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The Keep

The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)

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Pride Fest '96

Cop Gives Fashion Tips & Breeding Advice During Pot Bust

Interview With The Thingies



POST AMERIKKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOL. 25

50¢

NO. 4

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1996



Bloomington-Normal Says "No" To Racism

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BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOL. 25

NO. 4

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1996

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About us

The *Post Amerikan* is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or down played by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media.

We put out six issues a year. Staff members take turns as "coordinator." All writing, typing, editing, graphics, photography, pasteup, and distribution are done on a volunteer basis. You are invited to volunteer your talents.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The *Post Amerikan* welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and new tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-7232 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while--we don't meet every week.

An alternative newspaper depends directly on a community of concerned people for existence. We believe it is very important to keep a newspaper like this around. If you think so too, then please support us by telling your friends about the paper, donating money to the printing of the paper, and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in *Post Amerikan*.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to the *Post Amerikan* are available for the low price of \$5.00 per year for six complete issues. Please send a check (made payable to the *Post Amerikan*) to: *Post Amerikan*, P.O. Box 3452 Bloomington, IL 61702.

This issue of *Post Amerikan* is brought to you by...

David, Linda,
Nick, Ralph, Russ,
Sherrin and Steve

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About Books, 221 E. Front (inside)
The Back Porch, 402 N. Main (inside)
Bakery Bank, 901 N. Main
Bus Depot, 533 N. East
Circus Video, (Emerson and Main)
Common Ground, 516 N. Main (inside)
Front and Center Building
Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main (inside)
Law and Justice Center, W. Front
Medusa's, 420 N. Madison (inside)
Once Upon a Time, 311 N. Main (inside)
The Park Store, Wood and Allin (inside)
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Wash House, 609 N. Clinton

Normal

Acme Comics, 115 W. North (inside)
Amtrack Station
Babbitt's Books, 104 North (inside)
Bus stop, (School and Fell)
Cultural Expressions, 127 E. Beaufort (inside)
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What's your new address?

When you move, be sure to send us your new address so your subscription gets to you. Your *Post Amerikan* will not be forwarded (it's like junk mail--no kidding!). Fill out this handy form with your new address and return it to us, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702.

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City/State/Zip _____

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The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.)

Sept. 15

Good numbers

ACLU.....454-7223
Advocacy Council for Human Rights.830-2521
AIDS Hotlines
National.....1-800-AID-AIDS
Illinois.....1-800-243-2437
Local.....827-AIDS
Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092
Animal Protection League.....828-5371
Bloomington Housing Authority.....829-3360
Boys and Girls Club.....829-3034
Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035
Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070
Dept. of Children/Family Services.....828-0022
Gay & Lesbian Resource Phonenumber...438-2429
Habitat for Humanity.....829-0693
HELP (transportation for senior citizens/handicapped).....828-8301
Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356
IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
IL Lawyer Referral.....1-800-252-8916
Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-5051
Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment).....827-6026
McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351
McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450
McLean Co. Humane Society.....663-7387
McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070
Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691
Mobile Meals.....828-8301
Narcotics Anonymous.....1-800-779-6178
NAAFA (size acceptance)
Central IL chapter.....454-2128
National Health Care Services/
abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622
Occupational Development Center...452-7324
Operation Recycle.....829-0691
Parents Anonymous.....827-4005
PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help).827-4005
Phone Friends.....827-4005
PFLAG(Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).....663-0831
Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014
(bus/couns/edu).....827-4368
Post Amerikan.....828-4473
Prarie State Legal Services.....827-5021
Project Oz.....827-0377
Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
Safe Harbor Mission(Salvation Army) 829-9476
Sunnyside Neighborhood Center.....827-5428
TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301
Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237
Voice for Choice.....828-3108
Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807
Youth Services of Mid IL.....828-7346



Community News



News From the McLean County Peace Coalition

The McLean County Peace Coalition has announced the date for the second annual "Violence--Take a Hike" peace march. The march will be held on Sunday, September 29, 1996. It will begin at 2:00 pm in front of the Old McLean County Court House.

Featured speakers at this year's march will include: N.A.A.C.P. Chair and Normal Human Relations Commissioner Harry Hightower, representatives from the Y.W.C.A. and the Neville House and a U.A.W. representative who will talk about violence in the workplace.

The list of co-sponsors is currently at 16. We already have several new co-sponsors: the McLean County Center for Human Services, The Music Shoppe, the Advocacy Council for Human Rights, PFLAG and the Unitarian Church. We hope to exceed last year's number of co-sponsoring organizations (42). If your group or organization would like to be a march co-sponsor, or if you have questions about the march, call us at 828-3108. Co-sponsorship is free.

Thanks to Simon & the Coffeehouse

We would be remiss if we didn't offer a heartfelt thank you to our friends at the Coffeehouse in Normal for their support.

The Coffeehouse was kind enough to let the Coalition set up an information table outside of their shop during the Sugar Creek Arts Festival. Our presence at such a prime location meant that we got to see a lot of people and start getting the word out about the march.

What is the McLean County Peace Coalition?

The McLean County Peace Coalition was formed in response to the growing intolerance, hatred and violence in our society.

The McLean County Peace Coalition was created and is committed to ending the intolerance, hatred and violence that seems to be gripping our country. We believe that the use of violence as a means of settling disputes, whether personal, religious, theoretical or political is not acceptable. It is the Coalition's position that violence against women, children, men, people of color, people of different religious or ethnic backgrounds; violence against gays, lesbians and bisexuals; violence against people based on physical or mental attributes or disabilities; violence based on political, religious or ideological difference cannot be tolerated. It is our belief that an act of violence against one of us is an act of violence against all of us.

We believe that through education and mutual respect we can increase understanding and appreciation of our differences. We believe that by recognizing our commonalities we can feel less threatened by our differences and in so doing, create a more peaceful community.

To that end, the McLean County Peace Coalition will work to increase individual and community awareness about the impact of violence and hate speech. We will seek, as a Coalition of diverse organizations and individuals, to identify ways in which we can work together to create a safer community, state and country for all people.

Would You Like to Be a Peace Coalition Member?

Membership in the Peace Coalition is open to individuals and organizations who support this mission. Meetings are held at 5:00 pm on the second Wednesday of each month, at Community Action, 923 E. Grove, Bloomington. For more information about the Coalition please contact us at 828-3108.

Labor Day Parade

Bloomington's annual Labor Day Parade steps off Monday, Sept. 2 at 10 a.m., from Front and Center Streets in downtown Bloomington to Miller Park.

The parade will feature local union marching units with floats, high school marching bands, elected officials and candidates, antique cars and heavy construction equipment.

The parade will follow its traditional route, west on Front Street to Lee Street, south on Lee Street to Wood Street, and west on Wood Street to Miller Park. A picnic for union members follows the parade at Carpenters 63 Hall, 2002 Beich Road, Bloomington. Admission to the picnic is a Labor day parade raffle ticket. There will be no carry-out meals at the picnic.

The parade line up begins at 8:30 a.m., with entrance to the line-up area from East and Front Streets.

Preceding the parade, WJBC-AM will again run their "Laborer of the Year" award. The radio station takes nominations beginning August 26 through noon August 28, with the winner announced on Friday, August 30. Call the station's recorded message machine, 309-827-2000, during those days to make your nominations.

On Saturday, August 31 and Sunday, September 1 the Trades & Labor Assembly will host its annual softball tournament at Bloomington's Dunn Fields, behind the National Guard Armory. This tournament is open to union teams and must be preregistered. For more information on softball, call Tom Whalen at 309-828-4368 or Bob Williams at 309-827-4808.

For other information on the parade or to inquire about entry, contact parade chair John Penn at 309-828-4368.

Men seeking men

White male, looking for white males, 18-40, for friends, possible relationship. WM8/996

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Mental Illness Awareness

NAMI Conference

The 16th annual convention of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) was held in Nashville, Tennessee from July 5 through 9, bigger and better than ever. Of the more than 2,000 attending, many were consumers. The program reflected the growing consumer movement, with many workshops dedicated to issues that directly affect consumers. Many people with neurobiological disorders gave testimony to improved lives due to advances in medications.

We learned, however, that new meds are not the solution. We now must keep a watchful eye on "managed care" and how it will affect those of us with brain disorders. We cannot relax our vigilance over such issues as changes in entitlement funding and what it means for people who depend on things like Medicare and Medicaid for survival.

Discrimination remains our biggest problem and to that end we have begun a 5 year nationwide plan to stop the prejudice against people with brain disorders. It started with a bang as the Senate passed an amendment to the Health Care Bill to require parity in insurance coverage. If people didn't have to pay out of pocket for hospital, doctor and meds there would be fewer dependent on entitlement programs. (Sens. Pete Dominici, R-NM., Paul Wellstone, D-MN, Alan Simpson, R-WY and Kent Conrad, D-ND were awarded NAMI's highest honor for their work on our behalf.)

The campaign message is four-fold:

1. Mental illnesses are brain disorders
2. Treatment works!
3. Discrimination must end.
4. Stop the unfair economic burdens for those with brain disorders and their families, caused by discrimination.

Please join our fight. If you can use a phone or write a letter you can help.

Our major public effort to educate people about neurobiological disorders is **Mental Illness Awareness Week**, coming this Fall, Oct. 5-12. There will be a day-long conference Oct. 5, a panel discussion at the Unitarian Church Oct. 6 (date not confirmed at this writing), a candlelight vigil Oct. 6, and a walk Oct. 12. More details will be available as our plans are

completed.

The Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Livingston/McLean Counties meets on the 3rd Thursday of every month at BroMenn Conference Center and welcomes any one with an interest in mental illnesses. For more information please call 309-454-4983 or 1-815-842-1514.

--Faye Townsend



Misconceptions & Myths About Mental Illness

1. **A mental illness means you are "crazy."** No, it means you have a disease. Using cruel labels such as "crazy" or "psycho" only causes pain and discourages people from seeking help. Mental illnesses are real, very common, and can be devastating.
2. **People with mental illness can "pull themselves out of it."** A mental illness is not caused by personal weakness, nor can it be cured by personal strength. Proper treatment is needed.
3. **People with a mental illness will always be ill.** For some people a mental illness may be a lifelong condition like diabetes. But as with diabetes, proper treatment enables many to lead fulfilling lives.

4. **People with a mental illness are often violent.** Not true. The media gives so much attention to violence that violence by people with a mental illness seems more common than it really is. In fact, people with a mental illness are much more likely to be victims of violence than its cause.

5. **Children don't suffer from mental illness.** False. Millions of children are affected by depression, autism, and other mental illnesses. Getting prompt treatment for children is essential. Learn to recognize the warning signs.

6. **Mental illnesses can't affect me.** A mental illness can affect anyone. It strikes people of all ages, races, and economic backgrounds, whether or not there is a family history of mental illnesses. The good news is that treatments are available and new discoveries are happening frequently.

--S. Atezaz Sneed, Asst. Prof. at U of I, Peoria AMI newsletter

If you are interested in becoming a member of AMI of Livingston-McLean Counties send a \$25 check to AMI Livingston & McLean at 204 N. Parkside, Normal, IL, 61761. The \$25 membership includes newsletters from NAMI, AMI-Illinois and the local newsletter.

Letter to Clinton

Below is an excerpt from a letter written by William Hallinan, from Bloomington, Illinois, which was forwarded to President Clinton. President Clinton personally responded to Bill's concerns. The letter is very moving, very powerful, and, in parts, quite a graphic representation of the horrors many consumers experience in their struggle with their illnesses.

Dear Representative,

Many of my friends and I, when we once more experience cutbacks, will have to make the choice between medications and food. And will end up in jail as a result of choosing food. For things as simple as leaving businesses under the delusion that we had already paid for the merchandise. Or for writing checks for money we didn't have. This is to say nothing of what's going to happen when we find out we can't afford cigarettes. And have we become so harsh with "less government, no new taxes" that even in jail we would be supplied with inadequate, or nonexistent medications and monitoring? Many friends of mine would consider this permission to commit more, and possibly worse crimes. Because, in jail, you see, one is feed three times a day and has a warm place to sleep. Because everyone knows the biggest mental institutions in these United States are the county, state, and federal prison systems.

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Letter to Clinton cont.

I try to speak for many who don't want any trouble by talking to me about the nightmares they suffered as a result of psychiatry being a primitive science, psychology being a primitive science or from budget restrictions resulting in ineffectual treatment.

Tom was a good Christian man who attended church every Sunday, who was always kind and ready to help. PERFECT!!! thought the small-time con-artists who most mentally ill communities know of. They borrowed money from him they had no intention of paying back, and if he remembered they owed him, he would get sticky word games of affection until he forgot, or he would get loud, angry denunciation of his character for questioning how "they took care of him" and "protected him from the street." They gave him the idea last summer, that if he didn't run his air conditioner so much he would have more money to loan them. When the first big heat wave hit, his apartment was 110 degrees and Tom was dead of a heart attack.

I do a lot of second guessing about Tom. He was in the apartment above me.

Neill was a veteran of the American Armed Forces in the former West Germany. After his stint was up, he joined the local fire department, married, and had a little girl. Then the schizophrenia struck.

He had to resign from the fire department and his wife divorced him. After a bout with alcoholism, he got proper medication. Then he moved to a housing complex that housed some mentally ill but mostly retired people. I was told none of these retired people attended the educational session held by the local mental health center at the complex.

