

Over-Whelming Response

A few weeks ago we published an editorial outlining the attempts of a group of anonymous people who gathered together each year to provide Christmas for families, who because of circumstances, could not provide Christmas for their children.

This group, in its fifth year of existence, seeks out people from the working community who have sustained tragic or financial devastation, accident, illness or other circumstance which precludes them from having Santa Claus visit their home this year.

"The Group" secures information about these families from readers of this paper, friends and relatives. Once they have the pertinent information at hand, which includes clothing needs and sizes and other necessities, and a few toys the children want, they go shopping, purchasing the items needed, wrap the gifts and tag them with the child's name, identifying the group as only Santa Claus.

The items are delivered just before Christmas. The recipient never knows who the benefactors are. They never have to say thank you to an organized charity. It's just a hand reaching out to help families in their hour of need.

When the last editorial was published, we not only received an overwhelming response from the public, but several merchants offered our shoppers the opportunity to purchase the gifts needed at the stores at very substantial discounts, often at cost and below.

Many of our readers were moved by our efforts and sent in contribu-

tions ranging from a couple of dollars to several hundred dollars. Every penny will be used to make Christmas for those who cannot give their family a Christmas.

As everything is done anonymously, there is no publishing of a list of participants or contributors. Unbelievable as it may seem, participants do not even receive a tax deduction, as the group is not an organized charity. Everything is done from the heart because people are thankful for the blessing God has bestowed upon them and want to share with those less fortunate.

We recently learned of additional families who need help. We are sure there are many more out there we will hear about as Christmas approaches. If you know of someone in such need, you may contact us by writing to "The Group" c/o Suffolk Life Newspapers, P.O. Box 167, Riverhead, New York 11901. You may use the same address to contribute if you care to, or if you are a merchant and would like to take part in the program.

Those of us who have been involved in this effort, although it is costly and time consuming, are more strongly committed each year, for we know first hand the tragedy that can befall normal, hard working people and the joy and the uplifting these people receive in knowing that someone out there cared. Someone they do not know, will not see again, who blindly practiced the true meaning of Christmas and love for their fellow man.

And why not?

Suffolk County Executive Peter F. Cohalan, in his last dastardly deed in that position before he dons the robes of a judge, presented the legislature a budget that was not only way out of wack and will cause county real estate taxes to soar, but was so laden with fat that if prudently rendered down would have made an ocean of oil.

The legislators, after failing to approve a series of budget reductions that could have solved the problem, rejected Cohalan's proposal and sent it back with an admonition to cut it. Cohalan did, but in such a manner that it impacted on people and their lives, rather than the areas that cried out for cuts and reductions. Cohalan knew full well that if he got the county unions up in arms and sliced deeply into the favorite areas of other groups, the legislators would come under intense pressure and would succumb to political threats. So, Cohalan vetoed the legislative resolution that called upon him to reduce the budget by \$33 million. And Cohalan was right. Nine legislators did, indeed, fold, and refused to vote for an override of the veto. Thus Cohalan's fat laden budget lives.

The pressure came at a legislature meeting last week from 1,000 county employees who turned out by the unions to coerce the politicians. One by one the nine who caved in tried to cop a plea, explaining their vote was out of concern for the employees who might be laid off if Cohalan carried through on his threat. They did not say anything about concern for the taxpayer, and their votes showed they had none. Next year's tax rate for the general county fund will soar 68 per cent.

The county unions which represent about 10,000 people, less than 1 percent of the residents of Suffolk County, once more have shown that they control Suffolk County. It's sickening

when 1 percent of the population is able to bully nine spineless legislators into doing their bidding. It's sickening to hear these spineless legislators cheer when they could have--and should have--pared Cohalan's budgets in areas where rampant waste exists, but didn't do so. Instead, they took the easy way out, sent the budget back to Cohalan, and got suckered in by his political scheming.

The nine legislators who stood firm in the face of the threats and taunts of the county employees and special interest groups are to be applauded. It wasn't politically easy for them to do. But they knew full well that cuts could be made without hurting the average county employee. With a \$25 million rainy day fund put into the budget by the legislators, and with \$15 million included for vacant positions, and another \$1 million for new county cars, and other funds for the political welfare system for the rejected politicians who wind up on the county payroll, they knew cuts could have been made without hurting the lives of employees or others.

Cohalan came into office by promising the voters he would be a responsible, tough manager of government, that he would cut out waste, duplication and political abuses. He has done just the opposite. The man leaves behind a legacy that no one could be proud of. Instead of working with the legislature as a partner, encouraging individual legislators to be strong and responsive to the peoples' needs, one of his last acts as county executive was to turn them into cowards.

