

WILLMOTT & WHY NOTS

DAVID J. WILLMOTT SR., EDITOR

Put Your Voice Where Your Signature Is

The 25,000 people who carried or signed petitions demanding a vote on the LILCO-LIPA issue are invited to the presentation of these signatures to the Suffolk County Legislature on August 11, at the Evans K. Griffing County Center in Riverhead at 5:30 p.m.

You are grassroots government and you should witness the final act of the citizens petitioning their government for redress. Your voice should be heard!

Even though they said it could not be done, we have more than the required number of signatures in all 10 towns. Some towns turned in more than double the number needed. This was done 100% by volunteers who believe this is our government and we should have a say on important issues.

This should demonstrate to every legislator that there is more than sufficient interest in making sure this issue

is on the ballot in November.

How can the politicians ignore the thousands of petitions which contain more than the legally required number of signatures needed to put this issue on the ballot?

The Suffolk County Legislature simply must vote affirmatively. The people have a right to speak out and a right to be heard. This petition drive was successful because every individual counts.

No political party officially lent a hand. It was solely the people's effort, which proves the people can do it if they want it.

The success of this petition drive proves that the politicians were wrong to simply go along to get along.

Now they have an opportunity to become part of democracy.

And why not?

When Teachers Fail, How Can Kids Win?

The *Wall Street Journal*, recently had an editorial highlighting the huge failure rate of teacher wannabes.

In a test given in Massachusetts at a 10th grade competency level in English and math, 44% of those scheduled to graduate that year and eligible to become teachers failed the test. When the test was notched up to a 12th grade level, 59% reportedly flunked.

Massachusetts has always been known as the bastion of education. Whether you are a parent, a grandparent or an employer, you should not only be disgusted, but very concerned. If prospective teachers can't pass a 10th grade equivalency exam, how can our kids be expected to do so, or have any hope of learning what they need to learn?

The really scary part is, if these incompetents find their way into the system and keep their nose clean for three years, they are tenured and the children are stuck with them for life.

The educational establishment is already complaining that if these incompetents are not allowed into the system, there will be a teacher shortage.

A few years back, there was a surplus of 78,000 certified teachers on Long Island looking for jobs that did not exist. Teachers' colleges have been banging out students at a high rate. More than the system can absorb. We are sadly finding out that many of the graduates from teachers' colleges have not been adequately educated and, as a result, our children are suffering.

The new standards being set by the Board of Regents is the proper way to attack the problem. It's nothing person-

al. It's aimed only at those who are willing to settle for mediocrity and failure.

Those of us who care for our children and the world they are going to live in know that to be prepared, they must be equipped with a strong foundation in basic education. They must know how to read and write. They must understand logic, science and history.

Part of the problem—which the educational establishment chooses to ignore—may be that many who are graduating from teachers' colleges today are failing because of how they were taught. Most of them are victims of the whole language method of reading.

Phonics was ignored or, at best, used to augment the whole language method. Phonics teaches a child the letters, the sounds and the relationship of those letters to form words. Once you can put words together, sentences come easily.