Neill never seemed to mind. He seemed to think that if he were a nice guy and got along, everything would be fine. The trouble was that cruel and sick remarks that most of us think of as "just coming from some jerk" HURT Neill. It seems that some of the retired folks were determined to get the mentally ill tenants evicted from the complex.

Neill kept trying. He got a job delivering hot meals to shut-ins at the complex. The abuse never relented. In one final act of kindness, he gave away his cat and his precious possessions. And then he jumped twelve stories to his death.

Sharon was a divorced mother of six children. Her husband left her after 22 years of marriage when her disease became too much to deal with. When I asked her about how she may have suffered at the hands of the system, she demurred, saying she didn't want any trouble, having obviously been punished for speaking up before. She also said she respected what I was trying to do. For a woman who was convinced that men were unreliable, she began admiring me and what I was trying to do to the point where she fought for me when no one else would.

Age, obesity and cigarettes take their toll on those with the unending plague of anxiety disorders.

Upon her last hospitalization, Sharon died of a heart attack. She was 54.

Her daughter at the funeral screamed "I didn't care who you were, Mom! I didn't care!!" as they closed the coffin.

We suffer from an unending terror that is worse than people drinking two pots of coffee a day, worse than the worst "bummer" Ken Kesey ever concocted with his "electric kool-aid" and certainly worse than days of hideous, bludgeoning debate on state or congressional floors.

The injustice in all of this being that research spending for this disease is 1/10,000 of that of AIDS. And that we will suffer longer and with more stigma than an AIDS patient.

I guess we shouldn't be surprised that friends of mine die without hope. The 50% rate of any improvement from Clozaril and Resperidone is worse than a surgeon telling the cancer patient that they only got 50% of the tumor.

With all that facing us, I guess the only surprise is more of us don't stand in front of careening semi's. Or freight trains. Or jump off of tall buildings.

Sincerely,

William Hallinan

Voter Registration: Your Rights; Your Choice

Our government, at both the state and federal levels, is going through a lot of changes. In an effort to balance the budget, many cuts are being planned. Unfortunately, many of those cuts may have an adverse affect on the elderly and people with disabilities. You may be wondering, "Well, what can I do about it?"

There are two things that you can do to help. Contact your legislators. Whether it is through the mail or by the telephone, they need to know what we are thinking and how their decisions are going to affect us. Our correspondence needs to be overwhelming to them to compete with the high-priced lobbyists who are trying to persuade them.



The legislators to contact from our district are: Illinois representatives William Brady and Dan Rutherford; Illinois Senator John Maitland; U.S. Representative Thomas Ewing; and U.S. Senators Paul Simon and Carol Moseley Braun. It wouldn't hurt to drop President Clinton a line also. The message to them? "Please continue to support legislation that is necessary for people with disabilities and the elderly to maintain an independent lifestyle!"

The second important thing that you can do is to vote. The disability community is the largest minority in the United States. If we turn out to vote in large numbers, we can make our voices heard. In order to assist in this process, LIFE-CIL will be offering Voter Registration services at our office. So if you need to register to vote or need addresses/ phone numbers of elected officials, call LIFE-CIL (309) 663-5433. Let your legislators know your feelings! Make sure you are registered to vote and use that right to help protect your needs!!

--Life-Lines, LIFE-CIL Newsletter

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The World

Thoughts on Richard Speck

When Richard Speck was caught with a video of himself living it up in prison with drugs and sex, everyone knew there was a problem. This monster was serving a life sentence for horrible crimes, yet here he was on T.V. getting it on. Instead of solving the problem, however, the prison took the opportunity to take the first step in brutalizing prisoners; they made it against the rules for inmates to have access to video recorders.

There are only two reasons I can think of for denying recording equipment, audio or visual, to inmates. Both are very wrong. The most obvious is that officials want to do something in there that they don't want to be independently recorded. It doesn't take a guru to figure out what that could be in a prison... The second reason is that prison officials can't or won't stop the kind of behavior that allows serial killers to enjoy their sentence. Knowing that the public won't put up with this, they are just going to make sure that it's never recorded for any of us to see.

Removing prisoners' ability to record their revelries does nothing at all to stop said revelries. In all the media hype surrounding the incident, very little attention was paid to how the monster got his "party treats," or ways to stop this type of behavior in the future. As usual, the media fed us what the government wanted us to believe. Sadly, it seemed to work.

It insults me to think that Unca Sam thinks I'm dumb enough to buy their fallacy ridden cause-effect scenario. I am also afraid for any inmate who stands to suffer under these new rules. If we allow our prisons to become medieval torture chambers while continuing to jail people who have done nothing wrong (non-violent drug offenders, prostitutes, etc.), the life of the everyday citizen will be lived in fear of their evil judiciary.

On the other hand, if we allow monsters to party for punishment, society is not fulfilling its obligation to justice. It is bad enough that our tax dollars must pay their room and board, but if the purpose for them being there is ignored, our money is wasted. It is a sad, proven fact that Richard Speck's recording is truthful

Throw Down "Church Zones"

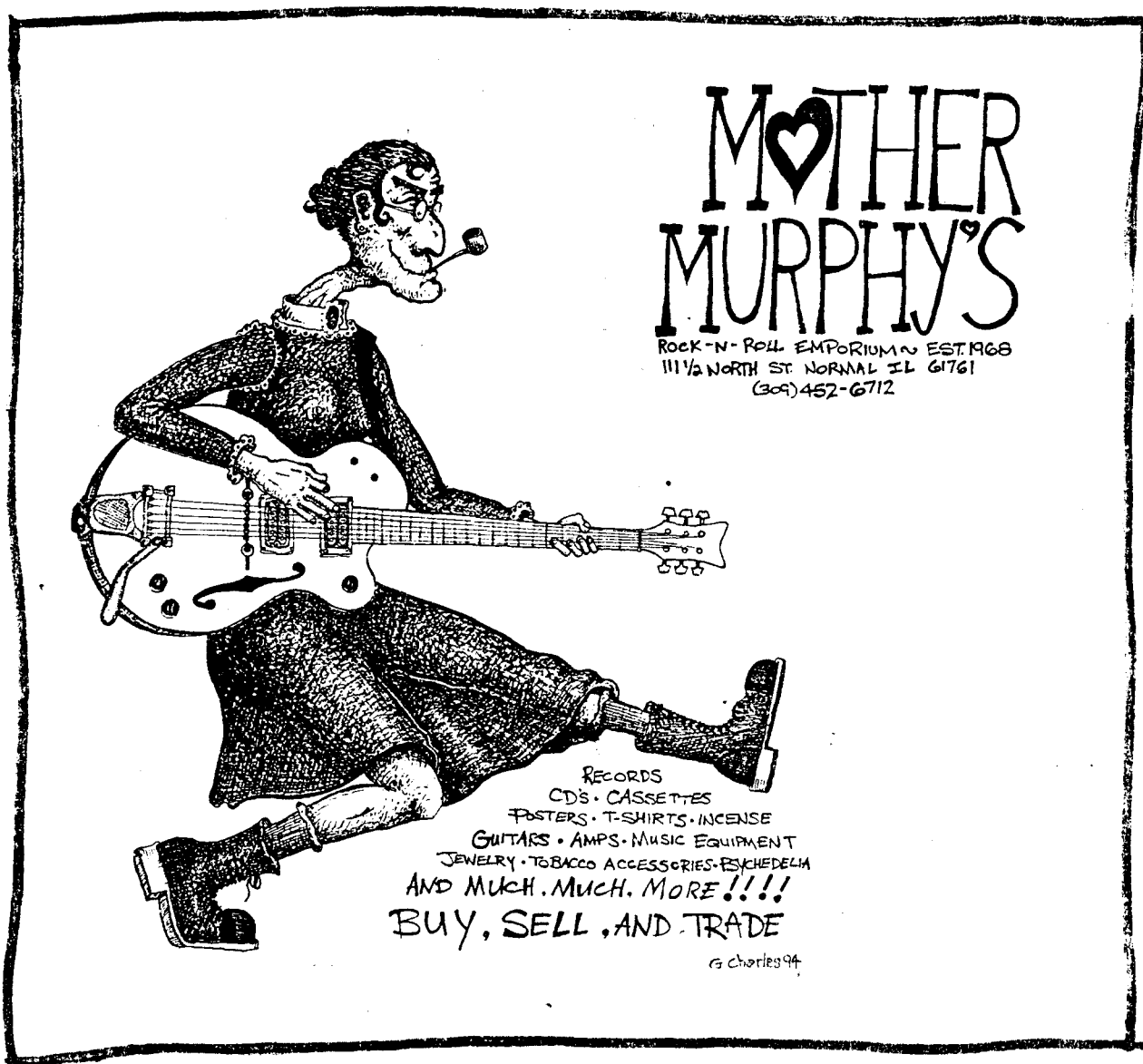
In America, the Constitution is soiled every day by those who would oppress a free society. Recently, legislation was introduced that would further mock our "highest law" and also further oppress both marijuana subculture and those who practice sacramental tribal religions. This legislation would create "Drug Free Church Zones" akin to the school zones. Under these new laws, anyone caught with illegal drugs within 100 yards of a "place of worship" would incur double the normal fines and penalties (which are already excessive beyond imagination). Any intelligent citizen should find several dire problems with this thinking.

The first and most obvious problem with these laws are the manifold ways they threaten the separation of church and state. Of course, in a country where prostitution and sodomy are illegal, it is hard to imagine this separation ever existed. This problem alone should nullify this law, and show its supporters off as the religious bigots they are.

Religious bigots? That is correct. With the effort to create drug-free "Church Zones," the government acts to deny the fact that some religions (which outdate "our" country by millennia) use what they consider illegal drugs in their religious worship. Would these peaceful shamans be doubly penalized for practicing their ways within their "church?" "Our" government has a very restricted definition of "place of worship"...

If you look around, you will notice another vicious side of these prospective laws. In a lot of urban and suburban areas it is hard to find that much space between "places of worship." Suddenly, we may find small, low budget churches springing up anywhere stoners rejoice. Just as it was during Europe's shameful Middle Ages, Christianity (mainly, around here) is being used as a political weapon. Would a simple shrine in one's home where a group of five gather in worship be a "place of worship?" If so, existing laws will be doubled almost everywhere, but be practically impossible to enforce as such. If not, the government is denying equality to faith without the funding for actual structures to practice in. And what about the parks? They are places of worship for many...

The more and more you analyze this new legislation, the more blatantly stupid it seems. If it passes, may those who love the Earth and their freedom tremble, not with fear, but with rage. The people pushing these laws are not only wrong, but dangerously so. Just remember, voting can treat symptoms, but rebellion can cure the disease.

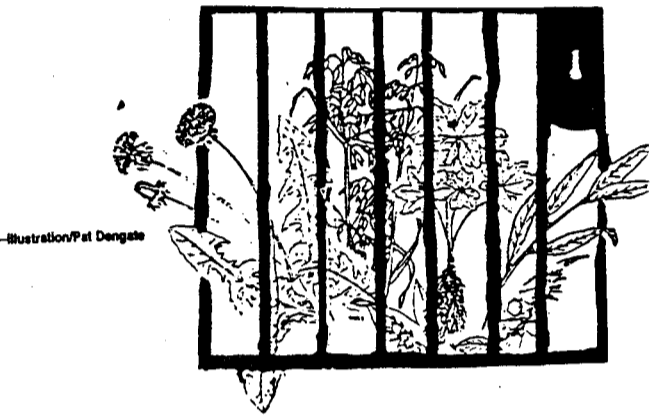




According to Matt

Save the Trees

For several years, the Custer Bros. Nursery has been up for sale. It is located on the south side of E. Vernon Ave. just after the Grandview four-way stop sign, and is populated by a community of farm-cared trees of many kinds. With the way land development goes around that part of town, I am afraid they could be sacrificed for more housing (student or otherwise).



A much better alternative exists, one that is easy and would add to the beauty available in our town(s). The nursery is just off of the Constitution Trail and could be incorporated as a peaceful, non-playground park. All it would take is a short side trail and some benches. The sales/service facilities could be renovated into

How to Overpopulate the World, and Make Money Doing It

After hearing all the hype about the population crisis, it seems that insurance companies (at least certain ones...) are still willing to risk the devastation of post-carrying capacity mass starvations to make a quick buck.

For instance, many health insurance plans will cover a certain amount of fertility treatments (and any are too many from the perspectives of thousands of kids looking for willing homes). More kids means more people on the health policy, and eventually more drivers needing car insurance. Both mean more money for the insurance company in question.

Most plans will not, on the other hand, cover prescription birth control or abortions. As they make more money by funding the outrageous population growth and thus their customer base, they even deny the same money to responsible people who realize what it means to outbreed one's environment.

All in all, this is just one more small way the capitalist drive for profit is damaging to our species.

a twin-cities info/flushing toilet stop. Area maps, history, and points of interest could be available, as well as local art and toilet paper.

For both the trees who grew up there and the people who haven't met them yet, I encourage everyone to let whoever decides these things (Parks and Rec?) know that more parks is better parks, and killing trees is wrong. I'd feel better about paying local taxes if they were used for beauty instead of ignorance.

Unfortunately, after I wrote this it was announced that Bro-Menn had purchased the Custer Bros. Nursery to build a cancer research center. Without going into my personal thoughts on institutional medicine (corporation), I would simply like to thank them for ignoring the generous amounts of land in the area they already own (future parking?) and instead choosing one of the few spots in town where happy trees still congregate. It is ironic that in order to (try) and treat cancer in humans they are willing to spread the pavement cancer; killing all of our Mother and our siblings in nature.

