

School Vote Budget Time

Within the next few weeks almost all school districts will vote on budgets and the school boards for the 75-76 term. School votes have a tendency to bring out the worst in all of us. They pit neighbor against neighbor, school officials against taxpayers and young families against senior citizens.

It's the one place the voter has an option to exercise his feelings about how his government is run and how his money is being spent.

School board members are not paid salaries. They donate their time, abilities and energy to governing the education system. School boards are no place for people looking for ego trips nor are they any place for those who have an axe to grind.

They are a place for people to serve their community well. A school board member should have two objectives; one, to obtain the best educational system for his constituents within the realm of their ability to pay. The other is to make every dollar the district spends go as far as possible.

Board members must be pragmatic, they must be able to withstand pressure from organized groups, the community, the school administrators and a host of other individuals. They can't have a need to be loved because no matter what they do, they are going to make some people unhappy.

We hope that you will look at the candidates carefully, find out what is motivating them to run. What are their qualifications? How do they hold up to pressure? Do they use common sense in approaching problems? Do they accept a situation as final or do they look at it as a challenge to be changed for the better?

Select your board members carefully, they are going to be charged with spending millions of your tax dollars. But more important, they are going to be responsible for the educational policy governing what your children will or will not be taught.

School budgets are complex documents. Without voter approval, a school must go on to austerity. There are two types of austerity: the common type sets up the budget, basically kept in tack as it was originally presented to the voters, but stripped of the nice things and conveniences for the district.

Extracurricular activities and sports are discontinued. Busing is cut back, school facilities are no longer made available for the community. Lunch programs are eliminated or curtailed. As

a result they put pressure on the community to pass the budget.

According to Leon Giuffreda, head of the state senate education committee, a board also has the option of putting the district on real austerity. Contrary to what you hear at a budget meeting, the board is only mandated to offer a very small portion of the budget. The state mandates that the school board must provide certain educational courses, these basically deal with writing, arithmetic, reading, social studies, health and a few other important programs.

All the rest of the course or curriculum that is offered by the school board is elective. If a school board deems it to the districts advantage to add courses or programs, then the functioning and staffing of these comes under the mandates of the states.

Technically, when a school board member or administrator says that 85 per cent of the budget is mandated he is technically right, but in reality, he is not. A school board can eliminate many of the courses and functions if this is a desire of the district.

It is important to remember this when you attend the informational meetings so that you can look at the programs being offered by your board objectively.

It is also a good idea that before you attend one

of these informational meetings, you personally go to the school district and look at the budget - the complete budget, line by line, and to determine for yourself what is being offered, why, and for how much.

You will also find many provisions and benefits are not mandated, but which the teachers and the other employees unions have been able to obtain from the board. These can add substantially to the overall cost of the budget.

We recommend that you take a close, hard look at this budget, examine it, question it and recommend prior to the vote to the board, your feelings. If you feel your school has done a good job in preparing its budget, has presented a balanced budget and kept it within the cost of your ability to pay, then we encourage you to support it wholeheartedly. Do not only support it by your own vote but go out and campaign for its passage.

If this budget does not reflect your feelings and is beyond your ability to pay, then campaign for its defeat. No matter which side you are on, we encourage you to take part in this important process of government. It not only effects about two-thirds of your real estate tax dollars, but more importantly the educational system our children will learn from. And why not?

Happy Mother's Day

Next Sunday is Mother's Day. It is not a legal holiday but it is a very important one because of the people we are honoring. In this wide world with all kinds of people there is one refreshing factor, the love mothers have for their children.

This is universal.

Last year and again this year we have run a contest to select the mother of the year. Participants are asked to nominate their mother and to tell briefly why she should be named Mother of the Year.

When you read the letters you realize the incredible task it is to be a good mother.

It is gratifying to see so many people (both children and adults alike) take the time to remember their mother. The women who are nominated should feel proud they have raised a child who thinks enough of them to make this extra effort.

We wish we had the ability to give out hundreds of first prizes as there are that many

nominees deserving of this recognition. Limited by our budget, we will give out the first prize and publish the names of all those mothers who have been nominated. In addition, we will send each a certificate proclaiming their nomination as a Mother of the Year.

There are two women in my life who I feel should be nominees but I can't enter them because I run this contest. To me, they should be right up there with stars around their names.

To those who have taken the time to nominate their mother, we thank you as we are sure your mothers' will.

To all mothers everywhere, we thank you for being yourself and doing your thing. Your job is more important than a president's and your responsibility is greater.

How do you do it, we don't know but thank God He has given you what it takes. Have a happy! And why not?