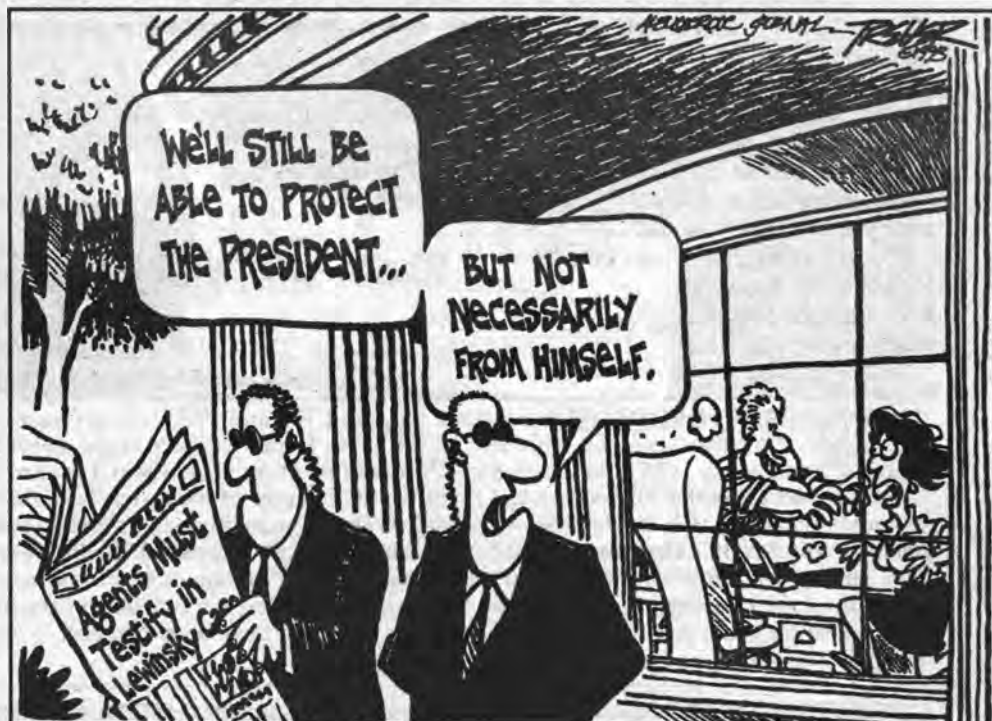
The whole language method depends on the child's imagination and creativity and it does not start with the premise of discipline and organization.

It may be more fun to attempt to learn to read with the whole language method, but if the objective is lost, what price do we pay for having fun?

We have a serious problem on our hands when 59% of the future teachers of America fail to pass a 12th grade competency test after having been educated for four years in a teachers' college.

This is an epidemic and it demands the involvement of every elected official from school boards to the United States Congress.

And why not?



He Just Doesn't Get It

Michael Caracciolo, legislator from the First Legislative District, just doesn't seem to get it.

Caracciolo appropriately voted to give residents the right to vote on the LILCO-LIPA issue. Then he flip-flopped and voted "no." No reason was given.

Caracciolo now has authored a memorializing resolution directed at the governor and the state legislature, asking them to change the law to allow the Suffolk and Nassau county legislatures to appoint the majority on the LIPA board. The governor, the speaker and the majority leader would each appoint one member under Caracciolo's plan.

Hey, Mike! Get your head out of the sand. The people want the right to vote on the board members. They don't want politicians appointing them. That was the whole basis for creating LIPA.

The board members were to be elected by the ratepayers. We did not want political hacks running the utility.

Governor Cuomo demanded, as a prerequisite for signing the LIPA legislation, that he be allowed to appoint a board, including the chairman, for a three-year period.

At Governor Pataki's request, the New York State Legislature took away the public's right to elect the board and made it a board appointed by the governor.

Caracciolo's plan is a farce and would do nothing more than allow local politicians to appoint their hacks instead of the governor appointing his.

Caracciolo's resolution should not even draw a second, and if it does, it should go down to a blazing defeat.

The people want to elect the LIPA board and they also want to elect the Public Service Commissioners. Nothing short of a free, democratically-elected board will suffice.

And why not?

We Need To Know

On July 11, at about 8:15 p.m., Johana Zapata, a little girl, just 20 months old, wandered out of her home at 109 Oak Street in Amityville. She toddled to the street and was struck by what was believed to be a GM-type vehicle, driving eastbound on Oak Street in the westbound lane.

Johana was killed by this vehicle and the driver fled the scene of the accident.

The vehicle is believed to be either blue or gray. The family has been devastated. The police are searching for any clues that may lead to the apprehension of the driver. If the driver comes forward now, it may mitigate the severity of the charges against him or her.

There is a possibility the driver did not realize he or she hit anyone; it is possible the driver might have thought it was a bump in the road or perhaps an

animal.

If you were in the vicinity of Oak Street and Bayview Avenue in Amityville on the evening of July 11 and you observed anything or believe that you may have been involved, please contact Lieutenant James R. Maher, Suffolk County First Squad Detective, at 854-8152.

If you have any information that may lead to the capture of this person, there is a \$2,000 reward.