Editor's note: If you agree with Matt, please write a letter in support of this idea to City Hall c/o Dave Anderson, City Manager or Ron Blemler, Head of Parks and Rec. @ 100 E. Phoenix, Normal, IL 61761.

What is a Pig?

To assure that only those deserving insult take offense to the term "pig," when used to describe an officer of the law, I offer this explanation.

Not every cop is a pig. It is unfortunate, but we need them to protect us from murderers, rapists, muggers and molesters. In this function, cops are hard-working men and women who put their lives on the line for the safety of society, and they deserve nothing but respect.

However, when a cop steps outside of his/her duty to protect and serve, and instead enforces laws that do nothing but rend to shreds the life and liberty of honest, tax-paying and otherwise law-abiding citizens, that cop is a pig.

With that definition, it can be said that any cop who has participated in a marijuana bust is a pig. These people in no way deserve any respect, and it is every moral citizen's duty to create a social atmosphere that is hostile to their efforts. Outside of the manifold positive reasons for ending this nefarious war on peaceful people, the basic fact is that pot busts are hate crimes.

Those heading these efforts, and spreading deceptive government propaganda are evil, and those who willingly carry out their policies are no better. The excuse "I'm just doing my job" has been used historically by all who support oppressive and hateful leaders, and when true justice is served the populace sees through this thin disguise for ignorance or (more often) personal greed. Police who pursue and combat the docile hemp subculture are just another

DO THE NAZI STOMP.



group of conquistadors, missionaries, klansman and Nazis. Fuck da Pigs!

In this world there are good and bad cops. Some look the other way where pot is concerned; the rest are pigs. As someone's mom once said, "Pigs is as Pigs does."

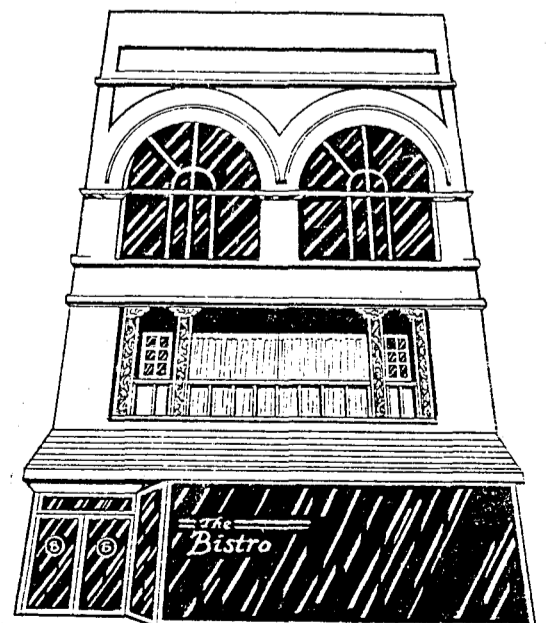
--MattToczko

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Cop Gives Fashion Tips and Information

Tuesday, July 9, 1996 was a very long work day. After the final buzzer sounded I clocked out and began the drive home from where I work in Towanda. As I pulled around the curve and on to Towanda Barnes Road, a sheriff's police car passed me heading the opposite direction. Eyes darting to my speedometer, I realized that I was only a couple of miles per hour over the speed limit, but the roar of my (girlfriend's) mufflerless '86 Chevy Spectrum made me more than a little nervous. That in turn made me remember the hitter-box in the driver's door, left there from the weekend. Hell, it was basically empty...

Just to be sure, I removed it from the door and looked to see if it was "green" at all, and sure enough there was one loaded rod and enough in the storage to load one more. At this moment, as I crested a hill doing 45 in a 55, the county mounty appeared right on my ass, lights off. I knew that wouldn't last. Knowing that any major movement would arouse instant suspicion (he was definitely close enough to see), I allowed the box to fall between my crotch and the seat as I put both hands on the wheel. With a very minor shift I was sitting on it.

Then the cherries and blueberries lit up. Figuring on getting a muffler warning, I casually pulled over. My window was already down, so I just kept my hands in plain view on the wheel. Having been in similar situations with small bits of weed many times, I was only a little nervous about the fact that I wasn't

wearing my seatbelt and didn't know where our proof of insurance was.

The deputy came up to the window. I greeted him, "Hello officer." And he asked me my name. I told him and he explained that he was pulling me over because my car sounded so loud. Cool. Explaining that I was aware that the muffler was gone, I told him that it would be replaced on Friday, payday. Next he asked me for my license and proof of insurance, which was not in the car. I got my I.D. from my pocket without shifting enough to reveal the box. I gave him my license and explained our insurance situation, right down to our agent's name. At this point I expected the usual procedure, which is to issue a fine and make you prove in court that you had valid insurance on that day. To my surprise, he shrugged it off. He told me that he was going to his car to radio in my info to make a warrant check, and if there were none, I'd be on my way. I breathed a sigh of relief when he reached his mobile.

After five to ten minutes he came back, gave me my I.D. and asked me to step out of the car. I asked why, not being able to think of a reason that I would have a warrant out. He said he wanted to show me the back of my car and why he pulled me over. He was already a step from the rear of the car, so I got out and joined him between my car and his. He was very mindful of the traffic on both of our parts, credit where credit is due. Sure enough, just below my bumper sticker reading "End Prohibition Again With Fully Informed Juries" was a lack of muffler.

"See," he said, "It's hanging a bit low."

Turning around, I pointed out that it was actually wholly missing. At this point he asked me where I had been. I said work. He asked me where I worked. I told him. Next, he asked me if I had any marijuana. "No, officer." "Any weapons or sharp objects?" "No, officer." "Any cocaine or heroin?" "No, officer." "Any pipes, needles, or drug paraphenilia?" "No, officer." I was that clear. He proceeded to explain that they had been finding hitters and pipes in the ditch along the road to Streator, and were therefore asking everyone about pot. He continued, "So you don't have any cannabis on you?" I gave the same reply. "Do you smoke grass?" he asked next. "No, officer." To this reply he stepped back and repeated, "Really? You don't smoke pot?" I replied that I kept a clean profile because I chose to be so vocal about legalization. I even mentioned the *Post Amerikan*, but he hadn't heard of it. "So, Matt, do you have any pot on you?" Getting a bit hurried and worried by this badgering, I pleadingly said, "No, officer."

Looking down, the deputy asked, "Why are you wearing two different colored socks?" Telling the complete truth, I said I wore different mismatched socks every day. "So you were in such a hurry this morning that you couldn't get matching socks?" he replied. I repeated, "No, officer, I wear different socks every day." To which he said, still trying to make sense of my personal taste, "So it was still so dark out when you left that you couldn't tell that they didn't match?" I repeated myself again. He asked if I was just running late for work. Exasperated, I sarcastically said, "Yes. I was late for the third time this week, officer." Moving on, he noticed my tie-dye. "Why does your shirt have a hole in it?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know?"

"It's an old shirt."

"Why do you still wear it?"

"It's one of my favorites, officer." By now I knew that he was way out of line, and I spoke the last line with a hint of contempt. At this point a fellow worker who had stayed later drove by and gave a wee honk. I pointed him out to the cop, which changed the subject from my clothes back to pot. Oh, well.

"So you have no marijuana?"

"No."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"Can I search your vehicle?"

"No, officer."

"Why not?"

"I'm in a hurry." Our car was very trashed with laundry, fast food and drink debris, newspapers, gardening tools, etc., and a thorough search I knew would take hours.

"Why are you in a hurry?"

"It was a long day."

"So why are you hurrying?"

"I'd like to relax."

"So can I search the car?"

"No."

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on Breeding During Pot Bust

"Can I walk a dog around it?" Calling his bluff, I said that would be okay, since that would prove my innocence quickly. He asked if he would find anything if he searched. I said no. "Really? I wouldn't find anything?" Making a mistake, I said, "There's nothing you could find!" Thinking he trapped me, he butted in, "But there's something to find!" I said once again, showing frustration, "No! There is nothing illegal in my car!" "Can I search you real quick?" he continued. Just wanting to leave, I let him. All he found was my chime, my I.D., and my crystal ball. He gave them back and asked, "Matt, do you have any marijuana in the car?" Once again, I said no.

He then told me that if I only had a small amount of personal stash, he usually tossed it in the ditch, gave a verbal warning, and let the person go (and they wonder about where roadside paraphenilia comes from...). I said I had none. "You are acting too nervous, Matt. The nearest dog is twenty miles away. Do you just want to let me search your car?"

"No, officer"
 "Well, I think I have enough probable cause to perform a quick search." At this point he began walking toward the driver's side of my car. Before he got past the back tire, I stopped him. "Officer, wait." He faced me. "There is a hitter box with one loaded rod sitting in the middle of the driver's seat." He didn't move. "That's all there is," I truthfully concluded. He found it and turned back to me. "Since you lied, I'm going to go ahead and arrest you on a Class A misdemeanor for possession of canninbas under 2.5 grams." Fuckin' Pig. He asked me again about weapons, on myself or in the car, to which I replied negative. After unlocking his doors, he allowed me to let myself in the back seat (no cuffs, thank the Deities!) while he searched the Spectrum to no avail. He then filled out papers, radioed in, and interrogated me. He asked me where I got my weed ("Out and About, Never the same patch twice"), if I had any LSD ("No"), and if I'd smoked any weed that day. I knew he was trying for a DUI, and since I hadn't smoked since Sunday, I decided to be a cock and lie, "Yeah. One rod at 4am this morning while I took a dump."
 "You're really far into this stuff," he replied. I snickered.

After the county mounty chatted pleasantly with the tow operator for about ten minutes, we headed off for the cop shop in downtown Bloomington. I remained quiet through the Rt. 9 East construction zone, but as we approached the intersection of Hershey I noticed a man smoking a pipe in the vehicle next to us. It was a company van with logos and equipment adorning it, and the middle-aged, clean cut male driver was smoking a normal pipe (not a bowl...). Staring the pig down in the rearview, I asked, "Officer, since that guy is smoking a

pipe can you assume probable cause to search him for marijuana?" He looked me in the eye and answered, "Does that look like the kind of c---" Here he paused and stressfully corrected himself, "Does that look like the kind of PIPE you would smoke pot from?" I answered truthfully that I had (you just have to rip the internal filter out...) and he looked away. Of course, if I had really thought that guy was toking the sacramental weed I wouldn't have pointed him out, but I made my point. A few minutes later, as we neared Linden Street, I spoke up again, "Officer, were any of the people you just gave warnings to truthful or honest with you, or did you have to go ahead and search them to find it?" Once again he looked at me in the rear-view. "No," he stated quite simply. I smiled a smug smile. Without looking away, he suddenly continued, "...But they were more straightforward!" He was real nervous.

When we got to the cop shop, we were joined by another cop in a small, plain room with a camera and a shelf. The new cop took my belongings. He was cool about it, realizing that this bust was a mere town ordinance violation in Bloomington. In fact, his attitude was semi-mocking toward his colleague, who even asked excitedly, "Hey, is drug paraphenilia a FELONY?" The new cop and myself answered in unison, "NO."

Next I was asked to remove my shoes and socks, to check between my toes for LSD. As I was taking my shoes off, the arresting county mounty asked if I had a girlfriend. I told him I did, and he asked if she smoked pot. I said she did, socially as compared to my religiously. Then he went into a spiel about how pot could damage her eggs and hurt our chances for having children. I told him that we were in a population crisis, and if we felt like having kids, we'd adopt one that needed a good home. He returned with the old argument that I (it's my choice?) might change my mind in ten years and that pot could cause birth defects like missing limbs and internal organs, not to mention facial disfigurement. I told him we weren't going to breed. He tried to continue, but I was getting pissed and cut him off, "Are you in any way a medical doctor?" The other cop was amused. "No, but I have training..." Once again I cut him off, "Then stop giving me medical advice." By this time I was working on my socks, first white, then pink. At this moment, the mounty explained to me the difference between male and female gametes. Exasperated, I told him I knew, and that we didn't plan on children. He said accidents happen: With as much venom as I could muster, I said that that is why certain operations are available to free men and women. My socks off, the cool cop broke it up and asked me to put my footgear on the shelf. One look at my feet and he decided that he'd rather not search them. They did search my ears for LSD, though.

Then came the time for me to take off my belt. Unfortunately, my belt was a silk scarf that had been knotted on those particular jeans for well over two years. I knew it wouldn't come off, so I admitted, "I'll have to cut it off," They told me I had to take it off, so I accepted a pair of scissors and did so. The cool cop said he'd tie it back together for me, but I declined graciously. During this short episode, the pig who busted me questioned me incredulously about my "belt." "So, you can't afford a real belt?"

"Yes officer, this silk scarf is stuck on these jeans."

"Maybe if you didn't buy pot you could get a belt."

