors.

The new assessor training and certification program is similar to those contained in the existing rules, the primary exception being more years of experience required for assessors in jurisdiction with 6,000 or fewer parcels. Training requirements may be more demanding for assessors serving the 5,000 to 6,000 parcel jurisdiction.

Elected assessors (in addition to appointed assessors) must complete a basic course of training, or its equivalent, and successfully complete an examination based on the course.

The basic course may be waived for any person who has certain professional designations, such as membership in the Institute of Assessing Officers of the New York State Assessors Association.

Actual and necessary travel expenses incurred by assessors while attending training sessions will be reimbursed by the state, subject to audit by the state comptroller. In the past, these were charges to the local governments.

Under the 1970 law, appointed

assessors who failed to take training courses were subject to having their appointments revoked. There was no penalty, however, if an elected assessor failed to take training. Villages were excluded from the 1970 legislation and also are excluded from the new law.

The major changes made by Chapter 33, as included in the proposed rules, are:

— Minimum qualification standards are established for two classes of appointed assessors: those who serve in cities or towns of up to 6,000 parcels and those who serve in places with more than 6,000 parcels. Previously, there were four classes: up to 3,500 parcels; 3,501 to 6,000; 6,001 to 15,000; and more than 15,000. The minimum qualifications of the proposed rules generally are similar to those contained in the existing rules, the primary exception being more years of experience required for assessors in jurisdiction with 6,000 or fewer parcels. Training requirements may be more demanding for assessors serving the 5,000 to 6,000 parcel jurisdiction.

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— Minimum qualification standards

for county directors continue to be based on the complexity and difficulty of the office according to three groupings of counties, but the number of counties assigned to the most complex grouping is increased from 9 to 19.

County directors also must take a basic course of training.

— Mandatory continuing education is specified for appointed assessors and county directors: for appointed assessors in jurisdictions of 6,000 or fewer parcels, 36 course hours of training within three years; for appointed assessors in places with more than 6,000 parcels, 72 course hours within three years. County directors also must accumulate 72 course hours within three years.

— Assessors and county directors who were appointed or elected on or after Nov. 1, 1981 and before Nov. 1, 1982 must be certified by the state board within two years after starting their terms. Those appointed or elected after Nov. 1, 1982 must be certified within one year of their starting term. County directors appointed before Nov. 1, 1981 must become certified by Oct. 31, 1983.

— The state board will conduct a hearing whenever it appears that an assessor or county director has failed to satisfy the requirements of the law. The State Board determines that the official has not met the qualifications or requirements, the official's appointment will be revoked or, in the case of an elected assessor, the office will be declared vacant.

Public hearings will be held at 10 a.m. on Nov. 23 at the floor hearing room, State Office Building, Washington Street, Watertown; 10 a.m. on Nov. 24 at the Community Meeting Room, Clinton County Government Center, 137 Margaret St., Plattsburgh.

From Our Files

Nov. 10, 1897 — The new Arlington is now open and receiving within its hospitable doors any who come the way. The hotel is very prettily finished and furnished and is extremely pleasant throughout. Barnett Bros. are proprietors and Mrs. T. H. Brown is manager while an experienced chef presides over the culinary department.

Nov. 10, 1897 — Normal Notes. Miss Minnie Stone has received a splendid promotion in New York, being advanced to Director of Music in a number of the city schools at a salary of \$1,200 a year.

Nov. 10, 1897 — A force pump to be run by steam power has been placed in the basement at the Normal and pipes the water from the well throughout the building.

BUCKS BRIDGE, Nov. 10, 1897 — The big sawmill has started up with a full force of men after having been idle since August.

WEST POTSDAM, Nov. 10, 1897 — The dulllest part of the dull times here was elections.

NICHOLVILLE, Nov. 10, 1897 — The immense crop of corn this season has revived the oldtime husking bee. The last one was at R. LeClair's on McEwen Street last Thursday evening when nearly 40 assembled and made things lively. After the husking a supper was served at the house that would have discounted many a hotel

or restaurant layout.