Thank God he no longer will be able to hurt the people as he has as county executive. But God help those who have to appear before him as a judge.

And why not?

Mario's Train Set

As the legend goes, Governor Mario Cuomo started out life as a poor boy. The story has it he was the son of hard working parents and was raised over a grocery store.

We believe Mario Cuomo must have been one of those boys who longed for a set of trains from Santa Claus, but they never came. We came to this assumption because of Mario Cuomo's proposal of a measure that would increase by a nickel the cost of a gallon of gasoline, with this added tax paid for by motorists so that train and subway fares do not have to rise.

Santa Claus must have brought Mario a car or a truck which he did not find much joy with because of his longing for trains. After all, there is no common sense or explanation of why the people who own cars, which are a necessity, because they must use them to make a living, should pay additional taxes to subsidize those who ride the trains and subways.

Mario Cuomo is known as a smart thinker, a man who demands fair-

ness for all. He likes to look at the residents of New York State as a big family. Being smart, sharp and fair, and the big daddy for us all, we cannot see why he wants to penalize one side of his family to help the other.

Maybe if Santa Claus had brought Mario his electric trains, he might be fascinated with building roads for our cars and trucks to drive on instead of subsidizing the yuppies in New York City and their desire to be always upwardly mobile.

Come on, Mario, stop looking at the suburban residents as Santa Claus. We're not. We are just plain hard working individuals who are paying the highest taxes in the nation and receiving less and less in services from our government. Your overwhelming re-election gives you the right to reward yourself with a big set of electric trains; it doesn't give you a mandate to hurt the people who supported you.

And why not?

SUFFOLK LIFE

NEWSPAPERS and Suffolk County Life

Vol. 25 No. 68

Offices and Plant Located at 1461 Old Country Rd. (Rte. 58) Riverhead 369-0800 Classified Ads 369-0820
Mail Address P.O. Box 167 Riverhead, N.Y. 11901-0102

Suffolk Life is published in 22 market zone editions every Wednesday

Three Villages/Port Jefferson
Brentwood/Central Islip
Ronkonkoma/Hot Brook
Hempstead/Hempstead
Bay Shore/West Islip
Smithtown/St. James



Total circulation audited and verified in excess of 333,000 Circulation Weekly

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Government Out of Control

Those of us who are involved in the newspaper business become very aware of situations developing in government that often escape the average person. Because of what we have learned over a period of time, we have had a growing fear that we are living in a society in which the government is out of control. Our democracy is no longer a democracy, or even a Republic. It has become a government that is operating beyond the control of the elected officials for the benefit of those who are in government only through appointment, or for expediency.

Our elected officials seem only to have a vague awareness of the actions of their people or the ramifications of their deeds. This feeling has been brought home to us on a number of occasions during the past few months.

On the local scene, we have observed two east end town governments agreeing to support the efforts of an environmental group to create a bay management plan which would give the environmental group oversight on zoning matters and other controls over waterfront happenings. We have seen state efforts in the past to do the same, to gain authority over our local waterways. This proposal would give the Bay Management Task Force the power to recommend policies and legislation to be implemented in order to protect the bays, according to a draft of the plan. Too often the powers to "recommend" become a license to implement new rules and regulations by people who do not have to face the judgement of the voters. Such powers are now delegated to elected town trustees under the Dongan Patent, the 300th anniversary of which is now being celebrated. Why would we transfer the responsibilities from an elected board to a self appointed group whose aims may not be those of the general populace?

On the county level we have watch-

ed over the four past years while the legislature attempted to establish new bureaucracies with power to affect the lives of people, but without accountability to the body that created it. The Pine Barrens Commission, and now the Oaks Barrens Commission, under discussion, recommends policies based on its own particular desires rather than public desire. This commission bases its actions on the 208 Water Study, based on boundaries drawn on a motel room floor, with political considerations the key criteria rather than scientific or hydrological data.

On the state level, we are acutely aware of the powers of the D.E.C. to develop rules and regulations, without responsibility for their execution.

