

## We Believe In Santa Claus

Just a few weeks ago, we published an editorial explaining "The Group's" efforts to make sure that children have a Christmas.

The children that "The Group" helps are kids who normally would have had a Christmas. But, because of an accident, a major illness or upheaval in the family's finances or other causes beyond their control, their parents will not be able to have Santa Claus visit them this year.

This editorial resulted in some very overwhelming responses and, as a result, we will be able to take care of more families this year than we budgeted for. If you know of some families that meet the criteria, we would like to know about them. We will need to know a brief description of the circumstances, and be able to confidentially verify the situation. We will need your name and phone number so that we may make contact with you to get the details on what the imperative needs are, sizes and desires.

"The Group's" efforts are totally anonymous. In most cases, the people we visit never know our identity. Santa and his helpers just show up without fanfare.

Families in need of this one time helping hand have been suggested to us by friends, associates at work or, in a few cases, schools and churches. Time is running out. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have as soon as possible.

The concept behind our effort is the fact that we are appreciative of our good fortune, and choose to share

it with others who have not been so blessed. Once the needs of the recipients have been determined, Santa's helpers shop for the necessities and the toys that Santa will bring. Many merchants and businesses that know of our efforts have very generously in the past offered merchandise at substantial discounts and, in some cases at or below cost, doing their part to insure that kids will have a visit from Santa Claus.

All gifts are personally wrapped and tagged with the recipient's name. Outside of the statistical information needed to purchase clothes, the identity of the recipient is kept completely confidential. The recipients never know who their benefactors were, or why.

We have heard, over the years, that our efforts have not only meant a thrilling and meaningful Christmas for the kids, but have been that extra helping hand that has assisted the parents through some very trying times. Isn't that what Christmas is all about?

We believe in Santa Claus, and we are sure that hundreds of children we have served to this day, still do too. If you know of a family that has fallen through the cracks and is not being aided by an organized charity or social agency, please let us know.

If you would like to make a contribution to our effort, you may do so by writing, "The Group," c/o P.O. Box 167, Riverhead, New York 11901. Your participation will help The Group to help others.

And why not?

## Fire Commissioners

Residents of area fire districts will go to the polls next week to elect members of the board of fire commissioners. Actually, very few residents will bother to vote, and therein lies a serious problem.

Audits from the New York State Comptroller's office, in recent months, have detailed very questionable spending habits on the part of some fire commissioners. In one case, commissioners attending a

convention in New Orleans charged mileage from Long Island to the convention site as if they were driving their own cars, but actually flew, rented cars, and charged off those expenditures to district funds as well. There were instances in which commissioners took "side trips" following the convention, to Florida, and to other resort locations, and charged these off to the fire district taxpayers. And the state audit reports recorded numerous instances of ineligible persons, such as wives, travelling along at fire district expense. These are all violations of state law, and a number of such cases are currently under investigation by the district attorney.

The problem seems to be that nobody cares, and the fire commissioners know it. The public appears to have one concern: If there is a fire, they want the fire department to respond as swiftly as possible and extinguish the flames. Beyond that, don't bother me with details or facts.

That attitude, however, can breed the arrogance that results in questionable expenditures. It can foster the waste of taxpayers' dollars. There is no accountability, because

nobody seems to care.

Imagine if the same were to happen in town and village governments, at the county level, in school districts, and other governmental agencies? The waste of taxpayer dollars would soar, as would the tax rates.

Not all commissioners are guilty of such abuses, nor are the members of the rank and file within the departments the normal beneficiaries of questionable spending actions. But there has been enough smoke in recent times to give warning that a huge blaze of wasteful spending is lurking beneath the surface. To fight that blaze, the taxpayers are going to have to respond.

The best way to do that is to take an interest in what is happening in your own district. Learn who the candidates are, and what they stand for. Then cast your vote. Just the increase in voter interest alone will send a powerful message to those who sit on the boards of fire commissioners. "We're watching," it will say. "we're interested."

Cast your vote and deliver that message.

And why not?

## Why The Jail Breaks?

Riverhead, the County Seat, for further back than we can remember, has housed the county jail. Only on a few, rare occasions have there ever been jail breaks from this facility. Over the past two years, however, jail breaks have become too common an occurrence.

The people of Riverhead, unlike their neighbors to the West, knew that the jail had to go some place. Instead of saying "not in my backyard," they have played host to this facility. The jail has, in the past, caused relatively few problems, but with the recent occurrences of prisoner escapes, residents are beginning to ask questions, and they should.