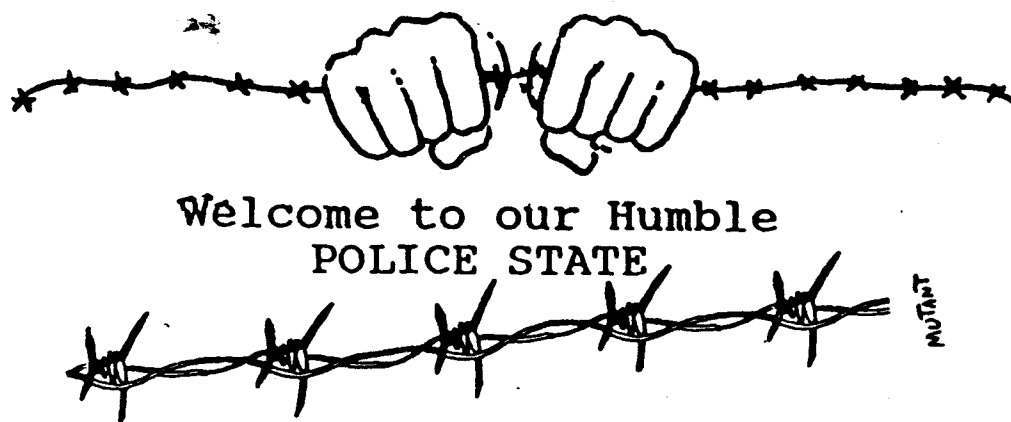
"I have several belts at home."

"Why aren't you wearing one?" I had already explained about the knot, and was preparing a curt comeback when the cool cop asked him to leave (in more words).

Things went smoothly from there on out. Three hours later and I was out on \$100 bond and walking home. I knew that that cop had discriminated against me the second he saw me and my anti-prohibition (no mention of pot specifically...) bumper sticker. He didn't even care about seatbelts and insurance, and we all know how rare that is. After incredulously interrogating me about my clothes, he lied and said I'd just get a warning. Hell, I even asked him if lying had turned a warning into a bust for his past victims, and he said no. I was a special case, I guess... Even the fact that he told me that he could badger, detain, and search anyone between Bloomington and Streator (with paraphenilia that they had discarded, no doubt, as probable cause) is wrong! With the added insult of his interrogation at the courthouse about our reproduction, I realized that this rookie-looking county mounty pig was well outside of Constitutionally acceptable standards, and my rights as a person had been walked on. All of this on top of the basic fact that marijuana prohibition is downright evil...

Anyway, I go to court on August 13. I plan on pleading guilty because I feel no need to deny something I am proud of, just as early christian eucharistic ministers did when their sacraments were illegal. I do, however, plan on filing a civil lawsuit against Officer Liebach of the McLean County Sheriff's Police. If there are any lawyers out there willing to take this type of case, or anyone with advice on how I could argue it myself (getting paperwork, etc.), give me a call at 829-9920. If you have had a similar experience (not necessarily drug related), give me a call also. With permission, these stories may be used in future articles.

-Matt Toczko





The Luck of the Irish or

My dad used to always say to me, "Marcee, you could fall in a pile of shit and come out smelling like a rose." He was referring to me having good luck. He didn't really mean it, as in general our family didn't believe in luck. He taught me that life is what you make it, and I think when he said this to me, he was implying that he taught me well.

He also taught me the power of positive thinking...the "good vibes" view. True, true. I believe it! And thus it seems to work with me. It started with a simple lesson when I was sixteen: You always drive to the front of a parking lot and assume, believe you will get a place up front, and most of the time you will. My mom was always amazed by this. She couldn't believe his good luck. It never happened for her! Yet she didn't drive up front knowing there was a spot with her name on it waiting for her. She just started driving elsewhere, would end up front, and then the spot wouldn't be there. We couldn't convince her that this worked if she would only believe in it. She still gets lousy parking spots, and we still get good ones.

When I lived in Chicago at one point we lived on Eastlake Terrace for two years, a groovy street only three blocks long with three beaches on it (the most north-east street in the city). Hideous parking situation. Across Sheridan Road from me was the Juneway Jungle...a very, very dangerous neighborhood to be out in at night, with gun action. There was minimal parking around my building and it was too dangerous to park across Sheridan, where there was plenty of parking. Yet, no matter how late I stayed out, I always had a parking place, and most of the time it was within a half block of my house. In two years I twice had to drive 20 minutes before finding one, but usually it took nothing more than driving up to my block knowing that there was one person visiting on my street and needing to get home who was going to leave then...and I would get their spot!

Now, "good luck" isn't always a matter of positive thought. It is a matter of choices as well. And sometimes bad things happen and it has nothing to do with what you have done. It just is. But we do have more control over our destinies than we think.

Folks tell me I am so "lucky" to have such a great partner, Mark. Sorry, but even though he is a great guy, it isn't all luck. Life events and choices led to us meeting. And then, do folks not consider that I have standards? After a past relationship I had been in with an irresponsible, egotistical, chauvinistic alcoholic, I hit rock bottom. I was contemplating suicide. Instead I CHOSE to get help, took "Thrive, not survive" as my motto, and went on from there. I have a great partner precisely because I deserved one and refused to settle for anything less. I knew what was and was not acceptable. I had limits, and I had expectations in a partner. I was not going to settle just to have a relationship. And I knew that, ultimately, a friendship was more important than anything. Mark and I do so well because underneath our differences (and there are many) we are best friends. This is why we chose each other. It wasn't just luck. It was a choice.

I have watched so many friends drift in and out of relationships. I have met so many women who have stayed in a poor relationship for years. Somehow being in a relationship is the all-important thing, and being truly happy comes second. When I hear folks say, "Oh, you are so lucky to have a man like Mark," I usually respond with something like, "Well, do you think I would have settled for anything less than the best for me? And anyway, I think we are both pretty lucky!"

Making conscious decisions in life leads us down the path of experience. All experiences make us grow, but most choose to stagnate in their choices. They are afraid to continue down the path or change paths. They are scared to admit they are wrong. It is hard to do, but to do so is a point of empowerment. It means that you are a person still capable of growth and change. You aren't there. You are constantly evolving as a human. It seems that folks forget the importance of the journey and the preparation.

If you were taking a long trip, would you not check the fluid levels, change the oil and fill up with gas? Would you not maybe check the radiator fluid and oil levels again at some point during the trip? Would you not periodically check the gas level? If they were low you would fill them. Your car might still

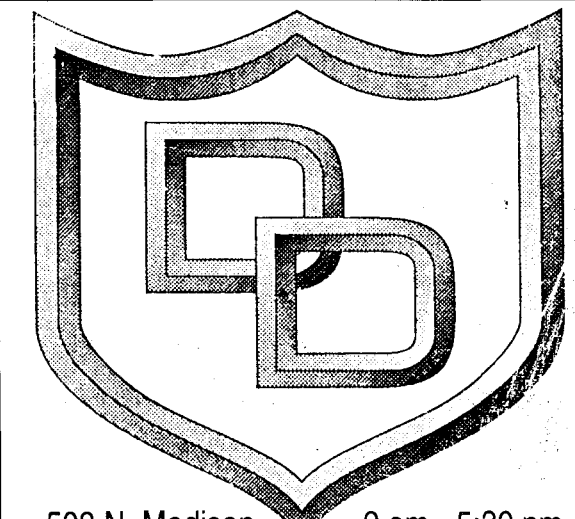
break down, but at least you were cautious and you tried. Compare that to the person who doesn't check their levels, and runs out of oil, overheats their car or runs out of gas. They didn't even try.

This is how many people live their lives. They don't look into things, explore their options, look at all possible outcomes and how the immediate choices may effect them, and then make a choice based upon wisdom. They just do what seems great at the moment, what they want. "Ooooo, but he is so cute and funny and good in bed! And he seems so nice!" Is this a reason to move in with someone you barely know? "I really needed a whole new set of living room furniture because mine was so ugly" and then later they lament the fact that they are so destitute and can't pay the bills. The list goes on and on.



One friend in the Chicago suburbs was telling me how funny it was after this recent flooding. Years ago after a big flooding she decided to not let this happen to her again. She chose to pay money to have part of her yard dug up and things done to prevent this from ever occurring again (don't ask me what, but it worked!). It was money that she could have used on "fun" stuff but felt this was a priority. When her neighborhood flooded this time, all her neighbors told her how lucky she was to not have to deal with a flooded basement. She thinks it funny that her planning and choosing to spend her money on a practical thing (which her neighbors have enough to be able to afford if they too wished to do it) is construed as good luck.

I am a calculated risk taker. I am willing to trust "luck" and common sense that things will turn out. When people look at these as being lucky when they all work out fine, I point out that I KNEW it would work out first, and if it didn't, it wasn't so much of a risk that I would lose everything. I take my chances. I moved to Chicago with Mark when we were young with \$1000. I knew that in about a month the money would run out, but I would have a job. This is because I was willing to accept any work. I understood my debt load (\$75 a month), I got an affordable studio apartment, and I would have done almost any job to pay the bills and keep me floating. I had no responsibilities, so how could I fail? I could and would have worked full time at a McDonald's to have paid those



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Life is What You Make It

bills! Yet I know of people who say, "I would never have had the guts. What if you couldn't have found work?" Well, I would have no matter what, because I was willing to do whatever it took, even if it meant a minimum wage job for a while. We will leave again in a year or two and start over in another part of the country, and this time be much better prepared since we do have responsibilities, our two kids. We will have no job when we go, but we have carefully planned out how to have the money and how to make jobs when we get there. My husband, Mr. Handyman, can do most things. I am a midwife and someone always is looking for one, and by the time we go I will be a Master Herbalist, and able to take on herbal clients as well. We are planning it out, not blindly going. And folks will look upon us at being lucky, instead of looking at our careful planning, simple and affordable lifestyle, and our willingness to take calculated risks. Things I call non-risks, because no matter what goes wrong, we can MAKE it work out.

There then is that ability to turn a situation around and what you choose to dwell on...the "falling in a pile of shit and coming out smelling like a rose" syndrome. You can take almost any bad situation and look at it in a good light.

In Tennessee I went with my kids to a new campground. There were people driving through, and some choosing sites at the beginning of the week so they could stay there Memorial Day weekend. I found a great site for us, and since campers never steal from each other, I hauled my kids' great potty chair (for nighttime use) and my box of cookstuff out and put it on the rock wall at the edge of the site, signifying that this site was taken. I drove up front, paid the fee, had nice guys fill my car with wood, went back and my cooking stuff was stolen. All of it. It was 6:00 at night; my kids were hungry; I had a campsite to set up; I was alone, and I had nothing to cook with. After cussing up a storm (and having to explain to my three year old later why it isn't okay for him to say those words) I stuck the potty chair over the stone wall where it couldn't be seen (after all, they didn't take it before and who would steal a potty chair!?) and had to drive all the way back to town, change all new stuff including things I had at home like extra towels, a grater, etc., and an hour and a half and \$85 later I arrived back and...the potty chair was stolen! They had to have been looking for it (changed their mind about it I guess) because you couldn't see where it was, unless you were looking for it.

BAAAAD luck. What did I do to deserve this? I was in a foul, foul mood. Okay, so I guess you really can't trust people, and I shouldn't have left it, but geez, I was camping! But didn't my daughter, who I know has these "psychic" flashes, say, "Mommy, someone will steal this?" And didn't she warn me again not to hide the potty chair because they would come back? Didn't I ignore this? Yeah, but still, come on. NO ONE steals from campers.

A couple of days later a guy came looking for me. A fellow camper who had all of his stuff messed with, and he was furious. He had

heard of me, and came looking for me so we could moan together. And this was my great luck! If it hadn't been for the stuff getting stolen, I wouldn't have met this guy. He told me so many stories about his life. He was very nice, helpful, my kids loved him, and he unlike so many was willing to tell me all about his experiences in Vietnam. Why he enlisted. The hell he went through. How the government has screwed him repeatedly and won't help him now (he has some problems from "shell shock"...I forgot what it is called, but it has totally messed up his life and the US government won't pay for it!). The way people spit on him when he came back. He is a man who thinks our government is awful, but truly loves this country and believes in true freedom. He believed the lies at the time and thought he was going to fight for a good cause, and after going to hell and back, they ignore him. I learned all about Tennessee and its history, racial prejudice, etc., and then I found out that his expertise is in solar and alternative energy, and in digging wells, both jobs that were government related when he came back from Vietnam. I learned more from him on alternative energy and how to calculate what you need, costs for systems, etc., in those three days than I ever have learned from books. My daughter got to hear some stories first hand about the atrocities of war (she had seen some Time Life ad on TV about the war and thought it was "cool" before this, no matter what I said to her) which let her understand first hand how awful it is (he kept it to her level so as to not give her nightmares). I had this truly wonderful learning experience which I

pondered for weeks after my return--the highlight of our trip for me!--which would never have happened if these idiots hadn't stolen my stuff and vandalized his campsite. Is this bad luck, or good? I think it was great luck!

Most clouds do have a silver lining, and mostly we do have some control over our luck. We all make choices. Even our health and illness is often a result of choices we make. Yes, there are notable exceptions, like the drunk who runs into the mother coming home from the grocery store in the middle of the afternoon and kills her instantly. This is a horrible tragedy. This isn't anything she deserved and there is nothing good in it for her. Unfortunately in the big picture, a lot of this does come down to choices as well...not our personal choices, but the choices of others. Some would argue, though, that if reincarnation is true then on some karmic level this probably all does boil down to choices of the individual as well. Maybe it is true, but try explaining that to the grieving family. Yet some tragedies too could have been avoided by individual choices. The chain goes on and on, but the point is this: We aren't helpless puppets with someone else yanking our chains! In most everything we do--by choosing to be a victim or a participant--we all mold our fate and destinies. You may not ever win the lottery, but if you don't play, how can you win?