The D.E.C., through lobbying legislators, achieves a mandate to close landfills, and then arbitrarily puts obstacles in the path of the one town in the county that has been moving to meet this ban while at the same time resolving its garbage problem. The D.E.C. smothers everyone in a maze of red tape on matters pertaining to wetlands and dredging and such, then does nothing punitive when one of its own officials gives an unheard of verbal approval to a developer to dredge a river and cover wetlands with the spoils. They excuse this action with the excuse an "emergency" existed because the river was too shallow for canoes to pass. Are the rules made to apply to everyone but the D.E.C.? Shouldn't they follow the same guidelines that they impose? In Riverhead they impose a moratorium on development along the Peconic River to protect its pristine nature, but do nothing when a State Department of Transportation contractor uses a riverfront site as a dump site for asphalt and roadwork debris. Nor have they ever taken a stand against the pollution of the Peconic River by the Brookhaven National Laboratory. Where is their concern for the protection of the

pristine river in these actions?

The D.E.C. is a prime example of government out of control, with a governmental agency run by bureaucratic appointees running roughshod over everyone while the people we elect to responsible positions claim they are powerless to solve the problem. The one person who has the power to correct the matter, the Governor who appoints the head of the D.E.C., seems totally unconcerned about these actions. Why?

That very same governor had the power to stop the State's Public Service Commission--another agency out of control--from giving huge chunks of ratepayer money to the utilities (LILCO is a prime example) through one rate increase after another. The Governor ignored pleas to get rid of the chairman of this commission until just recently. Had he acted sooner, the ratepayers could have been spared tremendous financial impact.

On the national level we have the example of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, a governmental agency which is running amok, changing its own regulation to suit its own desires, ignoring the welfare and safety of the public, acting more on behalf of the industry it is responsible for regulating than the public it was created to protect. The NRC's actions in regards to the Shoreham nuclear power plant are shameful, if not criminal. And yet the area congressmen and senators we send to Washington claim they are powerless to act to curb such actions. Lobbyists, including those who are former key aides to the President, apparently have more power to sway decisions than do our elected officials. Democracy was not intended

to be this way.

And now we have the example of the Iranian situation. How operatives in the Reagan administration, given unlimited power, violated arms treaties and a public pledge by our President not to aid Iran. It now seems clear that deals were made by those in the administration for the release of prisoners in exchange for the sale of arms which had been banned by our elected government. Profits from the sale of these arms were allegedly used to aid the Contras while a raging debate was going on about the United States continuing aid to this group. We are being led to believe that appointed members of bureaucracy have been making decisions for the elected government without their knowledge or consent. What's really scary is the fact that elected officials are using this line as a means to get themselves off the hook, without an expression of concern that we have a government that permits appointees to act far beyond their limit of authority.

Almost everywhere you look you see government, but you do not see democracy. You see bureaucracies operating at will, but you do not see elected representatives doing anything to take back the reins of power. Too many are too content to enjoy the perks and prestige of office instead of the responsibilities.

We are in a very dangerous time in our society. We have a democracy that is no longer a democracy, a form of government that has run amok. It must be controlled or it will control us. It is time our elected officials recognize this problem and act to resolve it.

And why not?

Time to Play Hardball

Governor Mario Cuomo has called the state legislature into special session this week. Unlike most other special session calls, the agenda for this session is not specifically defined as yet. It is, however, one to be carefully watched.

Among the items that may be on the agenda are measures dealing with the return to the taxpayers of the windfall taxes the state expects to garner because of changes in the federal tax laws; a senior citizen prescription bill; proposals to subsidize the MTA, and the creation of 23 new judgeships.

Of particular concern to Long Island is the package of goodies proposed by the Governor's office to subsidize train and subway fares for the benefit of New York City at the expense of Long Island. In the past, when bills of this nature have come before the Legislature, the Long Island delegation has taken sides along party lines. They have not acted as a delegation dedicated to doing what is best for Long Island. They have played political games. The result has been that upstate Republicans have walked away with our share of road monies and now have inter-state highways from Buffalo to Albany, and phenomenal by-pass roadway systems surround

most cities. New York City legislators, mostly Democrats, brought home the bacon for their constituents with funds for improvements to the mass transportation system, stabilizing mass transit fares at our expense.

The key ingredient of the proposal by the Governor's office is that mass transit fares be maintained at the current levels for the next four years, while millions of dollars would be poured into capital construction. The funds to accomplish those goals would come from a tax on suburbia. That tax would take the form of a 5 cent per gallon increase in the gasoline tax, and substantial increases in tolls on bridges and tunnels going into the city.

The Governor's plan is nothing more than a rip-off of Long Island. Only 20 percent of the people on Long Island use mass transit, but 100 percent is being blackjacked into paying for this gift to the MTA and the people of New York City.