Is the management of the jail lax? Do the Sheriffs and Correctional Officers refuse to take their job seriously? Is there a lack of leadership from the top on down that has caused conditions that allow prisoners to escape? Is it the fact that prisoners know they will not be shot if they attempt to escape? We found this one hard to believe, but on checking, it was confirmed.

Guards are not allowed to use deadly force unless met with deadly force. The carrying of a weapon is optional, not even a requirement of the job.

During the recent episode, Mark Daniels, the escaped prisoner, bolted over three different fences. A Correctional Officer who had been sta-

tioned in the parking lot surrounding the jail failed to apprehend him, as he was no match for Daniels' athletic skills.

His attempt to chase the prisoner with a vehicle failed when the vehicle became bogged down in loose sand.

Daniels tried to hitch a ride at the county center. With a sheriff's vehicle closing in, he commandeered the car and ordered the driver to drive off, making, according to the driver, a threatening motion as if he had a weapon. The driver fled from the car. Daniels, with the police in pursuit, sped away. He managed to elude his pursuers, and a man hunt has been conducted throughout the area since, but to no avail.

The residents of Riverhead need to know that the jail is secure, that jail breaks will not happen again and that if a prisoner does escape, he should be hunted with the intent to take him dead or alive.

The bleeding hearts who have given us liberal justice have placed the safety and welfare of the common, hard-working citizens in jeopardy. Prisoners are human, but when they take the law into their own hands, and willfully break it, they give up their right to common decency. When they act like animals, they should be treated like animals; no more, no less.

And why not?

# SUFFOLK LIFE

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Smithtown/St. James

Bay Shore/West Islip  
Mastic/Port Jervis  
Saville/Oakdale  
Hampton West  
Hampton East  
Mid Hampton  
Coram/Ridge

Rocky Point  
North Fork  
Patchogue  
Riverhead  
Huntington

East Islip  
Medford  
Babylon



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# Distinct And Different

The Suffolk County Legislature, led by Presiding Officer Gregory Blass, is once again making an assault on the office of the county executive.

Once and for all, the county legislature should come to grips with the fact that the county executive's job and the county legislators' job are distinct and different. The county legislature develops policy, makes laws, holds public hearings and brings the input of the public to government. The county executive, whether he be Republican or Democrat, is the elected manager of county government. It is his job to see that the policy established by the legislature and the laws it makes are carried out. It is his job to hire and fire personnel, negotiate with labor and develop personnel procedures. He is the chief fiscal officer and in that role develops the budget for the county, which is approved by the county legislature.

The county comptroller audits the expenditures of the county and pays the bills. The county treasurer collects the taxes, invests these monies and disburses them as needed.

As much as Blass and company would like to assume the role of management, they were not hired to

be managers, they are not paid to be managers. Their sole purpose is to be legislators and develop policy and law for the county.

The county legislature and the county executive's office, by charter, are meant to be two distinctive branches of government and not necessarily co-equal. The presiding officer of the county legislature is not on par with the county executive, no matter how much Mr. Blass may dream it should be.

For government, as for any business, to be effective it can have only one head. A board of directors may guide it and give counsel and advice, but it is just that, and nothing more. The legislature does not have either statutory or implied law to make it a manager of the government. That is the sole prerogative of the county executive, and it should stay that way.

We hope the new county executive, Patrick Halpin, will be diligent in warding off the raids made by the legislature on the office of the county executive. Instead of seeking more power, the legislators should be more concerned about doing their own jobs in a more efficient fashion.

And why not?

hacks to be awarded jobs paying over \$1,000 per week. Some went as high as \$1,500. When you look at these positions and compare them to private industry, you find that most of them are lower level management jobs that normally would pay in the range of \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year. Yet, the county is paying the people who hold these jobs salaries of at least twice that.

Many of these positions are not covered or protected by civil service. In some instances they were necessary, but in most cases they were necessary only to the individual politicians appointed and the people in the party who rewarded them.

Halpin has an opportunity to show his stuff. He should examine each position, determine its necessity. If

it can be eliminated, it should be. If the salaries being paid are out of line with those in the private sector, those who have done a good job should be allowed to stay, but the salary should be reduced to that of a like position in the private sector. In other words, simply take the patronage out of the position.

If Halpin fills these positions with politicians from his side of the aisle, he will rack up his first bad mark. If Halpin keeps the salaries at these levels he will rack up two bad marks. Halpin has an opportunity to come in with a clean broom. Get rid of the deadwood, readjust priorities and bring fairness to salary levels. We will all be watching closely.

