

Dunking

Game raises funds, lets out inhibitions

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY
It's enough to give a person paranoia—or at least to encourage the beginnings of a case.
The victim sits on a wooden bench. Heaven is above her. Water below. And in front of her, she can see through the fencing the beginnings of a mob of spectators with one goal in mind. She must feel the gentle grip of the water below her.
They call it a dunk tank.
This year Farmington school bus driver Nila Piltz was the woman who

made a splash for charity at the Farmington Founders' Festival.
Thursday afternoon found her sitting behind the cage cringing everytime someone traded a quarter for a chance to leave a softball in her direction.
If the ball landed surely in the center of a target painted on the tank, the bench was released and Mrs. Piltz went down, tank.
Sponsored by the Helping Hands CB club of which she is president, Mrs. Piltz's afternoon ordeal served to raise money for the Ann Arbor Bum Center.

In RETROSPECT, being the target of a dunk tank looks worse than it actually is, Mrs. Piltz admitted.
"The water's warm, the air's cold. It's not bad," she said.
Dunked about six times during one-and-a-half hours, Mrs. Piltz saw students, teachers and a few principals stop by to try their hand at dumping a bus driver.

Sitting in a dunk tank is an open invitation to friends and associates to catch a few laughs at the victim's expense.
"We want to see her dripping wet," crooned Helping Hands member Terry Lotz into the microphone.

Mrs. Piltz obviously had other ideas about her fate. She indicated her affinity for a dry existence with a simple yet eloquent gesture—she stuck her tongue out at him.

It didn't help, and Mrs. Piltz became resigned to a watery afternoon.

Dunking was painless but the anticipation was worse than waiting for ketchup to ooze out of the bottle onto a hot hamburger.

"You never know when they're going to hit that thing," she said of the tank's bullseye. "It's the anticipation that's bad."

As the sun began to set on Mrs. Piltz inside her aluminum and wood tank, another little annoyance manifested itself.

"WHEN THE SUN doesn't shine and you go under and get wet, it's chilly in that thing," she said.

Headless of the setting sun and the goosebumps on the tank's occupant, Lotz kept on drumming up business with the fervor of someone who's just discovered religion.

"We're gonna have a blue light special here. We don't have a blue light but we have the special. For 25 cents you get two chances instead of one," he announces without disguising his glee.

"And for a dollar you get 14 chances instead of seven."

"Oh no you don't," cried a chagrined Mrs. Piltz.

But she knew it was useless to protest.



Nila Piltz takes a dive for charity at the Helping Hands CB club's dunk tank. (Staff photo by Allen Schlossberg)

Schoolcraft honors 4 area students

Four Farmington Hills residents were named to the dean's list at Schoolcraft College for the winter semester.

Those honored were Rhonda C. Beier, Judith A. Hoffman, Bonnie L. Mesarosh and Freda J. Schwartz. All received personal letters of congratulations from Dean Fred Stenlund.

Glanda, Morgan earn masters from EMU

Richard W. Glanda, 33820 Hunters Point Road, and Elaine Ann Morgan, 26600 Ten Mile, both of Farmington Hills, received master of arts degrees from Eastern Michigan University.

Glanda and Ms. Morgan were among 32 graduate students who received master's and specialist's degrees.

Motels: Small guys struggle to stay alive

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their business and the no vacancy signs are blinking again. For the Revere's owners, good times mean building an addition to the motel along with their own house.

Ironically, while they're giving everyone else a place to stay for the night, the Skotchers are looking for a home themselves. The tiny quarters crunched between the reception desk and the first motel room is becoming too crowded for Mrs. Skotcher, her husband Jack, their 17-year-old son Jay and the family's cat, Minnie.

The nature of the business insures that the Skotchers will need a home close to the motel. And their closeness to their establishment makes it more difficult to find someone to take care of the business while they're on vacation.

"IT'S LIKE inviting someone into your home," said Mrs. Skotcher, 43. "It's hard to find help," she said.

Her number one helper is her son Jay, a Farmington High School student and a member of the National Honor Society.

"He takes care of maintenance and takes over the desk for a few hours in the evening to let us go out for dinner, sometimes," she said.

"We didn't buy this motel with the idea that we couldn't run it without him but that's the way things turned out," she said.

Her own introduction to the motel business came from her father and stepmother, Rae and Margaret Ridley. They bought the motel when M-102 first made its appearance on the business scene but were unaware of the



Susan Potts walks along a row of rooms at her Restwell Motel. (Staff photo by Allen Schlossberg)

impending freeway opening until they had made their first downpayment on the establishment.

The old owner panicked about the freeway and decided to leave the location, according to Mrs. Skotcher.

Four years ago, she and her husband bought the motel.

Nowadays, their business is based on passing motorists, locals and construction workers who live too far away from the Farmington area to commute daily.

SHE SHARES those patrons with the neighboring Restwell.

"Sometimes they'll refer people to us if they're full, said Mrs. Potts, of Restwell. "They can see things outside that we can't. So, if there's a family with six children in the car and only one person comes to the office, they'll warn us."

"We don't have the facilities to take care of six children. We only have one

and two bedroom units," she explained.

Both motels sometimes take in guests who can't find a room at the Holiday Inn, big brother to the smaller establishments on Grand River.

But even the Holiday Inn will get some competition when another hotel

is completed along the strip.

That doesn't seem to perturb the owners of the 12-room Restwell or the 18-unit Revere. Many of their guests are steady customers who work in the area and live too far to commute.

Their rates and the lack of a number of luxuries, such as a telephone in

each room, appeals to a different type of customer than the larger hotels.

Unlike the larger hotels, the owners of the two hotels at Grand River near Halsted don't always require identification from their patrons unless the proprietors are uneasy about a person.

PERSONS WHO want a room to indulge in a weekend of drinking are turned away. Couples with local addresses who sign the names Smith or Johnson are more welcome.

"We have our share of lovers," said Mrs. Skotcher. "I'd rather have them than the people who come up here for a lost weekend."

"You can't ask guests why they want a room," said Mrs. Potts. "The locals who come in have excuses. There's a certain amount of guilt involved, I think."

"But we don't have any people who sign their name Mr. and Mrs. Jones," she adds.

There are soe patrons that neither motel will tolerate.

Youngsters who want to party are on both blacklists.

"We turn them away. They have homes in the area. Why do they want to come to a motel?" said Mrs. Potts.

Drinking parties are another bane to the motel owners. Drunken guests get a little careless with their cigarettes. This is always a worry, admits Mrs. Skotcher.

While the motel owners aren't concerned about a couple's marital status, there is a limit to their liberality, pointed out Mrs. Skotcher.

One night, for example, after renting adjacent rooms to two couples, Skotcher noticed the men switching rooms several times.

Finally, the Skotchers told the quartet to stick to their own rooms.

"We don't care what they do inside their rooms as long as they stay there," Mrs. Skotcher said.

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