These benefit the city at the expense of suburbia schemes develop because State Republican and Democratic leaders from upstate and the city have seen time and again how leaderless and gutless, and as we have said many times before, how

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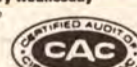
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Willmotts and Why-Nots

David J. Willmott, Editor

Play Hardball...

Cont. from page 3

useless our delegation of Long Island Senators and Assemblymen has been. Those leaders believe the L.I. delegation will vote as they are told.

The time-worn scenario of the past is, from reports we have heard, being orchestrated again. It goes like this: upstate and city legislators combine forces, putting enough votes together to push through the goodie bag for the MTA. That lets the L.I. delegation off the hook, permitting them to vote "no" for the record, knowing all the while that their vote doesn't mean a thing. Thus they fool the public, please the leaders because they put forth such a feeble effort, and the MTA and its users laugh all the way to the bank.

It need not be that way. If the Long Island delegation, from both parties, acted as a unified delegation and told their leaders that if Long Island is again unfairly taxed to benefit the MTA, they will continue to act as a solid bloc to kill other legislation the leaders sought. This is particularly true in the Senate where the political margin is very close. L.I. Senators should vote against any gasoline tax proposal, and against any other measure to benefit the MTA. Gasoline taxes collected on Long Island should be used for Long Island's road needs only!

If L.I. Senators tell Majority Leader Warren Anderson that unless he kills the gasoline tax measures and insures that Long Island re-

ceives its fair share of funds--without additional forms of taxation--to improve our inadequate highway system, he's going to be short of votes for any other legislation he wants, they would be utilizing the real clout that they have. If they fought for Long Island's needs rather than personal gains and prestige, they could make it happen.

The editorial board of this newspaper did not endorse long term Senator Kenneth LaValle because he has, in the past, failed to provide leadership. LaValle now has an opportunity to prove that he can be a man of leadership. Assemblyman Robert Wertz has often shown the desire to be a leader, and he too now has the opportunity to grab the reins and harness it to the Long Island delegation.

Long Island Legislators must realize they are Long Island legislators first, and members of a party second. Unified they are a force. Separate they are as powerless as wimps. They have the power. They just have to learn, and have the desire, to use it.

We will be carefully watching to see if our legislators will act as a unified force to benefit their constituents, or continue, as they have in the past, being party hacks. We would suggest the voters watch very carefully as well. And remember what our legislators do the next time their names appear on the ballot.

And why not?

Fish or Cut Bait

News from Albany indicates that the D.E.C. will relax their ban on recreational fishing for striped bass for the 1987 season.

We have editorialized on a number of occasions that we felt the outright ban on any taking of striped bass was arbitrary and a discriminating measure by the D.E.C. States surrounding Long Island waters have allowed recreational fishing for striped bass to continue.

Fresh water fish caught in lakes up-state have been known to contain chemical contaminants. The D.E.C. has allowed for the continuation of these fisheries but warned people of the possible contaminants and recommended that they not be eaten more than once a week. We editorially argued that the same treatment should be given to striped bass fishing on Long Island.

Striped bass fishing for sport purposes is the major charter fishing magnet in the fall on the East End. Over 500 charter sport fishing boats were crippled this past fall when the D.E.C. banned this sport fishery. Not only was the charter business hurt, but the East End tourist business, particularly in Montauk, was severely depressed because of the lack of fishermen during September through November.

The D.E.C., now acknowledging the importance of this fishery and its discriminatory rules, is expected to announce that it will allow limited sport fishing for the species during the 1987 season. Commercial fishermen who purse seine and trap striped bass are angry because the D.E.C. still refuses to relax its rules prohibiting commercial taking of the fish.

The D.E.C. claims that the fish may be contaminated with PCB's picked up in the spawning grounds of the Hudson. General Electric and other industrial facilities poured PCB's into the Hudson over a number of years. Although funds were allocated for clean-up, political bureaucracies have prevented this from being accomplished and, as a result, the PCB's are still seeping into the spawning grounds of the striped bass, causing the contamination of the fish.

In relation to the economic impact and the number of people involved and the number of fish taken, the commercial endeavor is minute compared to the recreational value of the fishery. Although few in number, the commercial interest has had powerful influence in Albany. Their main representative is John Behan, the assemblyman of the

Sixteenth District, which covers from East Hampton to Medford.

Behan's family grew up on the water and were commercial fishermen. He is sensitive to their needs and that is good, but not when he puts their needs before the good of all his constituents.