And why not?

# Luchsinger Will Be Missed

Jack Luchsinger has been a fixture in Brookhaven and Suffolk County planning circles for over three decades. For reasons of health, Luchsinger recently resigned from the town and county planning positions he has held. He will be sorely missed.

Just before Thanksgiving, Jack was hit with an illness that almost took his life. He is still hospitalized and he faces a long road to recovery. Typical of Luchsinger, as soon as he physically could, realizing that it will be some time until he is back on his feet, he submitted his resignation to both the Brookhaven and the Suffolk County Planning Boards on which he served. He wanted to make room for someone who could devote the time and effort necessary to make the important planning decisions needed today. He knew he couldn't for a while, so he stepped aside. We will miss him, his expertise, integrity, dedication, care and concern and

love for the land and the people of Suffolk County.

Luchsinger is one of those rare individuals that believes feverishly in goverment. An individual who is willing to participate and is not seeking any personal gain in return. He has been the essence of public service. Although best known for being vice-president of Swezey's Department Stores and his planning commission participation, Luchsinger has been actively participating in a whole host of other less known community and service activities.

We hope that Luchsinger's replacement meets the criteria he set for the job. They're mighty big shoes to fill. We ask you to join us in a prayer for his complete recovery. We are looking forward to seeing him and working with him for years to come.

And why not?

# Salaries Should Equal Worth

Incoming County Executive-Elect Patrick Halpin has a good opportunity before him not only to weed out and do away, once and for all, with wasteful patronage positions, but also to readjust salary schedules so that they reflect the worth of the job and the individual that is filling it.

During the Cohalan administration many exempt positions were filled and new ones were created that gave priority to the needs of the

politicians for lucrative employment rather than the need for the position.

Deputy county executives, deputy commissioners were hired by the droves. Salaries were set at levels to fit the needs, or greed, of the individuals appointed rather than the relative worth of the position, or what a normal candidate for the position could possibly hope to obtain in the competitive world of free enterprise. It was not uncommon for political

# Letters to the Editor

## Picture inspires sending of poem

To Whom it May Concern,

Some time ago, you had printed a picture, a statue of Mother and Child, and a beautiful story about Baby Jessica, the baby that fell into the well, which brings to my mind, a poem I would like to share with everyone, now that the Christmas season is upon us.

This very good friend of mine, who has written the poem, has since passed away. He was of the Jewish faith.

A reader,  
John Wisniewski  
Huntington

Thru the frosted window I can see  
The shining of the Christmas tree  
Standing there in all its splendor  
Giving thanks to hearts so tender  
May all the windows of the world be bright  
On this Holy Christmas night.

By Jules

Continued on next page

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## No Difference Of Opinion

Last November, the voters passed Proposition 4, Question 2, which was a bill extending the quarter percent Southwest Sewer District tax from 1989 through the year 2000. The money raised from the sales tax, projected to be \$580 million dollars, was specifically earmarked to purchase approximately 30,000 acres of open space, to provide payment in lieu of taxes to the affected districts and, most important, to share these sales taxes under a specific formula with the towns so that they may address the water, sewage and other environmental needs in their areas.

County Executive-Elect Patrick Halpin has his own interpretation of the bill. During the campaign, Halpin had proposed stripping the towns of any benefit from these funds. Halpin does not want to share any of these sales taxes with the towns. He wants the county to keep the funds and use them to clean up toxic waste sites. He considers these sites a priority. He does not feel that the towns will use these funds judiciously. Now he says that because he was elected, the people agree with his views on this specific proposal. That's bunk. Regardless of his feelings, the resolution specifically calls for revenue sharing with the towns and does not give him the leeway to abscond with these funds for other purposes.

What is even more amazing is that Halpin should be fully aware that the voters of New York State created a super toxic waste fund indebting themselves for over a billion dollars

to clean up toxic waste sites throughout the state, which does include Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Halpin, as a state legislator, voted to create this fund, therefore he should be keenly aware that Long Island was included as part of the State of New York. If Suffolk does as Halpin wants, uses the sales tax extension to clean up Suffolk's toxic waste sites, the state will respond, as they traditionally have, and use the state-issued bond money for New York City and the rest of the state. And Long Island will be short-changed again, just as it has been with traffic improvement dollars and a host of other matters.

There is not a town in Suffolk County that does not have crying needs to extend water and sewage districts. Halpin will be getting off on the wrong foot if he attempts to go against the towns and the wishes of the residents of Suffolk County. Halpin will be picking a fight he can't win, one that will cause him irreparable harm. He will be delivering a message that his administration will not focus on a cooperative attitude with towns to help resolve the important problems. He will fan the fires of controversy between the towns and the county that can do little more than stand in the way of finding needed solutions.