92.8 Per Cent Long Islanders Working

Unemployment seems to be big news these days. Here on Long Island our employment record seems to be overlooked. The state labor department released their latest figures reflecting March employment and it appears Long Island is leading the state in keeping it's work force busy.

Traditionally at this time of the year Eastern Long Island has been a 94 and 95 per cent employment rate. Very seldom does it get much above the 95 per cent level due to the chronically unemployed or those who persistently choose to be out of work.

Another indicator of Long Island's economic health is the record level of savings in our savings and loans institution. In talking with a manager of one of the leading institutions a week ago he told us their operation has never had so much money on deposit.

In addition the branch received 39 mortgage applications that month and had passed all.

Long Island businessmen are looking forward to a boom as the impact of the tax rebate begins to take effect. This should unleash several millions of dollars on the Island's economy creating more employment and making even further work.


East End realtors tell us they have a record number of rentals under contract which indicates our summer business will surpass last year's records. East End merchants have already reported an earlier than usual tourist activity. Even though the weekend weather has been anything but great, the migration has already started and we will enjoy a long summer business year.

We hope Long Island is an indicator of things to come for the rest of the country. And why not?

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Millions For Glamor, Pennies For Bread And Butter

They're working on the capital improvement budget at the county center. The capital budget is suppose to be a sensible way to plan your spending for years to come. It's a hodge podge of massive spending programs, ranging from farm land acquisition to the construction of new roads.

In theory, it is good, but it has become a gimmick to pass massive spending projects that can't be examined all at once as a whole.

There seems to be something for everybody in this budget -- golf courses, tennis courts, horse centers, and ski bowls. You name it and it's there.

What is sadly lacking is any expenditure to improve our biggest natural asset that we have available here on L.I., our fishing facilities.

Particularly what is missing are facilities for the average guy who goes out with just a rod and reel and just wants to fish.

Although it is officially closed, several thousand boaters a year risk their lives attempting to navigate the inlet. The only alternative is an hour and a half trip to Bayshore, or an hour's trip to Shinnecock.

Shinnecock Inlet however, is itself quickly falling into the same state of disrepair as Moriches. At the south end you can see from the beach the sand bars building up and they are reaching the point of becoming treacherous.



Jetties ready to collapse at Shinnecock

At the northwest end of the jetty, water has washed away the rocks that make up the jetty and the beach behind it is being washed out. Probably the next good storm will wipe out the road, the parking lot and destroy the town marina as well. It will put in jeopardy two commercial marinas and the primary port for the Shinnecock Commercial fishing fleet.

This condition is not new, it has just reached the point of disaster.

As we move inland, you have to cross from Dune Road to the mainland, you do this via county roads and bridges. Here is an ideal place for people with limited incomes to fish. It's ideal for senior citizens who no longer have their sea legs, but still love to fish.

In California, Florida and even in Nassau County, their governments realize this and have done everything possible to encourage their use. They had special cat walks constructed, along the road and the bridges for the fishermen to use. They also provide parking and occasionally rest rooms and running water.

Our Suffolk County government does just the opposite. They have put up wire fences to make it impossible for a fisherman to get his line into the water. It appears our county government does not want the average guy to fish in the heart of fishing areas.

Moving onto Shinnecock Canal we find part of this great natural fishing spot closed to the public. At the northeast end, the jetty is in such disrepair it has had to be closed as a hazard with the bulkheading collapsed and the rocks and sand from the Peconic falling into the canal. This condition has just gotten worse and worse over the last four years.

These are only just a few examples in the Westhampton-Hampton Bays area. We have heard of similar complaints from almost every area of Suffolk.

The County does not do anything to enhance the fishing in Suffolk. There is a great lack of ramps for trail boaters and adjacent parking facilities, throughout the county. There are very few county marinas that would encourage tourists to come by boat to utilize the great natural resources that are here.

Those that have money are able to buy a boat and keep it in a commercial marina. Those that do not, the average people of Suffolk County, depend upon public facilities to dock and fish.



County-owned bulkheading that is falling apart

They should be able to expect an enjoyable day of leisure plus the possibilities of putting food on the table inexpensively. It would seem that the county would be anxious to help these people and to make their life more enjoyable.

Once fishermen's facilities are created, they require almost no personnel to service the fishermen. Give him a spot to fish and he is content.

Maybe this is a problem. Building fishing facilities is not an expensive project, and it does not create additional jobs which can be handed out as patronage to political hacks.