--Marcee Murray

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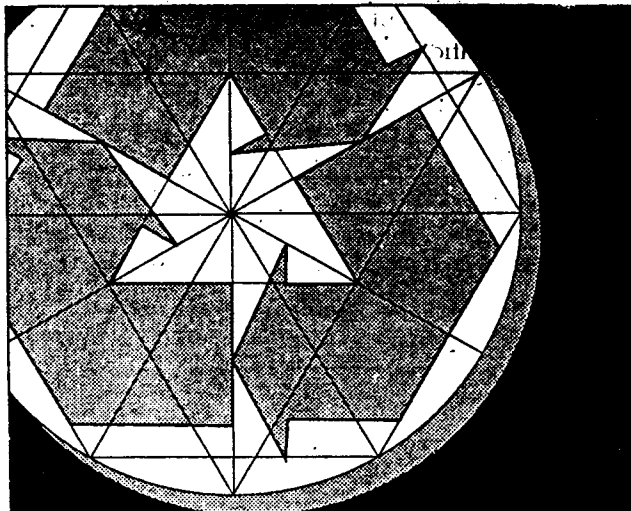
Bloomington-Normal

On Monday July 15, a rally and march against racism was held in Bloomington. The rally was organized by Rev. Frank McSwain of the Mount Pisgah Baptist Church to promote awareness of the recent burnings of predominately African American churches in the South, and to show that racism will not be tolerated.

I was one of over 400 concerned citizens who showed up for the rally at the Old Courthouse at 6:30. The enthusiastic crowd was welcomed by Rev. McSwain shortly thereafter. People of all ages, colors, and sizes were holding up placecards with the "no racism" symbol, waving them and yelling out the slogan, "Racism, not in our town."

Straight out of the horses' mouth

Rev. McSwain began the event by introducing Mayor Jesse Smart of Bloomington and Harry Hightower (in place of absent Mayor Kent Karraker of Normal.) Both read statements regarding the intolerance of racism and proclaimed that day to be "Not in Our Town Day" or something to that effect. I found it quite ironic given Smart's opposition to the Human Rights Ordinance that in one of his statements he said that (this a direct quote - you may use it as ammunition), "An attack against any segment of our community is an attack against our whole community." See also...hypocrite. It was obvious to myself and others that Jesse only hung around long enough to do some pre-campaigning and then split shortly thereafter. I never saw him during the march or rally at Mount Pisgah. I assume if he was there, he would be in the front to get a "I support all you good Negroes" pat on the back.



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▪ RECYCLE DRIVES

During the march, several downtown streets were blocked off, delaying traffic, as the 10 block march to Mount Pisgah Baptist Church took place. Children and choir members were asked to lead the march as others marched arm in arm, shouting, "not in our town."

Starting the rally off on a good note

Bloomington's Christian R&B/Rap group Agape, welcomed and fired up the crowd with two beautifully performed songs. This incredibly talented, six member ensemble sounds very similar to Boyz 2 Men. (forgive any misspellings) Normally, I am not too fond of this type of music, (extreme elongation of a note

Whitney.) but I found myself clapping and swaying just as enthusiastically as the rest.

Dwayne Aaron was the first speaker. He informed us that Habitat for Humanity has already made the commitment to rebuild burned black churches. Aaron is planning to lead a group to help rebuild a church and one should be assigned to him within the next two months. He urged us to help with the rebuilding, either monetarily or by making the trip down south to help with the construction. He stated that the churches may have been burned by fire, but they will be rebuilt with love.

Marc Miller and Norene Ball spoke briefly about signing pledge cards and attending study circles. These gatherings are a way for people of different ethnic backgrounds to teach and share their culture with others.

Ann Smith from the University of Chicago stirred the crowd with her dramatic speaking voice as she recited one of her poems. She was followed by Rev. McSwain who brought the crowd to cries of "amen" with his passionate words urging us to come together as one race and stand for what is right and true. Rev. McSwain humorously reminded the crowd that even though it may be hard to believe, he has some white blood in him, and some of us just might have some black blood in us.

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there

On another note, Rev. McSwain thanked State Farm at the end of the rally for donating the stage and sound equipment. After hearing this I was naturally inclined to do some research to see if they were one of the insurance companies that were denying coverage to existing black churches based on such factors as remote locations and wooden structures. (or just plain racism maybe.) I had read about this somewhere, but the article never mentioned specific companies by name. Wouldn't it be ironic if State Farm donated the stage, but refused to insure it?! I desperately searched for some kind of list (internet, magazines, newspapers) but nothing came up. I did find, however, an article titled, "Policies of Prejudice" in the July/August 1996 issue of Challenge magazine. It turns out that the National Fair Housing Alliance filed

discrimination complaints with HUD against three of the nation's largest insurers (one being State Farm) as a result of some investigating they did in predominately African American neighborhoods relating to the limited availability, not to mention overpricing, of insurance coverage. (This topic could be an article in itself.)

After the rally, everyone turned in their pledge cards, which simply state, "I believe that people should not be judged on their racial or ethnic origin, and I commit myself to this belief in all aspects of my life." If you are interested in signing the pledge, one has been included in this article. Please photocopy and send it to the mentioned address. By marking the "you may use my name" box, your name may be included in a possible future advertisement.



Although not well publicized, the march and rally were being filmed for the follow up documentary "Not In Our Town," which you might recall, aired on PBS late last year. I met up with executive producer Patrice O'Neill and asked her why Bloomington/Normal was chosen to be included. She stated that we were chosen because of our community's continued response to combating racism. She was very pleased with the turnout, which she said backed up her reason why we were one of a few U.S. cities chosen to be featured.

The follow up to the "Not In Our Town" is expected to air sometime in December. The Post will have more information in a later issue.

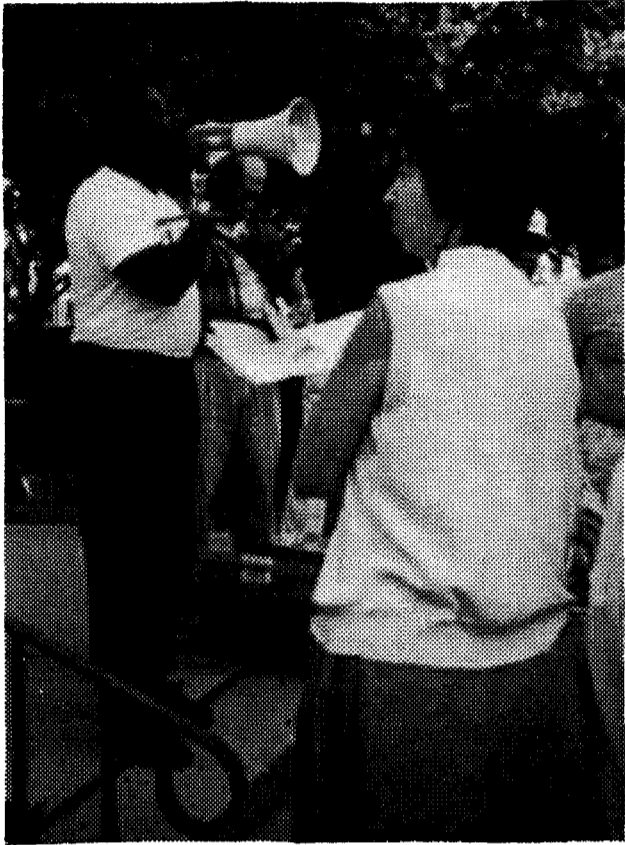
If you would like to sign up for the Study Circle, contact Norene Ball @ 662-0461, James Hines @ 829-8266, or Tom Goodell @ 452-2096.

If you would like to donate money to help rebuild a destroyed church, please contact Rev. Frank McSwain @ 828-2571.

--towanda! the non-racist



Says "No" To Racism



Rev. McSwain greets crowd, while executive producer looks on.



Harry Hightower addresses crowd.



Children gather to lead parade.



"Racism, not in our town!"

The Pledge

I believe that people should not be judged on their racial or ethnic origin, and I commit myself to this belief in all aspects of my life.

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

- You may use my name.
- How can I give others the opportunity to make this pledge?

Return to: The Pledge, PO Box 4422, Bloomington IL 61704-4422

The Pledge

I believe that people should not be judged on their racial or ethnic origin, and I commit myself to this belief in all aspects of my life.

Anyone can stand against racism; everyone should. When you hear racism, speak up! When you see racism, act!

name _____

date _____

tear + retain this portion.



BIm-Nor's Lesbigay

A better day couldn't have been slated for a pride festival. The sun was giving it his all, with a bit of breeze for temperament. I couldn't really tell how many people attended because of all the constant mixing and wandering among various booths and groups of friends, but by mid afternoon the Unitarian Church grounds were crowded and the concession stand had a constant line.

After opening talks, the Baby Blues played a riveting set that helped complete the atmosphere and further unite the wide diversity of people attending. Rick Beech, a DJ for Lesbigay Radio Chicago, complemented their bluesy folk music with a follow up set of particularly well composed post-industrial dance-mixish tunes. As his last song rhythmized off into the accepting audience, the gathering majestic clouds promised to answer his joyous angst of homosexual relationships with a heat of breaking rain.

It was a quick, beautifully heavy rain, barely continuing long enough for us to shelter the Post Amerikans we were peddling. Some people fled, but for the most part, people enjoyed the sudden cool and an actual excuse to get real wet in a big, happy group. A little bit later folks'd be getting wet on purpose with water balloons anyway. Those who did "rough" it out were soon greeted by one of those rare skies where the strength of the summer daystar dances with the misty remnants of water's release. The only reason a rainbow wasn't visible in the sky was because it was already present on the ground.

When it was dry enough to use the electric sound system again, the entertainment continued with an intelligently funny speech by a representative of the ACLU. He really put into context the progress society has made as well as the distances still left to traverse before reaching true acceptance.

The afternoon progressed with more folksy bands; one woman's haunting solo presentation spanning a variety of causes, including a wonderful environmental plea. A comedic lesbian rapper got things grooving with her rhymes and "Schoolhouse Rock" guessing game. Laura and I were relieved from our P.A. post around four as a feedback punky duo set up, and we called it a day. There was still quite a crowd, and the party went on strong for the rest of the early evening, climaxing with a balloon release.

From the perspective of this hetero-pagan-pothead, the festival was a complete success not only because of the glorious vibes present, but also because of the fact that the pigheaded element in town did not make a scene. Everyone there had a reason to be proud, but not the damaging sort of pride (such as nationalism). It was the loving, accepting pride of true community and transcended the petty motives of exclusion usually attached to the word "pride." That perversity of emotion and intellect is best left to The Pantagraph, which didn't have one mention of this momentous, first (of many) annual B-N Pride Fest.

In conclusion, I would like to apologize for any act my scatterbrain omitted, as well as any chronological inconsistencies. There was so much going on, and so much positive energy that the entire party seems to run together in one big memory smile.

--Pierre Gomez



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Community Shows Pride

Bloomington-Normal was the sight of the first Gay Pride Festival in downstate Illinois on Sunday, June 16th. The Advocacy Council for Human Rights Outreach Committee organized the festival in about six weeks time. The lesbigay and friends community was confident enough to support such an endeavor. The past year of political struggles made us strong and assertive as we took our place in the community at large. The festival was also another vehicle for the Advocacy Council to position itself as a leader in the central Illinois region. It was also felt that it was simply a time to party and celebrate ourselves.

You may ask what makes up a gay pride festival? The answer is people, people, people! People are the real life in a festival while everything else is accessorizing! The festival brought a very diverse group of people from as far away as Madison, Wisconsin. Every major city within a 60 mile radius was represented by their home organizations. I saw a lot of contacts being made between everyone, knitting the lesbigay region together. The Advocacy Council will be the first to tell you our first line of action is simply knowing who we are. Visibility is the most effective tool our community has. Were we ever more visible before that Sunday?

The festival began with an insane rush to put it all together by staff and volunteers. The vendors, artists and organizations began arriving at noon. The number participating was more than we could have hoped for. Their choice to participate showed a belief and confidence that really was the backbone of the entire festival. Once Upon A Time Books And Gifts made a strong presence along with several excellent fine artists in jewelry, painting and ceramics. There were quite a number of organizations and many from out of town. Brother-to-Brother from Springfield, Outpost from Champaign, GLAD from Decatur, and many more.

The grounds of the festival were, shall we say, very gay? The decorations began at the entrance to the parking lot with colorful purple and pink breeze blown ribbons and balloons. The grounds had numerous pride flags blowing

in the breeze. There was color all around. The atmosphere was definitely festive. The centerpiece of the festival was the stage. There was nonstop entertainment all day. Baby Blues Band was the main attraction and opened the festival with a terrific set. Rick Beech from Lesbigan Radio Chicago performed a very (a)rousing routine. Rick talked up the station which can be heard here at AM 750, Monday-Friday, 6-9am. Check it out. I caught Rick a couple days later on the air. He said really nice things about the festival and commented that festivals like that were where REAL gay pride was.

The skies darkened at this point as Marc Boon started his set. A rather rough storm hit us hard. People stood under trees waiting for the rain to subside, but it only rained harder and harder until everyone was soaked. Some brave souls started a volleyball game, gleefully jumping around in the downpour. The storm lasted about 30 minutes at which time there wasn't a single cloud in the sky. The sun blazed and everyone began to regroup and start again. The only consequences of the storm were the steam heat and that the crepe paper had been stripped. Spirits weren't dampened and we picked up where we left off.



After we recovered from the deluge, the Advocacy Council presented certificates of recognition to a list of people who cut across all demographic lines. It was clear that all corners of our society had been involved in the effort to bring equal rights to all our citizens. It was a very moving and uplifting ceremony, a true moment of pride.

To cap off the first half of the festival a balloon launch was orchestrated to the ELO tune, "Mister Blue Sky". Several hundred pink and purple balloons had heads raised in awe. It was a moving sight.