More importantly, this matter must be brought to closure for the parents' sake. It is a tragic accident that should not have happened and only if all the answers are known can the parents rest.

Please, if you were involved, turn yourself in. If you have any information, please help.

And why not?

WILLMOTTS & WHY NOTS

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You Are Invited: Democratic Gubernatorial Debate

Suffolk Life is pleased to announce that it is working in a collaborative effort with Suffolk County Community College and Cablevision to bring Long Islanders a live debate between the Democratic gubernatorial hopefuls.

We are a nonpartisan newspaper. We strongly believe that for the public to make intelligent decisions, it has to be exposed to the candidates, their positions, personalities and viewpoints.

Although this is a debate just between Democratic hopefuls, one of these candidates will be victorious on Primary Day, and will wage a campaign against Governor George Pataki in the General Election.

The public is invited to this debate,

which will be held on August 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium on the western campus of Suffolk County Community College, located just off the Long Island Expressway in Brentwood.

The candidates will be given an opportunity to address the audience in general and will also be specifically questioned by a panel made up of members of the Suffolk County news media.

Suffolk Life then intends to sponsor a debate between Governor Pataki and the successful Democratic candidate, if possible, at a date to be established before the General Election.

Long Island issues are often neglected because the office holders are not from the

island and are not familiar with our particular needs or position on various issues.

The debate format will ensure that the candidates will not only gain knowledge about our concerns, but will be given an

opportunity to express their own views.

You are cordially invited, urged to participate, and witness democracy in action for yourself.

And why not?

Forgive The Certiorari

The latest maneuver by LIPA was to meet with members of the Suffolk County Legislature to hammer out an acceptable amount to tax Long Island ratepayers instead of forcing them to pay the entire \$1.2 billion certiorari award issued two years ago by Judge Thomas Stark.

LILCO has argued that Brookhaven Town overassessed its Shoreham nuclear plant site over the course of several years and that the money must be repaid. Judge Stark has ruled that they were right.

Let's agree for the moment that because the courts have ordered the payment of this \$1.2 billion, the taking of this money in the first place was wrong and unfair. Brookhaven Town should not have overassessed the Shoreham property.

At that time, in order to pay for the overassessment, LILCO collected increased electric rates from every resident and business on Long Island.

In an effort to make it sweeter for LIPA to buy out LILCO's transmission and distribution system and accounts receivables, LILCO agreed to reduce the \$1.2 billion certiorari award to \$625 million.

But this money is not owed to LILCO or MarketSpan, nor is it owed to Bill Catacosinos, Bob Catell, or even to Pataki and his rubber stamps. It is owed to the ratepayers of Long Island, primarily those living in Suffolk County.

According to state law, LIPA cannot col-

lect any tax, and therefore it cannot collect the certiorari money. In spite of this, its chairman, Richie Kessel, has been busy attempting to convince the Suffolk legislature to drop its lawsuits and in return LIPA will reduce the certiorari award to about \$300 million which it will, allegedly, turn over to LILCO, now renamed MarketSpan.

The question then becomes: Why would LIPA or the governor and his cohorts want to take that very same money away from the public a second time? Why would LIPA insist on giving any money to LILCO-MarketSpan if it legally does not have to, especially if it cannot legally collect it?

If the money was taken directly from the ratepayers in the first place, any refund must be returned directly to them. And, it certainly does not make sense to take money from the ratepayers' left pocket only to put it back into their right pocket.

LILCO's shareholders were provided for when LIPA purchased the transmission and distribution system and accounts receivables, LILCO's executives were handsomely provided for when they were paid \$67 million, and our government officials were provided for when they blindly agreed to this deal in the first place.

It is now time to provide for the ratepayers, and that responsibility sits squarely on the shoulders of LIPA trustees. Forgive the certiorari!

And why not?



Revisit The Entire Deal

In the last state election, the public supported the current governor and other representatives because they promised they would look after our best interest. These representatives promised to make their decisions based on all the possible information and knowledge available.

That has not happened.

A clear case in point is the Catacosinos fiasco. The governor brokered a deal where LIPA purchased the transmission and distribution and accounts receivables from LILCO for \$7.8 billion.