Fishing has universal appeal. With the natural facilities we have here in Suffolk there is a place for the rich, the poor and all those in-between. To not take advantage of this natural resource is an injustice to county residents. We encourage our leaders to consider what we have and how easy it would be to make it more attractive for everyone.

cont. on page 4 EG

PROPERTY OF SUFFOLK COUNTY KEEP OUT

County-owned facilities on the canal have fallen into disrepair and are closed to the public

Fishing is a billion dollar business here in Suffolk County. It's a natural, and the county does almost nothing to enhance it. We have almost 100 miles of ocean beaches for surf casters, but limited right of ways onto the beach. Thus surf fishermen are denied the opportunity to follow the fish to the best spots.

In Westhampton for example, the county owns several right of ways onto beaches where the jetties are located. Even though they are county owned right of ways, the average citizen is forbidden from trespassing over them to reach the beach.

Even if they were able to cross at these points it is illegal to park cars on these right of ways, because a county edict forbids it.

This edict is the work of Beecher Halsey, the legislator from this district, who made a deal with the fat cats with houses on the beach that are protected by the jetties. Although jetties are being paid for by all taxpayers, the fat cats don't want fishermen spoiling or contaminating their ocean view.


To the east and west of this area are Moriches and Shinnecock Inlets. It is through these inlets that boaters from Bayshore to Montauk have access to the ocean.

Moriches Inlet is officially closed to navigation by the Coast Guard because the inlet has not been maintained and is in disrepair. This has resulted in the inlet shoaling up, which is a dangerous situation for any boater.

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The Way America Should Act

I feel a little bit better about being an American citizen today, after watching our President act in behalf of this country like a man.

When news reached us of Cambodia, seizing an unarmed American merchant marine ship, I was furious and frustrated.

Here was another minor power openly attacking the United States, jeopardizing more American lives and all that I could hope for from my government was hot air and humiliation.

I could foresee another Pueblo incident, where our government cared more for what our enemy thought about us, than we did about protecting the lives of the United States citizens.

President Ford's swift actions to secure the safety of the men, the ship and kicking the Cambodians in the pants to boot, is just great. The only unhappy note of this is we lost American men in this action.

An act of war, as perpetrated by the Cambodians necessitates this type of risk. I believe, President Ford has the people behind him.

The screaming liberals will attempt to castrate him for having the guts to do what was needed, when needed. They will cry: 'we should have gone through diplomatic circles and waited this thing out. His move was risky and could have led to World War III.'

That's bull! It's risky to get out of bed in the morning. More people are killed on the roads than have ever been killed in wars.

The only diplomacy that is understood in the world is 'I won't hit you because you will hit me back and the chances are that you can hit me harder than I can hit

you.' This is what people and governments understand.

It should be understood this merchant ship was in international waters; it was not harassing anyone. It was attacked and seized in an unprovoked attack.

If Ford had not acted swiftly and dramatically, the Americans involved would have been human hostages in a black-mail attempt to make this country bow and scrape to ridiculous Communist demands. And that could have led to an all out war.

Ford's action also serves notice on the rest of the world that we will no longer roll over. We will fight for our rights if we are pushed.

This message is very important, in all our future dealings with foreign powers. Let's hope they have gotten it, loud and clear. And why not?

You Must Take Medication

Big brother is at it again. There is a bill in the hopper in Albany to force you to take your daily dosage of fluoridation.

If passed by the legislature, it would mandate that all water companies fluoridate their water system forcing you to consume fluoride whenever you drink water whether you want to or not.

Fluoride is supposed to prevent tooth decay in children. It does not help anyone who has passed out of childhood, and in fact, it has been recently suggested by some scientists that there is a direct link between fluoride and cancer in older people.

Without getting into the alleged merits or dangers of fluoride we take issue with those who feel they have a right to force anyone to take medication without their express permission.



"We've had it-!"

Why Charge For Beach Passes

In most of our towns the fee for a beach pass is only a dollar or two. Not a big deal, not a big amount of money, but a real annoyance.

On one hand, we pay through our taxes for beach maintenance, parking lots, buildings and life guard service, then when we want to use these facilities we have already paid for, we have to fork over another couple of bucks for the privilege of using them.

When we call a cop, we don't have to pay additional charge for his services. When we send our kids to school we don't have to pay a tuition fee. When we go to a town board meeting, we don't have to

pay for a box seat. The examples go on and on.

Why then, should we have to pay more for something enjoyable that we get from government. There is no logical reason for it. It just seems to be another way our simple minded government officials have found to rip us off.

If this annoys you as much as it annoys us, why not go to your next town board meeting and voice your objection. If you can't get there in person, sign your name along side of this editorial and send it to the town board, a specific board member or the supervisor. Your voice will be heard. And why not?

What we do with our own bodies is our own business, as long as our actions do not harm anyone else. This is an individual right of all of us.