The stage hosted a fascinating variety of people. The musical acts were wonderful and diverse. The range of acts went from Baby Blues' well rounded sound to folk music Wisconsin style to the eccentric Ruth Buzzy duo. Sprinkled among the music were political speeches, including an appearance by congressional candidate Laurel Prussing. The simple fact that politicians, such as Ms.

Prussing, approached was a clear sign of our growing political importance, all the more reason to actively support the Advocacy Council in its clearly affective work.

From the Advocacy Council's point of view the pride festival outstripped our expectations. In the case of individual artists or groups it may not have been as successful as they would have liked. When the ads for the festival went out it was unknown who the vendors would be. They turned out to be an amazing group of artists but it was too late for the Council to advertise the strong presence of fine arts and crafts for sale. It is felt the festival visitors were unprepared for such quality priced goods, leading to less than hoped for sales. It is hoped everyone understood that the simple fact the festival took place and was successful is a tremendous step forward for the lesbigay community and their friends.

See you there next year!

--Ron Frazier, Outreach Committee Co-Chair of Advocacy Council for Human Rights





Local Legislators Display Poor Labor Records

Local Republicans continued their poor labor voting records, according to a summary of 1996 legislative action recently released by the Illinois AFL-CIO.

Following six key votes this past spring, local Republicans only voted with labor once.

Local Republicans followed include William Brady of Bloomington, Jay Ackerman of Morton and Dan Rutherford of Pontiac.

All three voted for one labor bill that drew only one negative vote and 113 positive, the Workers' Compensation Rate Adjustment Fund Increase. This bill provided cost of living adjustments to survivors of workers killed on the job and helped make that fund solvent.

The three Republicans voted against workers on five other measures. These included: 1) cutting employer contributions to the Unemployment Insurance fund \$300 million over the next five years; 2) Allowing employers to pass untrue information about employees--the employees must prove the employer intended to lie; 3) Repealing overtime provisions for T.V. and radio announcers and writers in markets of less than 100,000 people; 4) Exempted loan closing agents and real estate appraisers from unemployment insurance coverage; and 5) A retroactive appeal of overtime protection for truck drivers from 1976-1994, removing any responsibility for back wages from employers.

The Unemployment Trust Fund raid and cutting the overtime for T.V. workers were signed by the Governor and are now law.

Over in the Illinois Senate eight bills were

followed. Bloomington's John Maitland voted against labor seven times, Lincoln's Robert Madigan four times.

Senate bills followed by labor included: 1) the Unemployment Insurance raid; 2) Removing employer liability for passing false information; 3) Improving pensions for state and university employees; 4) repealing overtime for T.V. workers; 5) exempting loan agents from unemployment coverage; 6) Exempting messengers and couriers from unemployment; 7) Amending the state constitution to require a three-fifths vote to pass any law requiring a local government expenditure; and 8) Prohibiting East St. Louis teachers from striking and restricting bargaining.

The Scaffolding Act, a construction worker protection the Republicans took away last year, can't even reappear. Chicago was considering its own Scaffolding Act, but Rep. Al Salvi, the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate, sponsored a bill which passed with Republican majorities forbidding any city from even writing its own Scaffolding Act.

"If this anti-worker majority in the General Assembly stays in control, they'll go right back to their pro-big business agenda next year," warned Illinois AFL-CIO president Don Johnson. "Labor is at a crossroads, if we don't vote worker friendly legislatures in November, the damage may be irreparable."

--from Livingston & McLean Counties UnionNews



Washington gets TOUGH on corporate crime.

Kathy Lee, Michael J., Where Are Your Things Made?

Michael Jordan leads the Chicago Bulls to championship, but where do the shoes bearing his name lead? Kathie Lee Gifford smiles brightly on T.V. daily, but are there clothing workers smiling who make her fashion line?

A sports or T.V. star can make millions in endorsements, but what about the actual product their name is on? Did that celebrity ever visit a factory or a worker's home?

"Sweatshop"--a word once almost disappeared from national vocabulary, is returning again. As brand name and celebrity garment lines proliferate, the hidden secret is the working conditions behind the label.

Sweatshop used to connote some dank big city loft with poor women huddling over sewing machines. That is still possible and U.S. sweatshops are reemerging. With an international production system, sweatshops today also includes a metal building in an export processing zone in Haiti, the Philippines, El Salvador or Honduras, producing clothes for the U.S. marketplace.

An effective key in exposing this system is the National Labor Committee (NLC). They've developed an effective system of exposing conditions, often with first hand testimony of young women workers from impoverished countries and zeroing in on U.S. celebrities whose name the shirt carries.



Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1994 Clay Butler



cont.

A new tactic the NLC, which is funded by U.S. unions, developed is insuring decent treatment for these impoverished workers. The first reaction to exposure by U.S. retailers is to drop the abusive producer. Instead, the NLC challenges U.S. celebrities and retailers to insure certain conditions are met by their suppliers.

The most recent flush of national publicity came over Kathie Lee Gifford, daytime talk show host who said she gives her earnings to children's charities. Tearfully Gifford first denied the charges and then tried to drop the suppliers. At one point her husband, ex-football star Frank Gifford went into a factory to personally pay exploited workers. But now Gifford is pushing her U.S. retailer, Wal-Mart,

to help insure decent conditions, no matter where the clothes are produced.

Disney is another ripe target. "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" is this year's literary classic reduced to cutesy talking animals and a flood of consumer products--figurines, clothing, fast food promotionals--soon filling your T.V. commercials and a mall near you. But where are those Disney items made?

All over the world is Disney's market and production reach. "It's a Small World" might be Disney's song and every nation's workers found it on their labels--though they're probably not singing happy songs. Toys from Chinese factories join textiles from around the globe.

Recently the NLC made issue of Disney's use of Haitian suppliers for kid's clothes. Last year's Disney hit, "Pocohantas" featured Disney pajamas selling at your local Wal-Mart for \$11.97--and netting Haitian workers about 7 cents a set. "How does it benefit the people of the U.S. or Canada when U.S. companies pay 30 cents an hour wages, or less, in Haiti?" NLC director Charles Kernaghan asked.

How workers come to term with the new multinational economy is a troubling question. The NLC points to an alternate path, using consumer pressure and global labor solidarity to challenge companies who seem oblivious to national boundaries and local laws.

--from Livingston & McLean Counties Union News

The Post Amerikan Interview: The Thingies

In our community it is a rare treat indeed to find bands that appeal to our need for a truly unique sound which defines the area in which we live. For many years *The Something Brothers* were the definitive sound; they were a truly original band which gained a substantial following, not only in this town, but also in places they visited. After the demise of that band others have come to take their place giving a more defined sense of a "Bloomington-Normal sound." Bands which followed include (but are certainly not limited to); *Stumpwhoopt*, *The Spelunkers*, and most lately, *The Thingies*.

I was given an opportunity to interview this band a week before their show at The Gallery towards the end of July and I really thought we would just sit there waiting for questions to occur and answers to be given. But it ended up being a little different than that. My idea of a rather simple Q and A ended up to be a genuine conversation of the bands formation, their songwriting process, and the music they create which makes them another good original band. *The Thingies* are comprised of three members: Ed Pierce (famous for his Midwest Exchange commercials) on guitar, Steven Harris (go to a show and let his English accented voice fill your ears) on bass and vocals, and Jeffrey Greenberg (finally, another excellent drummer when there are too few in town) on drums and percussion.

The band came together about one year ago after Steve & Jeff had a two-piece band playing between set breaks calling themselves *Sporkupine*. Ed, who played with *The Something Brothers*, was invited to check them out and he was more than interested in the chance to be playing with different musicians than those of the past. The circle of musicians in this town is rather small and Ed was looking for an outlet to express his own ideas and attain some form of musical freedom. The opportunity to jam with some new people solidified his decision, and the band began practicing in August of '95. Jeff gave the best account of the band's first practices, "The first night I played with Ed, it was like 'boom, click' it was that easy...if you're going to play with other people, one--you gotta have fun, and two--it's gotta happen fast or else it's not gonna ever happen."

The songwriting process of the band is another matter; according to Steve, "This is the first band where every song is co-written." He goes on to explain, "Typically we'll get a rough idea of the melody and then the words...as I'm singing the melody I'm syllabating, doing little syllables; ad-libbing little phrases, some of them are pretty cliched, some of them are pretty cool and stick." Ed continues by describing the approach they have in writing the songs, "Even though I'm playing the same

chords he'll [Steve] take the bass line and build up the melody around that and it still circles over those chords but the subtle changes and the way the melody changes...I guess it's really our whole thing..." He also explains that, "...pop-oriented melody hooks are the key..." to the style of music they play. Not unlike the idea of waking up to music on the alarm clock and having a song running through your head all day; the only difference is that *The Thingies* music is much, much better.

I left the show at The Gallery with a feeling that these guys know what they are doing and know where they are going. They work together very well considering how they manipulate abstract changes in melody and obscure scale progressions all the while keeping the rhythm attainable to the listener. To give people who have not yet heard this band an idea of their sound, I took the opportunity to ask some audience members what their opinion of the band's sound was and to make some comparisons to other groups. A number of people explained that they were reminiscent of '80's pop music. One person said that they reminded them of *XTC*, another said *The Cure*, another explained that they sounded, in parts, like *The Police*. Regardless of these comparisons, I am satisfied with Steve's explanation of the attitude of the band, "The ideal situation is totally egoless, it's just to play...that is just awesome, that's the way it should be."

--Nick Murray



Crash. the end of car

Every year, the American automobile industry spends \$20 billion to prolong the illusion that cars are sensual, sexy, sporty status symbols worthy of their role as our alternative to immobility. Every year, more than 45,000 people lose their lives on the interstate (not to mention the number of plants and animals who have met their undeserved end here). Every year the gas and oil runoff from roads is equal to the volume of 21 Exxon Valdez oil spills. Every year, North Americans devote one quarter of their waking lives to the use and upkeep of their cars.

"If anyone had realized the sheer magnitude of the interests affected by this road system, it is impossible to imagine that it would ever have been built." -- Senator Patrick Moynihan, D-NY

The concept of the government-funded interstate highway goes largely unquestioned in our society despite its only being 40 years old--with it we commute to work, shop around, get more places faster and with the most directional freedom. Of course, it also creates and maintains urban sprawl, mono/mega-mall takeover, car culture; it displaces/replaces quaint local main streets, and heightens US dependence on foreign oil.

It's high time we realized that by threatening human health, using up non-renewable oil reserves, paving over land, undermining urban economies, and tearing at the social fabric of our communities, car-centered policies are (the professor and i can't resist this cliché) heading us down a dead-end street.

The interstate highway system has literally terra-formed the whole surface of our home world, Earth. These massive highway systems and the ever-expanding human areas hatched in their paths displace more and more of the once habitable wilderness areas of this planet. The earth that was originally moved to create the US interstate system was enough to cover the entire state of Connecticut with 2 feet of soil. This exchange of natural lands for unsustainable habitats of concrete and blacktop alone offsets nature's ecosystems with repercussions that radically change the environment around us, not to mention the effects of the over 200 million US cars driven on them daily and the increased work, speed and consumption inspired by their existence. Under and around the 45,530 miles of US interstate highway with its over 510 billion annual vehicle miles, once existed a sustaining system of beautiful, intact, life-teeming earth--what grows here now are federal taxes, construction jobs, shopping complexes, noxious fumes, billboard advertisements, NOISE, and, of course, the automobile industry...

Aside from the all out nastiness of privileging concrete over critter and clover, the professor and i ponder how this affects our so important national economy? Well, let's just say there are winners and losers,



(hey, that's capitalism for ya). Generally we've known the losers all our lives. They're our neighbors, our friends, our relatives. And as for the winners, well they're harder to peg, but we can read about their progress in magazines like Fortune 500 or in their best-selling autobiography. The "mom-and-pop" version of city life was traded in for malls and commercial strips along the highway where inflated land prices restrict most, save national and multi-national chains. Whole towns that were bypassed by the interstate died, while towns that were near experienced some convenient "reshaping." The railroad (still more fuel efficient than automobile transport) continues to suffer greatly from car culture. Many passenger lines have been closed and freight transport is down by 20% since 1950. Innumerable low-income neighborhoods were ripped apart in the building of interstate highways en route to the suburbs, where jobs were relocating. Due to reduced funding for mass transit, these jobs now required a car, an expense that left many behind to suffer in the American city's "downward spiral." Farmers who owned land in the path of the interstate sold out for a pretty penny and fertile lands were paved into K-Mart's and Quick-E Lube's, concrete cloverleaves and vast lots to accommodate the ever-increasing parking appetites of automobiles.

Our penance? Urban sprawl - hermetic hamster mazes of consumer decadence where tradition and regional identity are assimilated into timeless, placeless, profit-proven corporate species: WalMart, Staples, Best Buy, Barnes & Noble, Chi-Chi's... and what would Veteran's Parkway be without a TGIFridays? Over 3/4 of all US office space has nestled its bigger and bigger head here, in "Edge City," infectiously farther out into the "new urban landscape," leaving behind the old and fast becoming ruinous scaffolding of centralized Downtown, USA. On-ramps, off-ramps, concrete cloverleaves get us to work, to play, to the auto mechanic, to the various stores necessary to maintain our immoderate lifestyles... hardly a place to amble on two feet (or four) or on bicycle tires. Here in Edge City the automobile is given more civic rights than citizens. One look down Veterans Parkway and it's obvious that our town is fast becoming a suburbia which is shaped for cars, not for people, plants or critters.