A few days before the deal was signed, Catacosinos walked away with a \$42 million golden parachute retirement plan and his 26 senior executives split another \$25 million.

When the public found out about this fiasco, it was incensed. The politicians immediately moved in their spin doctors, calling the payout illegal and demanding that Catacosinos resign from his new post with MarketSpan.

Those of us who have been paying attention were not impressed with this predictably shallow response from our representatives.

Catacosinos has since stepped down, but not before having to testify before the state Assembly Committee on Energy. The former LILCO executive testified that LIPA, the governor and all the elected officials knew he would receive the \$42 million because it was documented in the LILCO-LIPA agreement.

According to Catacosinos, our elected officials chose to ignore the point since they never said anything. We are left with the feeling that our representatives are lying when they claim they knew nothing about the \$42 million.

Did our representatives refuse to take the time to personally read every page, every line, every word in the LILCO-LIPA deal? There is no other way to read a contract.

None of this would have happened if the governor, the attorney general, or the state senate and assembly members had taken the time to read the documents of this deal.

It was not deception that fleeced our elected officials, it was not high priced Madison Avenue attorneys or Wall Street investment houses, it was pure and simple laziness, an incompetence that will cost the ratepayers of Long Island more than \$30 billion over the next 35 years.

The politicians called for the resignation of Catacosinos. In November the public has every right to call for the resignation of our elected officials unless there are some drastic changes.

If a contract is violated by one party, this cancels any agreement between the participating parties. If Catacosinos' \$42 million payout is a violation of the deal, as the politicians have claimed, now would be the perfect time to revisit the entire deal.

And why not?

We Need Campaign Reform

Congress is currently debating campaign reform for the federal level. This is a long overdue measure that is supported, with some trepidation, by a few Democrats and Republicans.

There are those who like the system as it now exists—in a quasi-regulated environment—while others detest it. Particularly the challengers, as they never have an equal footing and are rarely able to mount an adequate challenge.

Under our quasi-regulated system, candidates are limited in how much money they can accept from any one individual or corporation. Shrewd politicians, however, get around these limitations by directing contributions to special housekeeping accounts or to state and national parties or affiliations, which then use the money on behalf of the candidates.

Congressman Peter King has offered legislation that would repeal the section that limits individual contributions, but would ban political action committees and soft money.

We believe we have a better idea. We believe campaigns should be limited to no more than six weeks. Fund raising should be limited to eight weeks prior to the election and there should be mandatory, weekly publishing of all contributions.

Candidates would be limited to spending a certain amount of money for each enrolled voter. If these measures were adopted, the need for year-round fund raising and campaigns that start the day after the elections.

We have heard many public officials agonize over the amount of time they must spend away from government in search of money to run their campaigns.

Voters are often so turned off by the incessant television ads that they tune out altogether. The voters want facts and information and this is what the candidates can give the public during a six-week campaign.

Our campaign financing system, as it is currently structured, is a disguised "government for sale auction" because labor unions, big corporations and foreign interests all have a financial stake in the candidates.

How can the candidates be responsible for good government or to the electorate? Reform is badly needed.

We should look outside the inner circle to find the answer. We should not settle for reform that creates more problems than it solves.

It is time for new thinking.

And why not?

WILLMOTTS & WHY NOTS

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Those Who Would Micro-Manage SCCC

Suffolk County Community College is operated by a board of trustees. The trustees are volunteers who are at the top of their professions and are charged with operating the school prudently and efficiently, but more important, they have been asked to do it free of politics.

These trustees, who serve four-year terms, are nominated by the county executive and after a thorough evaluation appointed by the Suffolk County Legislature. This procedure was chosen to keep the school out of politics and free of political influence.

For years, the community college was a peeping giant. It quietly fulfilled its role of educating young students and those in

the workplace who wanted to improve their skills, but it suffered from a reputation of being stodgy.

A few years back, the school attempted to restructure itself and operate as a business, to sell itself to the community by meeting the area's demands rather than what the establishment wanted to offer.