After the near Nixon dictatorship and the resulting Watergate scandal, we are not anxious to give up any more of our individual rights to government. Let big brother look after himself and we will look after ourselves.

If we want to fluoridate our own water we can. There are systems available. We also can take our daily dosage of fluoride in the toothpastes that are available to us.

Whatever good that could possibly come out of fluoride would be diminished a thousand fold, if we are forced to take medication as the state sees fit. And why not?

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Bears Close Watching

The county legislature this past week unraveled a charter amendment to be voted on by the public this coming November which is entitled "The Environmental Preservation Act."

It is an all encompassing amendment that will create a super agency out of the department of Environmental Control.

The act will give power to this agency to oversee all development and the use of land and buildings already constructed.

The intended purpose is altruistic but we fear it will become a super-bureaucracy with unregulated powers

that will enable it to enter into just about every phase of our lifestyle.

The existing agency to date has not had the best track record, particularly in using common sense to solve problems.

Because this will be an agency whose people are not elected, they will not be directly responsible to people. Yet it will have enormous powers over everyone's lives.

The act will be subject to several public hearings and we encourage all to attend these to hear first hand just what effect the act will have on them.

The charter amendment could very well have more effect on you than any other single piece of legislation passed or enacted by the county including the charter itself. Please take an interest in this matter, it is very important. And why not?

DMV Rides Again

This week, one of our co-workers had her driver's license stolen from her purse. So she went over to the Department of Motor Vehicles at the County Center in Riverhead to get it replaced.

"How do I know you're who you say you are," was the question she was asked by the clerk behind the counter.

"Here's my insurance certificate and a bunch of other identification," was the reply.

"Well, we'll send it away and you'll get your license in the mail," said the clerk.

"I use my car to earn my living, what should I show a policeman if I should get stopped?" our co-worker replied.

"Sorry, I can't help that," was the answer.

So our Suffolk Lifer is driving around without a driver's license. And the silly reason is that the D.M.V. makes no provision for people who lose their license (or have them stolen).

It's not bad enough to have to stand in the long lines at Riverhead, watch the clerks excuse themselves for coffee breaks, and get generally pushed around like cattle.

Now licensed drivers are sent out without any proof they attempted to replace a lost or stolen license and presented with a parcel of problems if they get stopped by the police.

Great government, isn't it? And why not?

Welcoming Our Guests

With Memorial Day weekend upon us we will feel the first thrust of our multi-million dollar tourist season. This year it looks like all records can be broken, by the thousands who are with us for the season, plus the weekenders and daily visitors.

The impact of the tourist dollar effects everybody in Suffolk County. Even businesses not directly involved in this market can get some of their business from spinoff.

It is for this reason that we must all do everything we can to make our visitors feel welcome and wanted.

It doesn't take too much effort to smile and be pleasant. Those simple gestures

go a long way when you are a stranger in a resort area. It's the thing that keeps them coming back.

Try to think of our guest as just that, a guest. They are not imposers but people we seek out to serve. The money they spend here stabilizes our economy and is one of the important reasons we have not felt the effects of the recession as have other areas.

Having been on vacation yourself, you know how you like to be treated. Treat our visitors the same way. Your effort in this cause will go a long way towards making people continue to come back to Eastern Long Island. And why not?

Millions Being Wasted

I ride past the former Suffolk County Airbase almost every day coming to work and try not to notice the rapidly deteriorating condition of this facility.

I'm frugal, if not down right cheap and nothing maddens me faster than waste. By the time I hit our office in Westhampton I am generally boiling.

The county took over this facility with much fanfare -- it was going to be an industrial center for Suffolk and a great general aviation airport.

There was talk of training schools and manufacturing plants, corporate headquarters and all the good things that an area can use to bolster its economy. Studies were ordered at cost of several thousands of dollars.

The result, is that most of the base is now run down, unoccupied and a disgrace. The only portion of the base that looks alive and presentable is that occupied by the Air National Guard. They have kept their facilities up-to-date and are making use of them.

Suffolk County has done almost nothing with theirs. There is a fixed base operator who uses a small portion of the base, but even this arrangement has been questioned.

To keep the base costs taxpayers in Suffolk County almost a million dollars a year. This does not even include the cost of tax revenues lost by it being in government hands. It's a crime, a shame to have such an important facility with such great potential lying waste.

No one from John Klein to the legislators seem to give a damn what happens here, and this is the biggest crime of all.


If this base is too big for these small minded politicians to handle, then it should be sold. We are sure there is private capital available to buy it and make it an asset to the county.

Something should be done now before any more damage is done through deterioration and neglect.

And why not?

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