Nov. 24, 1897 — The local Salvation Army will on and after Tuesday, Nov. 30 conduct their meetings in the hall on Raymond Street, formerly used by the G.A.R. This hall is over Mrs. Wilson's knitting mill.

JOE INDIAN, Oct. 20, 1920 — Fred Chase is skidding pulp for P.X. Blake and staying in the S.K. Brown house. Mrs. Chase is cooking for the men.

SOUTH COLTON, Oct. 20, 1920 — Schenectady capitalist is equipping plant to furnish lights for South Colton. Power will be derived from the saw mill property owned by Mr. Furman.

Oct. 20, 1920 — Federal agents seize Stutz car following crash on Canton Road. Made raids here on four places. Made big seizure of liquors in two trucks stopped at roadblocks on Hopkinton Road. Among the amusing incidents was the halting of a car containing a party of members of the Men's Brotherhood of the local Methodist Church on the way home from a revival meeting in Brasher. They took the affair good naturedly.

Oct. 27, 1920 — Potsdam Village has election district with polling places in Water Station, Fire Station, Town Hall, Masonic Temple, John Gillis' bar on Cherry Street and Fairborn's shop on Market Street.

Dec. 20, 1960 — Orman Sanford, 16

Cherry St. presented with a pin at Orchard Paper company for 15 years service.

Oct. 14, 1931 — Potsdam would eliminate taste in water. Village trustees here had workings of armatorator explained to them. It would eliminate soft water taste and cost \$500.

Oct. 21, 1931 — High school cafeteria is ready. It will be used by the domestic science department and will serve lunches to students and teachers.

Oct. 28, 1931 — Steel lights for Hanawa. Town of Pierrepont contracts with utilities for 21. Work began Thursday with E.A. Pellon of the Potsdam office as engineer.

Oct. 28, 1931 — Eben had his share of traffic Sunday. Many tourists trying out the Canton-Potsdam road just opened.

Oct. 28, 1932 — A bit mixed. Mrs. Youngbride: "I'd like to get some chestnut coal please. Do you guarantee it to be free of worms?"

Sept. 23, 1923 — Fine gift to club. The Potsdam electric light and power company, through its president, F.A. Stoughton has given the Potsdam Club six chairs, a davenport and large mahogany table for its use in one of the downstairs rooms.

compiled by Earl Pattison

letters

O'Neil Says Thanks

To the Editor:

Now that the election season is over, I would like to thank all of you who worked, in one capacity or another, on my campaign. Every individual act of involvement may at first seem small in comparison to the total effort, but each individual act, magnified and multiplied many times over by dint of the numerous persons involved, truly results in a tremendously large contribution. Each and every one of you who helped out in your own special way is to be congratulated and commended. You have shown, by your active involvement, that there still are people who believe in a truly democratic system, a system in which ALL persons become actively involved.

There were so many tasks and chores for all of you to do that a listing of them would be close to an exercise in futility. Suffice it to say that the important message still remains; whatever you did, however you did it, whenever you did it, I can only offer my most appreciative and modest thanks.

To all the people that I have already had a chance to talk to personally, and for all the many, many people whom I have regretfully not had an opportunity to thank personally, I would like to offer this brief message as a means of expressing my deepest gratitude and thanks. Some people say that the only satisfaction that can be gained from a political campaign is winning. They forget that there is also a great amount of satisfaction that can be derived from seeing so many people from so many divergent backgrounds come together and unite in a single cause and to act on their commonly held beliefs. To see people become actively involved in our greatest American tradition, democracy, is in itself a great reward and a great source of satisfaction for me, as well as it is for you. My candidacy acting as the vehicle for your unification and action only makes me that much more humble and grateful.

Once again, my deepest thanks.
John G.A. O'Neil
Parishville

Fast Reactors Needed

To the Editor:

With the elections behind us, passions should cool on the future of this nation's fast breeder reactor program. The opportunity to support breeder development will present itself during the special session of Congress next month. An affirmative vote, at that time, on the new budget for the Clinch River Breeder Reactor Project is vital.