There are more cars on US roads than before imaginable, accounting for one-quarter of the nation's carbon dioxide emissions, nearly two-thirds of carbon monoxide, and one-third of lead and nitrogen oxides. The average car emits a stiff cocktail of more than 1,000 pollutants which contribute to global warming, urban smog, acid rain, low-lying ozone, and many other deadly conditions. Each year the average car puts more than four times its body weight of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere accounting for the more than 4 billion tons of CO2 emitted annually by the world's vehicles.

But pollution concern goes deeper than just the surface over-use of automobiles. The manufacture of cars and trucks also creates a large amount of pollution. The emissions from producing steel and plastic materials, along with the energy used to assemble cars can amount to as much as 20% of all the pollution a car will produce in its lifetime.

As cars and trucks run on oil processed into gasoline or diesel fuel, the pollution caused by cars also includes the pollution and environmental destruction caused by oil exploration, production, transportation and refining. Oil is one of the most polluting human industries and there is a long history of environmental destruction associated with it. The areas where oil is produced are often polluted by toxic spills or the build-up of toxic wastes. Every year 1000 times as much oil is routinely spilled in its production than escaped from the Exxon Valdez during the famous 1989 tanker incident. The politics of oil is, of course, troubling as well. US dependence on foreign oil is up from the less than one-fifth imported in 1950 to the over one-half imported today (not to mention that one-fifth of current oil imports come from Persian Gulf nations.)

As it stands, road traffic is heavily subsidized by our government ("our tax dollars at work,") while subsidies for public transportation are continually cut. But what is less commonly recognized is the enormous level of subsidy that is granted to the personal automobile. All external costs of transport - damage to the environment, health problems caused by air pollution, the impacts of global climate change, deaths and injuries incurred from accidents - are carried not by individual car owners, but paid for by society as a whole.

It becomes clear that cars have taken us a lot farther than we ever hoped to go, but we must collectively move from understanding to acting. With more land now devoted to cars than to housing, continued sprawl is likely but it is not inevitable. Travel behavior and land use patterns are still, at least in part, functions of public policy. Because we know you wanna help, the professor and i have compiled some tactics to force car culture into reverse:

1. **Kick the Car Habit.** Cars divide and erode city neighborhoods. Car traffic turns streets meant for shopping and congregation, into smoggy, isolated speed tunnels. People who live on busy streets are more likely to view



culture

Chemical Time Bombs

the world as a dangerous place, and are much less likely to know their neighbors. The next time you find yourself fumbling for the car keys, stop and ask yourself: geez, do I really need to drive?

2. Shop Locally. Nothing undermines local shops and town centers more than the sprawling consumer-magnet megastores that function as society's new cathedrals. They kill the soul of a city, and marginalize people who don't have cars. Fight for mixed-use zoning and street-level retail developments accessible by foot and public transit in our downtown areas. It's good for business - retail turnover increases 25% following pedestrianization.

3. Warning Labels! Demand labels listing all auto pollutants be placed on the back of all vehicles (for now, write up your own):
WARNING: This vehicle emits Carbon Dioxide, Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Oxides, Sulfur Dioxide, Benzene, Aldehydes Methane. These pollutants cause respiratory disease, cancer, smog and global warming!

4. Prank Parking Tickets! Serving an Environmental Summons requires the offending driver to pay the additional costs of driving assessed from a bionomical standpoint, which takes into account some of the environmental and societal costs of automobile operation. Call the Greenpeace Atmosphere Enforcement Branch (416-345-8408 EXT. 3040) for a fresh supply of tickets.

5. Join the Critical Mass Bike Movement. Pedal protests are taking off big time. Cyclists have choked off roadways all across the planet. Earlier this year in Berlin, 70,000 cyclists (yup, 70,000) turned out for World Environment Day, blocking the streets, raising their bikes defiantly as pedestrian onlookers cheered and irate motorist fumed.

6. Let's Ban Car Advertising (fat chance, but it's worth a try...) Like cigarettes and other products which have detrimental effects on health or the environment, car advertising should be taken off the public airwaves. What other product advertised on TV disables, pollutes, and destroys so much life? Car manufacturers spend more \$\$ on advertising than any other corporation. The average TV viewer is saturated with car propaganda to the tune of around 30 commercials per day. These ads communicate an unreal understanding of the car which allows society to ignore the deaths, injuries and pollution caused by dependence on automobiles.

7. Direct Action Gets th'Goods. The car lobby is enormously powerful and won't let go of its stranglehold on our cities without a fight. But protest works, letter writing works, and as always the dollar ballot works. So, support our local Friends of the Constitution Trail, or if you must get there faster take the bus, Amtrak, or carpool for non-walkable/non-bikable trips. Tell City Hall we want better transit, not more highways.

Umatilla, Oregon
Tooele, Utah
Pueblo, Colorado
Pine Bluff, Arkansas
Newport, Indiana
Anniston, Alabama
Blue Grass, Kentucky
Edgewood, Maryland

Read these town names and think for a moment of their people. They are ordinary American towns, with one tragic difference. The deaths of thousands of their citizens have been arranged by the U.S. military.

These towns are the sites of huge stockpiles of unstopably eroding M-55 rockets armed with the most fiendishly deadly chemical weapon the military mind could devise. They are "chemical time bombs" due to a design flaw that the Army discovered only too late.

It's a design flaw that leads to a rocket "auto-igniting" which detonates other weapons which deliver the poison sarin over a wide area. Since the Army cleverly made the rockets so that they cannot be safely dismantled, those time bombs just keep on ticking.



Is anyone going to be reprimanded for this? Is anyone going to be fired for this? Is anyone going to be hung for this? Who is the enemy here?

We spend trillions of dollars on the military and now it turns on us. We have created a diabolical, cold-blooded, Nazi-hearted monster.

Is this nation capable of generating a significant moral force to oppose the mind set that brought such horror into being?

Please, may it be so.

(based on an article in *Time* magazine, dated Feb. 12, 1996 pp42-43.)

--Gregg Brown

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--nanny & the professor



News From Voice

Complain to Congress and Let The Christian Coalition Pay the Bill

The Christian Coalition has set up a toll-free number to the Capitol switchboard. When you call 1-800-963-3524, you are connected directly to the Capitol switchboard. . . they will ask you what office you want. . . give them the name of your Congressman (probably Tom Ewing for most of you good people). All you have to do is tell the receptionist in his office what you are asking the Congressman to do (preferably relative to an upcoming vote--using creative license here may be illegal), give them your name and address when asked. . . and you've made a significant contribution for reproductive rights. And the Christian Coalition pays the bill. What could be better? Not much.

This month call Tom Ewing and express your disappointment on his votes on reproductive rights and health care measures (including Title X family Planning, which passed no thanks to him). Express your dismay at his vote on the gay marriage bill.

Cool huh? We get to call Washington to express our views and the Christian Coalition pays for it. That's mighty Christian of them don't ya think?

Source: Planned Parenthood with editorial comment by VFC.

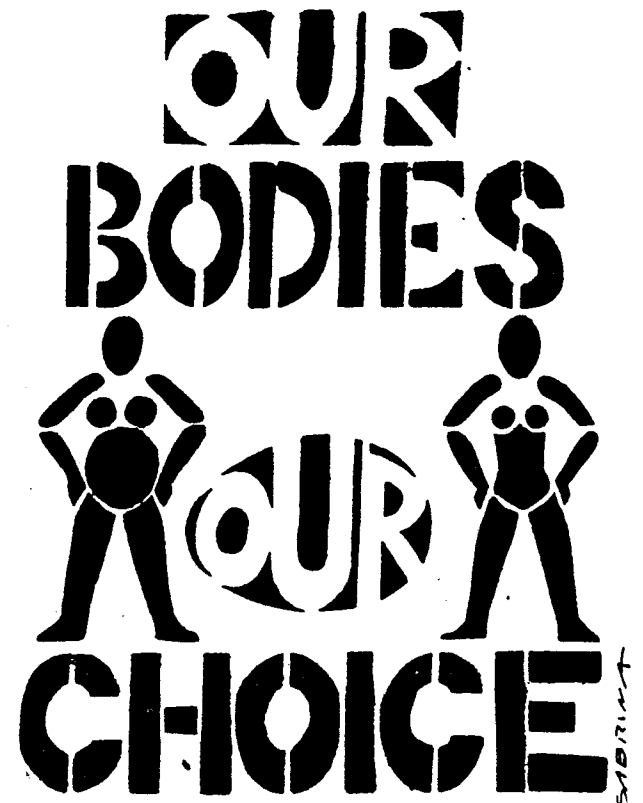
Title X Wins, Restrictive Amendments Fail

Last July 11th, the House of Representatives voted 232 to 193 to approve an amendment offered by pro-family planning Representative Obey to require that applicants for Title X funds certify to the Secretary that they encourage family participation in the decision of minors seeking family planning services. Obey's amendment (supported by Newt) replaced the anti-family planning amendment sponsored by Rep. Istook, which would have required teens to obtain written parental consent in order to obtain any services offered by Title X family planning clinics.

Rep. Soulder planned to offer an amendment to eliminate Title X funds and transfer all of the Title X funds to the National Cancer Institute. However, he arrived late to the floor of the House and because of his tardiness Rep. Porter would not allow him to introduce his amendment. Now there's a lesson on the importance of punctuality.

Unfortunately Congressmen Ewing, LaHood, Poshard, Hastert or Weller just don't get it. Sooooo, maybe you could use that toll free number mentioned earlier to let these boys know your thoughts on their vote. As important as it is to remind those who work against us on these issues that we are still here, it is equally important to thank those who help us. Please call (via the Christian Coalition toll free number) Congressmen Porter and Greenwood and thank them for their hard work in saving Title X.

Source: Planned Parenthood with editorial comments by VFC.



had harassed her for more than a year, which has led her to wear a bulletproof vest and alter her route to and from work.

Circuit Judge Thomas Moultrie granted the order last week to protect Hanzo's "right to quiet enjoyment of the neighborhood."

DeParrie, editor of *The Life Advocate* magazine and one of Oregon's most outspoken opponents of choice, had argued his activities were protected as free speech. He said he would appeal.

Source: *Chicago Tribune*

Moderate Republican Chosen to Fill Dole's Seat

The Lt. Governor of Kansas, Sheila Frahm, a leader of the moderate wing among Kansas Republicans, was chosen to fill the Senate vacancy left by the resignation of Bob Dole.

The selection of Frahm, a pro-choice republican, by Republican Governor Bill Graves, dismayed religious conservatives but was no surprise.

The appointment means that for the next few months, at least, Kansas will be represented in the Senate by two women. Frahm will have to begin campaigning immediately if she wants to keep the seat. A special run off election will be held this fall; the primary will be in August. Frahm will face Representative Sam Brownback, an anti-choicer.

Source: *New York Times*

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Two Questions

"Rather than ask, 'Can you be a gay, lesbian or bisexual person and still be religious or entitled to civil rights?' we think the question is 'Can you practice fear and hatred and still be considered civil, much less religious?'"

from The Rev. Dr. John A. Buehrens

Abortion Foe Declared Stalker

In Portland, Oregon, an anti-choicer has been declared a stalker and ordered to stay away from a clinic director's home.

The order against Paul DeParrie marked the first time Oregon's stalking law has been used against anti-choice activities. Similar laws have been used in other states, including Florida and Texas.

Jude Hanzo, executive director of All Women's Health Services in Portland, said DeParrie



For Choice

Thanks to Babbitt's

We want to extend a big thank you to Babbitt's Books in downtown Normal. For the second year now Brian has allowed Voice for Choice to set up a table in front of his store for the Sugar Creek Arts Festival.

As you know, we're an all volunteer grass roots organization. We rely on support from the community to help us stay afloat. We are pleased to report that we raised some funds, made some friends and enjoyed the weather (well Saturday at least).

Thanks again to our friends at Babbitt's.

Some Thoughts

These are just a few of the ramblings of the writer.

Does it seem odd to anyone else that this Congress, the one so concerned with unborn fetuses, continues to try to: reduce Head Start funding, reduce school lunch programs, turn back environmental protection, fight tougher FDA inspection standards of the meat industry even though children have died from tainted meats, take huge amounts of money from the tobacco industry, which not only is selling to our children but to pregnant women, which causes all sorts of problems for the fetus, oppose the increase in minimum wage which makes it easier for families to support themselves and alleviates some of the stress faced by the working poor in this country.

Anyway, just a few thoughts.

Cause of Miscarriage Sought

Three Indiana women who had a total of six miscarriages within two years may have been sickened by well water polluted by a hog farm nearby, the Government says.

The Federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention said that the women were drinking well water that contained high levels of nitrate, which is found in trace amounts in many vegetables but can be harmful at the high level present in animal and human feces.

The agency said, though, that studies have not consistently linked nitrate consumption with miscarriages.

The three women, who miscarried from 1991 to 1993, all lived within a few miles of each other in La Grange County, a farming area in northeastern Indiana. One woman miscarried four times, all within the first eleven weeks of pregnancy. Another woman miscarried within the first eight weeks; the third woman lost her first baby, also within the first eight weeks.

County health officials checked area wells after a resident alerted them to high nitrate levels in her water. Nineteen families were interviewed, including five women who had given birth without trouble. "We found the women who had miscarriages had wells closer to the hog farm than the women in the area who had term deliveries," said Michele Lynberg of the CDC's National Center for Environmental Health.