Halpin should rethink his position and issue a statement that he will uphold the will of the voters, and will not try to interfere with revenue sharing with the towns.

And why not?

## Why Not Shoreham?

LILCO is looking to establish a new gas powered generating plant. The proposed plant is projected to produce 220 megawatts of electricity, approximately 30% of the generating capacity of the ill-fated Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant.

LILCO is attempting to site the generating plant in the Town of Babylon. The industrial site chosen is bordered on one side by a populated area containing eight to 12 homes per acre. Citizens of West Babylon, the proposed location for the new plant, are expressing concerns about possible environmental problems, increased traffic congestion, over industrialization of the community, and other possible negative impacts. They wonder: Isn't there a more suitable site in Suffolk County for this plant?

We suggest there is. The site of the ill-fated Shoreham Nuclear Power

Plant, a 449-acre facility that already has been developed and is just waiting to be used. The transmission lines are already installed there, lines that were intended to carry the electricity produced by the nuclear power plant. The land has been cleared and all the support facilities are there. The neighborhood surrounding the plant, which enjoys an enormous tax advantage because of the nuclear power plant, surely wouldn't complain about a gas operated facility. By comparison, Shoreham is a wilderness to Babylon.

The Public Service Commission recently ordered LILCO to plan for the future, based on the assumption that the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant will not go into operation. The report prepared by LILCO, which indicated that the West Babylon site was the company's choice, was

prepared on the assumption that Shoreham would operate. The report indicated, on page 1111, that if Shoreham did not operate as a nuclear facility, it would be more than acceptable as a gas site.

Considering the Public Service Commission's ruling, it would be

prudent of LILCO's management to re-evaluate their proposal and place this facility where it would be most inexpensive and productive to the stockholders, the ratepayers and the taxpayers.

Shoreham is it.  
And why not?

## Is The Pendulum Swinging?

The New York State Supreme Court decisively threw out the Health Department's attempt to impose smoking regulations in public and private places. The court, in this ruling, stated the Health Department bureaucracy went far beyond their powers. They had taken into their own hands the right to make a law that is reserved, under the Constitution, to the Legislature.

We have written, on many occasions, about our bureaucracies being out of control, developing and executing rules and regulations never passed by the Legislature. We believe this was wrong, since we, as people, elect law makers for this purpose, not unaccountable appointed bureaucrats.

Legislators have been appalled at this situation, as are everyday citizens. The State Supreme Court's ruling goes far in saying to these untouchable bureaucrats, 'you are

not the law makers of the state. You cannot make laws by issuing rules and regulations. If you want a law passed, you must go to the Legislature, where the law will be written, debated on its merits and passed or rejected by a consensus of the elected representatives of the people. You no longer can sit in your bureaucratic ivory towers, dreaming up ways that people can live without first having these ideas passed by the people's representatives.'

It is not only the Health Department that has been propagating regulations, but the D.E.C. and other bureaucracies controlled through the Governor's office. Based upon this ruling, we hope to see other rules and regulations challenged. This case gives them good ground for such challenges.

And why not?

## Holiday publishing schedule

Santa Claus has asked if Suffolk Life staffers could assist him in his holiday delivery campaign, so we have rearranged our schedules to give him a hand. The next edition of Suffolk Life will be published this Saturday, December 19, so that we will be free on Christmas Eve. Saturday's edition will be filled with holiday cheer from both our advertisers and our news department.

Suffolk Life will not publish again until December 30.



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# Happy New Year

As we pass out of 1987 with many questions unanswered, great universal uncertainty, let us leave the past behind and concentrate positively on the future. May we start the year with a prayer, a request for divine guidance in our dealings with our loved ones, our fellow workers, friends and adversaries. May we commit ourselves to going one step

further than is requested in all of our relationships.

The staff here at Suffolk Life wishes all our readers a very happy New Year as we renew our commitment to publishing for you a newspaper dedicated to fighting for and serving the people, and strive to become the finest newspaper in America.

And why not?

# No One Is Above The Law

Cops are not above the law. In fact, they should adhere to the law far more diligently than people who do not make their livelihood by law enforcement. The same goes for their union, the P.B.A.

Three Suffolk County cops, last summer, went before a special commission created by the Suffolk County Legislature to look into alleged police abuses by the Suffolk County Police Department. The three now are being threatened with expulsion from the Suffolk County P.B.A., which will result in their loss of health benefits, legal representation and other perks of the job. This is an utter disgrace.