Our three possible and almost limitless new sources of energy are the breeder reactor, solar power and fusion. None is yet attractive from a cost point of view, but of them the breeder reactor is by far the most advanced and the most likely to succeed. Yet for it to reach a commercial stage will take two or three successively improved development reactors. The Clinch River Breeder Reactor is the

Effects of AT&T Deregulation To Be Discussed

To the Editor:

During the coming months, two federal decisions restructuring the telecommunications industry will have a profound effect on the way all Americans obtain and pay for telephone service. The major changes brought about by these decisions and their inevitable impact on all of us in New York State will be felt in two stages — January 1, 1983, and again in 1984.

We see a need to address the issues and problems related to deregulation of the telephone industry and the divestiture of AT&T from its operating units such as New York Telephone. Therefore, the Business Council of New York State has joined with the State University of New York at Albany, Onondaga Community College, and the National Conference of Consumer Organizations to sponsor a one day conference Dec. 8 at the Sheraton Inn Convention Center, Thruway Exit 37, Syracuse.

The conference will begin with coffee and registration at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 4:30 p.m. We have invited representatives of business and industry, community organizations, the news media, the academic world, and individual consumer leaders. A nominal registration fee of \$4.50 will be charged to help cover luncheon costs; however, no one will be denied attendance due to financial constraints.

Topics to be covered include a background of regulation of telecommunications industry and impacts of the fundamental policy changes; pricing of local service and how

Matzell Says Thanks

To the Editor:

I would like to offer my appreciation to Town Supervisor Robert Bailey, the town board, and all of the town residents who supported the referendum in the recent election to maintain the Norfolk town police department. Your confidence was greatly appreciated.

Tom Matzell

customers will be affected; specific impacts on home and business customers; the overall effect on our various communities, and other issues. Speakers from industry, the University, and consumer groups will air the issues and concerns from their various points of view in what promises to be a highly informative session. Each segment includes ample time for conferee participation.

Richard B. Dressner
Dean, Continuing
Education, SUNY Albany

Raps Gun Control Position

To the Editor:

For well over a decade the 50 million gun owners of the United States and the National Rifle Association have been assailed by the advocates of gun control with the accusation that we have been insensitive to the tragic loss of human life.

During that period we have seen this group write and smugly proclaimed righteousness assume postures within which no point of exaggeration, calumny, defamation or even slander was beneath them.

However, the overwhelming defeat of California's handgun "freeze" initiative as reported in the Washington Post, Tuesday, Nov. 9, displays the gun prohibitionists' cynical disregard of human life for purpose of political expediency. In the final sentence of the article Michael Beard, Executive Director of the National Coalition to Ban Handguns writes, "I hate to say it, but one well-publicized homicide could wipe that (California vote) out."

Imagine an individual of supposed intelligence praying for the death of some prominent American so that his own selfish, misguided cause might be advanced.

This from an organization that trumpets from any available podium and through any available medium their slogan, "To save one life." What hypocrisy!

J. Warren Cassidy,
Executive Director,
NBA Institute for
Legislative Action

Rescue Squad Thanked

To the Editor:

We would like to express our gratitude and thanks to the Potsdam Rescue Squad for transporting our Mother, Margaret Jenks to Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester.

Very special thanks to George Kahn who drove the ambulance down to and Penny Tallian, the nurse who took care of her in the ambulance.

You will never know how much it meant to us for you to be there when you're services are needed so much and willing to help us.

Thank You,
Mike and Alberta Jenks
Jerry and Vicki Jenks
Wayne and Cheryl Boulton

Couple Thanks Locals

To the Editor:

My husband and I wish to offer our great thanks to all the kind people of the staff of the Canton-Potsdam Hospital and all the local people who lent a hand to us while we were hospitalized from our automobile accident on Labor Day. We received the best possible care and cooperation from everyone and we will never forget you.