About thirteen million households in the U.S. obtain drinking water from private wells, which are not regulated by the EPA. The EPA recommends that anyone with a private well evaluate the quality of its water periodically. (The typist recommends adopting a vegetarian diet, thereby not supporting the factory farming industry which is contributing to the pollution of our water as well as causing other environmental destruction.) Households with infants should also be careful because high nitrate levels have been linked to methoglobinemia, or "blue baby syndrome." Symptoms include a blue tinge on the nose and ear tips, diarrhea, lethargy and coma.

Source: *New York Times*



Looking To Adopt

The following were listed in the *New York Times* as among the most common mistakes made by prospective adoptive parents in home interviews:

- *To admit that you are still trying for a pregnancy.
- *To admit that one of you was dragged in by the other and has no interest in adoption.
- *To use the home study as a forum for your doubts and fears about adoptive parenting.
- *For husband and wife to say conflicting things in their individual sessions or for your answers in your application not to match your face-to-face interview.
- *To talk too much, thereby revealing information you wish you hadn't.

*To be angry rather than confident, persuasive, assertive. Few people get through a home study without getting furious at somebody or something.

*To be apologetic, defensive, rather than confident, persuasive, assertive.

*To mention problems that your worker never asked about.

*To pretend that infertility didn't hurt. It was no big deal; there was nothing to grieve over.

*To assume that honesty is the best policy.

Kind of a scary list.

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RAPE CRISIS CENTER



The Poetry Page

Like a Good Neighbor

i met the man who decided
long ago that dandelions
are a bad thing, and a means
to judge one's neighbors.

he sold marigolds, but his brother
sprays yards. with urine, the wolf

acknowledges his space. freedom
is accepting the limits of our
nature, and crabgrass grows
where it can. conformity can be
expensive but our differences
are free. rather un-American.
weeds do not need deeds,
yet hemp could pay the taxes.

he said dandelions are inferior
to marigolds, due to lack of breeding.
when planning a yard, the best
guests arrive where there's money.

--Matt Toczko

Fire

Red.

Hot.

Find me solid!
Write your name on me!

You find,

You see

What I ain't got.

Make me feel the heat!

Cigarette.

Matches or lighter.

Cigarette me, baby!
Hard!

right
on
my
arm.

--David Hall

Sovereign Fire

Fan the flames higher, Newt my lad
A larger flagration Rome never had

Burn the tables & chairs & fascist law books
Throw in a lawyer or two for good measure
For ashes and memories, we long may treasure!

Your mirror is shattered, Newt old man
Soviet gone, and America's last reason
Comes the end, soldier's last killing season

The future is ours, Newt, you see
By the light of Washington's final glory
Woman and Child tell tomorrow's story

When the crime of nations is a history text
And earth is one country, clean, and ungoverned
But by joy and freedom of self-led sovereigns.

Fan the flames higher, Newt my lad
A larger flagration Rome never had

Burn the tables & chairs & fascist law books
Throw in a lawyer or two for good measure
For ashes and memories, we truly will treasure!

--Millenium Twain

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Passage into Sommerland

Every spirit-bound-to-flesh
has known many birthings,
and has also known manifold
the wondrous rites of release.

Depart in joy and peace,
spirit-no-longer-bound
by-skin-and bone,
depart to higher lives.

To whirl a madcap jig in the oldest woods,
to be one with the chieftain trees.
To soar and spiral above the open plains,
to join the song of forever and more.
To flow in entwining harmony as rivers,
to be the rhythm of rain,
To burn away the old, come the brushfire,
to know truths in lightningwrit skies.

Every spirit-rejoicing-in Sommerland
has known many cold deaths,
and has also known manifold
the wondrous rites of embrace

Return in joy and peace,
spirit-at-one-with-all-Nature
return and spread your joy.

--Matt Toczko

Reincarnation Love Song

in a time
not this time
another time
another round
I found you

we watched the sun rise
not this sun rise
another sun rise
in other skies
I knew you

we were borning
not in mourning
another borning
another forming
I love you

born in laughter
ever after
never after to die
outside the light
never after to die
outside the light

another time
another sun
another birth
you are the one
am I?

you are the one

am I?

--Gregg Brown



Notes From The Land Of Anti-Fat

Susan and the Sacks

Let us now slam Susan Powter.

The motor-mouthed diet maven has been an annoying presence on both tube and bookstore racks for some time. But in an irritating bid for lefty respectability, she now graces the pages of the current *Ms.* magazine. The newest issue (VII, 3) contains an interview with the redoubtable Ms. P., and it's a model of infuriating rhetoric. Susan Powter -- feminist heroine?

What makes this latest turn in the career of the ultra-caffeinated exercise Nazi so scary is the way she manages to couch her fat phobia in the jargon of liberation. To Ms. P., the only path to liberation is to have a body like her; the rest of us are just plain doomed.

From the start, she lays her fat bashing ideology on the table. Opening the interview discussing a series of pelvic photos from the latest edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, Powter describes each woman pictured in the book as looking like a "sack of shit." To her, the sight of these average looking bodies is "as offensive as I find in *Playboy*."

And calling fat bodies excrement isn't? Though she repeatedly denies promoting the thin ideal of diet society, the message in that phrase is stark: fat is ugly; fat is less than human; fat is shit.

For a woman who claims to be beyond appearance (and who regularly slams unsympathetic press types who call attention to her skinhead buzzcut), this might be an amusing contradiction if Powter didn't take it to her typical hyperbolic level. For her, fatness is a badge of weakness that screams its owner's inability to take control of her life: "How in the hell are going to plan a career? How in the hell are you going to say to your husband



who beats you, 'No, you asshole, you can't do that anymore?'" To be fat is to lack the upper body strength to confront any of life's obstacles. Powter repeatedly bashes fat women for lacking "upper body strength" to fight the good fight, though she doesn't tell us if, say, a wheel-chair bound woman is equally weak.

Take away its artifice, and Powter's verbal bullying is not much different from the language of domestic violence. In both cases, the victim is stripped of dignity, often in the name of "helping them." The sadistic EST in nineties guise.

In Powter's world, it is impossible to be both fat and healthy; to be fat is to de facto be unhealthy. "It's slow suicide, man. I lived it. I was 260 pounds. It was horrible to be there."

This column has argued the health issue in the past. But for the record: it still remains unclear on whether fatness or dieting is the culprit in many "fat-related illnesses." We know, for instance, that with low-calorie diets, you can lose just as much muscle as fat tissue -- muscle

Despite regular loud pronouncements to the contrary, we don't know if adults can be fat and healthy -- because the data has been tainted by histories of dieting and the repeated stress/blows to self-esteem that fat people face in this society. We do know that the risk of dying from heart disease is about 70% greater in those with fluctuating weights than in those whose weight remains stable, even if that weight is a "fat" one. And that older women who maintain a higher body percentage are less likely to suffer from osteoporosis as well as other conditions associated with menopause.

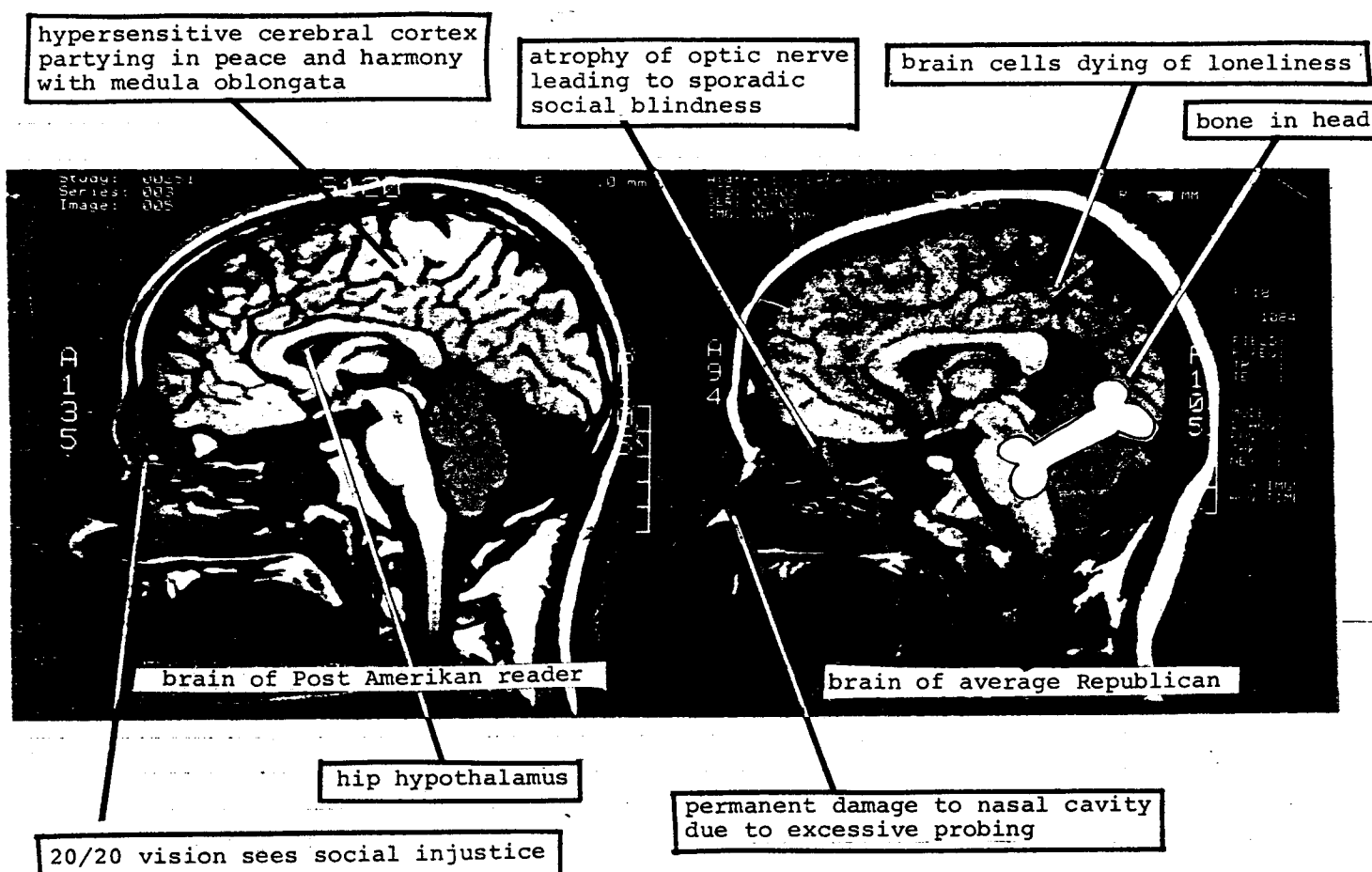
We also have anecdotal evidence: like the example of Roseta, Pennsylvania, in the 1960's, population 1,700, "nearly all of the residents obese and hardly a heart murmur among them" (Schwartz, *Never Satisfied*). But anecdotal is not medical evidence, and even if it was, a self-described "used car salesman of fitness" like Powter would ignore it, anyway. that gets replaced with fat when the dieter yo-yos back up to their old weight. This could explain the increased fat levels that many longterm diet campaigners have in their hearts and bloodstream.

There's too much money to be made in browbeating the fat.

This column will grant Ms. P. one point: being fat can be "horrible" in a culture that feels it's perfectly fine to be abusive to the large. But like many abuse victims, Susan Powter thinks nothing of perpetuating the same demeaning assaults that she herself experienced. Swing those sacks. . .

It's ironic that the same issue of *Ms.* to contain the Powter interview would choose for its cover story: Xena, the warrior heroine of syndicated television. Both figures may be overblown and cartoonist, prone to dramatic overstatement. But in her refusal to exploit her sisters, Xena is probably the more humane of the feminist heroines

--Bill Sherman



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Bottom lines

* Amount the US owes the United Nations: \$1.5 billion. Amount of cash the UN currently has on hand: Less than \$100 million. (Boutros Boutros-Ghali)

* Cost of a second physical fitness center at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard: \$10 million.

* Cost of a third golf course at Andrews AFB: \$5 million.

* *Newsday* reports that the Clinton administration has been paying \$12,280 for a spare door hook on the C-17 cargo jet that originally cost \$389.

* Average cost of one kilowatt-hour for residential customers in the U.S.: 9 cents. Average cost for industrial customers: 4.5 cents. (Edison Electric Institute)

* Cost overrun on Boston's Third Harbor Tunnel funded 85-90% with federal money: \$8 billion

* Amount of money that the Bureau of Indian Affairs spent between 1973 and 1992 but can't figure out how: \$2.4 billion, or one out of every seven dollars flowing through tribal trust funds in this period.

Civil liberties

* Number of people the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission spied on during the civil rights era: 87,000. (*Washington Post*)

* Percent of motorists stopped by police along a northeastern stretch of I-95 in Maryland who were black: 71%. (*Washington Post*)

Politics

* Percent of Oregon voters who gave voting by mail a favorable rating: 76%. Percent voting in the recent Oregon vote-by-mail election: 66%. (University of Oregon Research Survey Lab)

* Percent of people who said in 1994 that they trust the government to do what is right most of the time or almost always: 22%. Percent who said the same thing in 1964: 79%. (Institute for Social Research, University of Mich)

Source: *The Progressive Review*



"WHAT WE ARE SAYING TODAY IS THAT YOU'RE EITHER PART OF THE SOLUTION OR PART OF THE PROBLEM."

--Eldridge Cleaver

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