The school has received a very positive response from the community as a result of this broad-minded mission. Students today are receiving a first-class education at a fraction of what other schools cost. Moreover, they find it easier to obtain jobs in their chosen field and are well prepared to go on to four-year schools.

Last Tuesday night, at the Suffolk

County Legislative meeting, we witnessed a display of pure, political arrogance and disrespect for this institution. The legislature refused to vote on the reappointment of 16-year-member Sally Ann Slacke as chair of the board of trustees.

Slacke is a proven businesswoman, the head of a major Long Island corporation. She has been held up as a role model for women succeeding not only in business, but in a male-dominated arena.

Slacke has consistently volunteered her time to serve her community. One of her most significant contributions has been as chairperson of the SCCC board. It is with her guidance that the college has become an outstanding institution.

There was no logical reason to deny her renomination, but the decision has all the earmarks of a political one. Slacke has been hard-nosed in negotiations with the unions that represent the school's employees. They are currently working without a contract.

In a very apparent conflict of interest, Legislator Brian Foley led the attack on the college. We do not believe this mean spirited attack was motivated by what is good for the students.

Foley's brother is a teacher at the

school and a member of the union. His father, who formerly held Foley's legislative seat, is a trustee of the college and, some say, aspires to be the new chairman.

As a legislator, Papa Foley earned the reputation of being a cheerleader for union causes.

The legislature should not be attempting to micro-manage the college. This is the job of the independent trustees. The legislature can give direction, but should not demand that the college specifically follow its management directives.

Because this particular meeting focused on the budget, legislative directives were issued to the college that are beyond the legislature's purview.

When the college was established and independent trustees appointed, the purpose was specifically to keep the school out of the political realm. Now, because of some in the legislature with self-serving motives, the college finds itself under a full-fledged attack by politicians.

This is wrong. It should not be allowed. It can only have a deleterious effect on the school and its students.

And why not?

So Long, Mike!

Suffolk County Legislator Michael Caracciolo effectively sealed his political fate last week in a display of pure cowardice and contempt for the public's will.

The issue was the now-infamous LILCO-LIPA \$7.8 billion partial takeover debacle. The public has expressed a strong desire to have a say on this vital issue which will place a monumental mortgage on the future of today's ratepayers, and their children as well.

Caracciolo has been all over the lot on this issue. When the deal was announced, as chairman of the legislature's energy committee, he presided over public hearings to disseminate information about the agreement.

He ran his hearings with an iron fist, and, in the opinion of many, with unnecessary arrogance and impatience. He voiced strong opposition to the LILCO-LIPA deal during and at the conclusion of those hearings. Then he came face to face with political pressure and caved in to the wishes of the political bosses.

He voted in favor of a 1997 resolution to place a referendum on the ballot which would give the people a voice in the deal, but turned tail and opposed a similar resolution earlier this year.

Last week he sat at the podium and watched as two large volumes were formally presented to the legislature containing 25,000 signatures from Suffolk residents demanding that a referendum be placed on the ballot. That presentation came during a public hearing on a resolution by Legislator George Guldi (D-Hampton Bays) which also proposed placing a LILCO-LIPA referendum on the ballot.

The Guldi resolution had been discharged from committee with the required votes, but it was then discovered that a public hearing had not been held on it. That hearing was held at last week's meeting. However, because of this snafu, the resolution now required that 12 votes be cast to discharge the resolution for a vote by the full legislature.

During the vote to discharge, five legislators (Fred Towle, Paul Tonna, Alan Binder, Steve Hackeling, and Mike D'Andre) ducked the issue by abstaining. Martin Haley voted "no." Ten voted in favor of the discharge and two were absent.

One of those absent, Joe Rizzo, stayed away on doctor's orders, but wrote a letter of strong support for the referendum, urging his fellow legislators to approve the resolution.

The other missing legislator—guessed it, Caracciolo—was not really absent. He was hiding. He was spotted in the offices of County Executive Robert Gaffney while the vote was being taken.

When the vote was completed, Caracciolo came into the room and sat down at the podium. He disgraced himself and hid from the responsibilities of the office he holds with this cowardly action. He hid from the 25,000 petitioners who demanded that the LILCO-LIPA deal referendum be placed on the ballot. He is a political coward and does not deserve to be a member of the Suffolk County Legislature or hold any other public office.