Sincerely,
Betty and Floyd King

NUCLEAR WARFARE: A Plea For Disarmament

BY JEANMARIE MARTELL

The threat of war has been present in my entire lifetime. I can remember practicing air raid drills when I was in elementary school. The teacher would instruct us on procedures (crouching against a wall, or under our desks) and then an alarm would sound and we would do as we were told. I remember wondering what it meant. What was an "air raid," and how could we be safe regardless of where we were hiding? I remember the fear of death and loss of my parents, my home, my security.

Although that was 20 years ago, the threat has not diminished. In fact, it is bigger and more threatening than ever. Now we are learning how to survive a nuclear holocaust. There is presently a huge civil defense budget, plans for evacuation of city dwellers to rural areas, stores of food, pain killing drugs, underground accommodations for our nation's leaders (with all the comforts of home) and military retaliatory attack strategies. We are being given information that would lead us to believe that we could survive in case of a nuclear attack, and how the quality of life will change for us.

I am beyond fear now. It is obvious that my children cannot survive a nuclear holocaust, and I would not even attempt to run to a "safer place." There will be no safe places. Here in the North Country, on a sunny autumn day with breezes blowing, it is hard to imagine such a threatening circumstance. I see my children playing in the yard and my heart is warmed by their freedom from concern. Yet, I cannot forget how easily their tender lives could be snuffed out if one of our world leaders saw fit to push the button.

Living in rural America, we do not consider the possibility of nuclear war very often. It seems so far removed from our present lives. Yet, it is this very disposition which perpetuates the threat. Are we, by displaying apathy toward an issue that seems out of our hands, condoning the arms build-up and inflated civil defense spending?

We are all responsible for the present state of the world. And we must all become responsible for changing it. There are numerous ways in which we can become involved in effecting change.

As citizens of small towns, we mustn't let this responsibility be set aside. It is too easy to sit in front of our TVs and watch the anti-nuke activities on the news. Yet, this is about the ex-

next important step in that series.

The development of a breeder concept is indispensable to the future exploitation of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This truth is recognized by France, England, Japan, India and the Soviet Union, where strong breeder programs are underway.

I hope that when Congress reconvenes this month the members will be able to set short-term politics aside and vote resoundingly for the future of their country. After 11 years of development, Clinch River is already more than 85 percent complete in design. To kill it now would waste vital research already done and would foreclose a vital option for this country's energy future.

Sincerely,
Carl Walske, President,
Atomic Industrial Forum, Inc.

Our lives, our children's lives, our homes and our entire lifestyles are in just as much danger as city dwellers. We will not be exempt from the destruction. Our waterways will be destroyed, our land will be contaminated by radiation. We will not escape the three stages of radiation sickness which will eventually lead to our death. Our children will not be saved in the event of such an emergency. Therefore, we cannot be exempt from raising our consciousness to the point of responsible activity.

The hope for our future and our children's future depends on us. We, as parents, as voters, as the providers for their future, must be the ones who bring about change. We must become outspoken on the subject of possible nuclear holocaust.

This issue is not a political one. It transcends politics and political leanings. It is not even an American issue. It transcends geographic boundaries, political systems, equal rights or civil rights causes. It is beyond religious or spiritual persuasions or denominations. It is an issue of the human spirit, the preservation of the human race, all people, young, old, able, disabled, the poor, the wealthy, the powerful and those who feel powerless.

My plea, as a mother, is for all people in small towns throughout the country to be become involved in the demand for world disarmament.

Certainly we cannot remain comfortable in our beautiful landscapes, raising our lovely children knowing the imminent threat of a world war that would completely destroy life as we know it. We must understand the consequences and take appropriate action to avert such a disaster.

Please!

There are a number of organizations which are actively demanding world disarmament. One of the largest is: Physicians for Social Responsibility, New York, 610 Madison Ave., Suite 704, N.Y., N.Y., 10022, 212-308-2325.

This group started in Boston and is growing daily in force. They are available for lectures and presentations across the nation.

Others include: North Country Peoples Coalition, 265-4011; Parents and Friends for Children's Survival, Box 752, Old Chelsea Station, N.Y., N.Y., 10013, 212-691-4709; Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign Clearinghouse, 4144 Lindell Blvd., Room 404, St. Louis, Mo., 63108, 314-533-1169.

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