The three went before the commission and told the legislators what they saw, as they saw it. They felt there were wrongs that needed addressing. They had tried working within the system and had been ignored. The union now wants retaliation against these three men who dared speak out against the brotherhood.

Let's face facts; cops are human. The force is made up of some exceptional human beings and some very rotten apples. With a force the size of Suffolk County's, you are going to have a good dose of both, with the

vast majority somewhere in between, doing a good day's work for a great day's pay, and perks and benefits that are superior to those received by most other workers. They are proud of the work they do, most of them enjoy it, and won't jeopardize their job by entering into illegal actions. Sure, they will look the other way when a brother officer is involved in a traffic infraction. They might even bend over backwards to give a brother officer a break in a more serious matter. But, when the chips are down, they are as honest as the rest of us and we don't think that these men feel very proud about their union and what the union is trying to do.

The bad apples, those who perpetrate theft, graft and a whole host of other crimes by either aiding or abetting, want no one, particularly their own brethren, to upset the apple cart. By forcing all cops not to speak out about injustices in the department or criminal activities, they have immunity from prosecution, and any attempt at reform can be stifled.

The Suffolk County P.B.A. must come to grips with itself. It sounds like the leadership has much to hide and is doing its damnest to cover up

its dirty linen. We are incensed as a newspaper, as we are sure our readers are, about this crude attempt to stop anyone from criticizing the police. We would hope that the rank and file Suffolk County cop is just as

incensed as we are at their union. The good cops of Suffolk should join ranks to rid the union of leadership that refuses to clean its own house and punishes those who seek to do so. And why not?

# Investigate All Political Spending

The State Commission on Government Integrity is reported to be looking into campaign spending of acting County Executive Michael LoGrande. They are looking for expenditures made by LoGrande as county executive that may have had political overtones.

We have already commented that we feel the use of taxpayer funds for the promotion of a candidate is wrong. It is wrong for Republicans. It is wrong for Democrats. It is wrong for federal, state, county and local officials. But for the state commission to look solely into LoGrande's expenditures, we believe, is more a vindictive act by Democrats than it is an attempt to resolve any wrongful spending.

The Democrats themselves, including State Assemblyman Patrick Halpin who will become the county executive on January 1, are not above sin. LoGrande's staff pointed out that they have documented 28 mailings that were made on Halpin's behalf through congressmen's offices, state offices and legislators. If

true, such expenses would be hidden from public view because they would not show on Halpin's financial reports. This is wrong and if it did happen, it should be exposed. Halpin did not have available the resources that LoGrande did, but the resources he did have he used to the nth degree.

We are disgusted with the way our taxpayers' monies have been squandered by all politicians in their quest for re-election. We would like to see it come to a screeching halt. To do so, the State Investigation Commission on Integrity must investigate all allegations of wrong doing, from the governor's office right down to the local dog catcher. Be it Republicans or Democrats, they can't zero in on one sole Republican and expect to have any credibility.

If indeed there is to be an investigation, it should be enlarged to cover all candidates, including Halpin, so that all wrongful spending is eliminated once and for all.

And why not?

# Thank You, Senator, Thank You Congressman

Senator Patrick Moynihan and Congressman Thomas Downey deserve a hearty thank you from all Long Island residents. Downey and Moynihan stopped LILCO's attempt to limit the number of bonds an authority can issue to take over a utility such as LILCO. This backroom, under the table, Washington deal was uncovered by Downey and publicized widely.

Downey threatened to lobby against the Budget Reconciliation Bill in its entirety if this provision was left in. As a powerful member of the Ways and Means Committee, his voice was heard and the amendment was dropped from the house bill. It was feared, however, that when the bill got to the senate, utility supporters would be able to re-insert it. A number of senators are blatantly in the pocket of the utilities and the industries that have vested interests

in the development of nuclear energy. Traditionally, the senate itself votes with big business.

Senator Moynihan singled out this issue as his number one priority during the conference. For two days he labored untiringly and the compromise bill finally emerged without this provision.

If the bill had passed, it would have been the end of L.I.P.A., for L.I.P.A. would have lost its ability to finance a takeover using tax free bonds, which would have pushed the cost much higher and possibly even made it more economical for LILCO to operate and sell electricity than for L.I.P.A. to do so.

The day was saved once more, and the credit goes to Congressman Downey and Senator Moynihan. We owe them our thanks.

And why not?

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