An all-out effort is being planned to remove him from his position. The other six legislators who abstained or voted no—votes that denied a decision by the full legislature on the referendum issue—will have to answer to their constituents for their disregard of the will of the people.

Voters from the respective legislative districts will, without a doubt, exercise their constitutional right to remove these lawmakers from office. We are equally confident that voters will stand by to support the all-important issue of the referendum in any way they can.

The Suffolk County Legislature has often been referred to as a funny farm because of the crazy antics of its occupants, especially during meetings. Because of the shenanigans of these legislators, which deny the people a voice on this crucial financial matter, the legislature is no longer just a funny farm—it now falls into the category of Hall of Shame.

These so-called public officials represent only themselves, not the people. They are not worthy of being our representatives and are motivated solely by personal greed and the directives of their political bosses. Those responsible for abdicating their responsibilities must be removed from office at the earliest opportunity.

And why not?



Hey Buddy! Want A Loan?

You are going to take out a loan for \$101 whether you like it or not. The check will be in the mail, just before November's election.

You will pay 110% interest on the money you borrowed. In reality, you will pay back \$629 when interest and penalties are compounded.

Oh, and sorry, but you can't opt out of this convoluted proposition; you can't say "No." That's because you don't have a vote in this matter.

Governor George Pataki and Richie Kessel, when selling the LILCO-LIPA bailout deal, promised the ratepayers they would receive rebates.

They had planned on using money owed to you from the federal racketeering suit LILCO was involved in.

Judge Weinstein, the federal judge who oversaw the suit and the dispensing of the fines, said LIPA could not use the balance of these funds for this purpose.

Last week, Kessel announced that in order to keep the governor's campaign promise, he would borrow the money through the LIPA bonds that were issued.

Ratepayers will now pay through transmission and distribution charges for this alleged "rebate," spelled "ripoff."

Suffolk ratepayers will not only pay for their own "rebate," they will also pay for the higher amount Nassau County residents will receive.

If all the money LILCO collected in the name of the ratepayer through certiorari suits and federal tax payments had been calculated properly, the ratepayers would be owed about \$2,000 per person.

To us, it makes absolutely no sense to issue a check to Suffolk residents for \$101 when they are owed close to \$2,000—and then tell them it will cost them \$629 to pay it back.

Not much about the LILCO bailout ever made sense to us, but then again, we never had an opportunity to vote on the issue, even after submitting 25,000 signed petitions, gathered by volunteers, to the Suffolk County Legislature.

The voters must act now, or the abuse of ratepayers and the public in this county will never end.

And why not?

WILLMOTTS & WHY NOTS

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It's Not About Sex

The frenzy that President Bill Clinton has created has less to do with his sex life than with the image of this man as the leader of our country.

Clinton's actions can no longer be swept under the rug and dismissed out of hand because of the gravity of the situation. Clinton told a boldfaced lie to the American people.

For a long time, many of us had suspected that his words were not credible, but when he looked right at the American people and said, "I did not have sex with that woman," and then recently had to recant his statement, he lost all credibility.

How can he be trusted with any other pronouncements? Not only can the American people no longer trust him, neither can the leaders of other countries.

One of the most disappointing characteristics of the Clinton administration has been a willingness to lie outright to the public, both directly and indirectly, by putting a particular spin on a given situation.

There have been a number of allegations made over the course of Clinton's presidency that have left us with grave concerns. We chalked up some of these to the work of fanatics. The alleged drug running in Arkansas; the covert flights in and out of Mena Airport; the 38 deaths of associates of the Clintons and the findings that are suspicious

in themselves.

And how about Vincent Foster's alleged suicide? That has always left us uncomfortable and smacks of a coverup. The disappearance of Foster's notes. The length of time between when they were lost and then found. The apparent evidence indicating that Foster had not died where he had been found. The forensic evidence that could be interpreted to indicate that he had not killed himself.

Then there was Hillary's \$100,000 overnight profit in a commodity trade that smacked of insider trading which was soon forgotten.