The commercial fishermen are saying, we can't catch striped bass, so the recreational fishermen should not be able to do so either. That's wrong. The commercial fishermen deliver the majority of the fish to the market. The recreational fishermen mainly are concerned with the sport interest, second their own table and

in a very limited way they are sell their excess catch to the market. Although we are not convinced of need for any ban at all, we are satisfied with the D.E.C. opening striped bass fishery for recreational purposes.

We hope that Assemblyman John Behan does not interfere with the re-opening of the sport fishing measure. This is too important trade-off or take a chance bargaining for the commercial taking of striped bass. For John Behan time has come to fish, not cut bait. And why not?

Letters to the Editor

"Contribute what you can"

Dear Sirs,

Another holiday season is upon us and I have some serious questions for everyone. The elderly couple in front of you on the supermarket line. Do they really have pets to feed all that canned pet food to?

Perhaps that is their Christmas dinner.

The family down the block from you, will their Christmas dinner be peanut butter sandwiches? Is your next door neighbor deciding between food or heating oil because he can

afford only one of the two?

Now for some answers. For the price of a carton of cigarettes you can buy enough canned goods to feed a family of four for two meals. Find the group in your area that is sponsoring a food drive and contribute what you can.

Sincerely,
Tom Graves
Shirley

"Please slow down"

Dear Editor:

This is a plea from the Friends of Roanoke Avenue School to those motorists traveling Roanoke Avenue and Northville Turnpike Monday through Friday to slow down. Some of our youngest children (ages 6 - 9) are walking to and from school each day because they are ineligible to take the bus. In the course of this walk to school they are asked to risk injury by crossing Roanoke Avenue during peak traffic

times without the aid of a crossing guard. The Roanoke Avenue/Northville Turnpike intersection is a nightmare for adults in automobiles--think about trying to cross these streets as a six year old with your mind on other more important things (school) than the traffic.

Please slow down for the safety of our children.

Sincerely,
Friends of Roanoke Avenue

"Get our facts straight"

Dear Mr. Grasso:

I read with a certain wide eyed fascination Mrs. Laura Ross' letter to you, where she portrayed Legislator Tony Bullock as an advocate of sadistic leg trap killings. You see, I live in Hampton Bays, have three dogs, one young daughter and just happen to be Mr. Bullock's secretary.

This position does enable me to have a definite opinion of Mr. Bullock's character and a certain enlightened insight into what goes on in his office.

First, let me remind you that the so called sadist is the same man who in June of 1986 sponsored and passed Resolution #1687 protecting animals locked in cars under the unmerciful heat of the sun.

I've heard of people changing their philosophy, but please, let's not be so frivolous

or uninformed as to believe that in less than five months an animal lover can turn into an ogre.

Your legislator and mine has worked very hard on behalf of our four legged friends. Remember, I know, I was there. He is a co-sponsor of Resolution #2100 banning leg-traps. Frankly, I find Mrs. Ross' allegations unfair and undocumented.

It's wonderful what the pen can do, and it's certainly rewarding to know that we live in a community where people care about their environment, but before accusing people of certain ideas, let us first get our facts straight, and then go out and fight the good fight. In so doing, a lot of ill will can be avoided and a great deal more issues can be settled.

Sincerely,
Marie Claude Baronnie

'Don't close Coast Guard Station'

Dear Mr. Willmott,

On November 18, 1986, I read the article written by Ann Becker Bennett in the South Shore Press regarding the closing of the Moriches Coast Guard station during the winter months starting next year. I must strongly oppose this dangerous move as a wife of a commercial fisherman. My husband uses the Moriches Inlet daily, both during the summer and winter months. He is one of at least four boats that continue their occupation as commercial fishermen throughout the year and must pass through the Inlet to begin their day's activity; they do not necessarily remain in that immediate area. Certainly they would move either east or west, with the migration of fish. If a boat was in trouble off of Moriches Inlet, how long would it take a Coast Guard Boat

from Shinnecock to respond? My husband's life and the lives of every commercial fisherman who fish the South Shore of Long Island would be placed in jeopardy if the Coast Guard station in Moriches closes down for the winter.

My husband has come to the aid of many a sport and commercial fisherman over the years who have been in trouble while fishing offshore. Who will be there to assist him if the need arises during the perilous winter months?

We are asking for your help and support to have the Coast Guard reconsider this hazardous decision to close down the Moriches station during the winter months.

Thank you for your concern and assistance.

Sincerely,
Patricia Boyce
Mastic

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1986
SUFFOLK LIFE NEWSPAPERS
PAGE 4 ABCDEF