There have been so many instances of apparent wrongdoing that it has left all of us, both foe and supporter, questioning the integrity of this president.

Can Clinton continue as an effective president? We doubt that he can, as we know his word is not his bond. If you cannot trust someone you are doing business with, you cannot do business. We would hate to see this country go through an impeachment process; and we do not look forward to Al Gore being president.

The American people have a dilemma on their hands and none of it is pleasant. It is unfortunate that Clinton had such low regard for the American people and that he has put himself in this disgraceful position.

And why not?

Our 38th Anniversary

On a hot, sticky day in the early sixties, August 17 to be exact, *Suffolk Life* was born.

Over the next 38 years, it grew to be one of the largest weekly community newspapers in America.

Today, we are found in nearly 520,000 mailboxes—virtually every deliverable postal address in Suffolk County, and an independent audit shows that *Suffolk Life* is read every Wednesday by 89.5% of the people who receive it.

As much as I would like to take credit for this huge accomplishment, I cannot. The credit belongs to my dedicated staff, which goes far beyond the call of duty every week to bring the people of Suffolk a well produced, well organized, readable newspaper.

A special thanks must also be extended to the army of postal carriers who deliver *Suffolk Life* right into your home through the United States Postal Service.

In addition, I would like to particularly acknowledge our advertisers. It is through their support that the bills get paid and we have the financial resources to publish this newspaper. Every page of advertising creates a one-third page of news space, which our reporters endeavor to fill with important stories pertaining to your neighbors, your community and your town. The more advertising we receive, the more news we can

publish.

Suffolk Life is an ever growing and changing product. We are constantly striving to publish a better newspaper. We have incorporated the latest in technology, and always endeavor to be on the cutting edge of production techniques.

Twice a year, we ask our readers to show their support for this newspaper by voluntarily paying for their annual subscription. We run a drive in January and another in conjunction with our anniversary. We do not send out individual bills; instead, we depend on our readers to renew their subscription once a year, sending in whatever amount they feel they can afford.

We know that *Suffolk Life*, in many cases, is the only paper delivered to our readers. They depend on it to keep them abreast of community happenings and what government is doing for them or to them. If you did not subscribe as requested in January, we ask that you do so this week. Our usual request is \$15.

It has been a pleasure to have served you for the last 38 years. We look forward to continuing to be the eyes and ears of Suffolk County and to grow and produce a better newspaper every week throughout our 39th year.

We thank you, our readership, for your support.

And why not?



Ignoring The People

More than 25,000 Suffolk County residents signed a petition requesting the right to vote on the LILCO-LIPA issue. They petitioned their government and their government flatly said "No!"

This is dangerous, because it places politicians above the people who voted for them. Last week, a similar situation played itself out in Brookhaven Town. Citizens submitted 12,000 signatures on petitions requiring a vote on the issue of councilmatic districts. There were 5,000 more signatures than required by law.

Stan Allan, Brookhaven Town Clerk, ruled the petitions invalid on technical grounds. Whenever you have a citizens' petition drive, there are bound to be technicalities. You have amateurs doing the work of the professional political leaders.

We would like to know how 5,000 petitions can be invalid in Brookhaven. The organizers of the petition drive are challenging Allan's ruling in court.

The case is now before Judge Robert Doyle, who we believe is a fair and impartial judge. What the petitioners are asking for is their inalienable right to be able to vote and take part in their gov-

ernment.

Win, lose or draw, let the people have a voice. There are strong arguments on both sides of the councilmatic issue. Let these issues be aired. Let the public be educated on the issues, and then let it decide. This is what democracy is all about.

Sitting politicians should never get in the way of the voters' right to determine what type of government they want. It may be good politics, but it is bad government.

We hope Judge Doyle will find enough valid signatures to call for a referendum. If he does not, the Brookhaven Town Board would be well advised to heed the voice of the people and take the initiative on its own instead of ignoring the public the way the most of our Suffolk legislators have on the LILCO-LIPA issue.

Enough people in Brookhaven and in Suffolk County have spoken out, loud and clear, on both these issues. There is sufficient interest in the referendum. The campaign and the vote should go forward.

And why not?

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