

OBSERVATION POINT

The Giving Of Thanks, 1969

By Philip H. Power



Thanksgiving is a time set aside for giving thanks for the bounty of our land, for the things that make up our good life. The oldtime dinner was set at a time when the crops were all in and when families and friends had time to come together to celebrate the turning of another season.

The history of Thanksgiving came forcefully to mind last week, when George Creber, Lord Mayor of Plymouth, England, paid a visit to Plymouth, Michigan. He brought with him as a gift to the community a cobblestone taken from the dock from which the Mayflower sailed for America in 1620.

Amazing, isn't it! The men and women who walked over that same rock down to the little Mayflower to voyage into the fierce unknown of the new world celebrated the first Thanksgiving.

So on this 1969 Thanksgiving, it might be nice for us to thank Mayor Creber for helping us remember the people who made the first Thanksgiving.

PEOPLE. IT'S always seemed to me that Thanksgiving ought to concern itself as much with giving thanks to people as with the fruits of the land and our style of life. After all, people help people in so many ways to make their lives better.

So for this Thanksgiving season, let me offer a few thanks to the people in this area:

• To the men and women who worked so hard to lay bricks and plant new trees in Plymouth's Kellogg Park. It will become one of the most lovely city centers in the entire state, because some people cared for their community.

• Thanks to Gov. Milliken, the state legislature and to Rep. Marvin Stempien for getting leg-

islation through that helped Livonia's tight school budget take over the load of the Nankin Mills district annexation. A check for \$33,250 arrived last week, and that should cover a lot of half day sessions.

• Redford Township is setting up a drug counseling center. It's a first of its kind in this area, and I'm sure a lot of confused kids and frightened parents will thank the people who have worked long and hard to get it going.

• The Northwestern Child Guidance Clinic in Garden City has helped over 1,500 emotionally disturbed children back to a normal life in the past five years. Parents of these children will join me in thanking the countless people who have given time and money to make the clinic possible.

BUT PERHAPS our biggest thanksgiving should be to an unknown teen age girl in Farmington.

It's a simple story, as are all good ones.

A woman who lives in Farmington Township was driving on Grand River last week. A diabetic, she suddenly suffered an attack and drove to the Federal's store in the downtown center where her husband was working.

As she drove up to the entrance, she slumped down over the steering wheel and called for help.

A man and a woman stared at her, and then passed by. Intent on shopping for dresses, they made no effort to contact a sales clerk or store official.

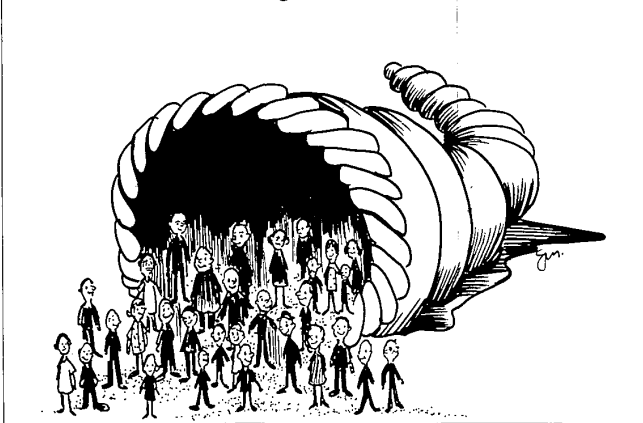
Several other adults ignored the woman's plea for help.

But a teenaged girl came by, heard the cries, and contacted an assistant manager in the store. He reached the woman's husband, who rushed her to a doctor's for an insulin shot.

The girl left. No one knows her name. She may have saved the woman's life - simply by caring for another human in trouble.

So on this Thanksgiving, 1969, let us all pause for a moment to give thanks for the people who care. They make the giving of thanks worthwhile.

OUR BLESSINGS



R.T. Thompson writes

There Is Place For Girls' Sports

During the past several weeks, we have been swamped with calls from parents for answers to the question, "Why don't high schools in Observerland have varsity sports for girls?"

Many times the calls have come from mothers and fathers who take a great deal of time to point out that they have been blessed with nothing but members of the opposite sex and thus never

will have an opportunity to cheer for a member of their family during the heat of competitive, varsity contests.

"Sure, we're real happy to attend the games now when the boys have all of the spotlight, and the only opportunity for girls is in the cheerleading squads - but they are limited to no more than eight on the varsity and eight on the junior varsity," said parents.

"WE ARE NOW IN a different generation, one in which there is a repeated cry of a generation gap, and we as parents of girls, no matter how girls, believe it is time for a change. We would like part of that change to be the start of varsity sports for girls."

Inasmuch as we hail from that part of Ohio which finds high schools and junior highs sponsoring varsity sports programs for girls, we sympathize with the parents.

We have seen feminine athletes from as many as 27 rural high schools compete in a basketball tournament, in a county championship track and field meet and in a fall season of baseball ending with a tournament between winners of four districts for a much coveted title and trophy.

We have noted how proud these girls have been to win varsity letters and wear sweaters with the huge chenille letters. It placed them in the same class with the boys and gave them a feeling of equality.

CONTRAST THAT to the current situation in most Observerland schools where girls participate in swimming, volleyball and basketball competition on an intramural or Girls Athletic Association basis.

The competition is keen, but there isn't any official recognition of the students and there isn't the same pride one would have from performing as an official representative of the school.

The move towards girls' varsity teams may not be as far away as the parents would believe. There has been a tendency on the part of some athletic boards and the school boards to sanction such a program.

The first break in the barrier came last spring when the Northwest Suburban League - which lists South Redford's Thurston, Livonia Franklin and North Farmington among its six members - voted for girls varsity competition.

The initial championship in

the new program was won by North Farmington's tennis squad. Other sports slated for varsity play are in volleyball, basketball and swimming.

With that program already underway, now is the time for parents in other school districts to strike - strike while the iron is hot.

IT IS OUR BELIEF that the Suburban Six League, which has three Observerland teams in its six-school membership, will be the next to vote approval. There have been some moves in that direction in the past three or four years with basketball games between some of the schools - not as official representatives, but at least it has been Plymouth vs. Bentley as one example.

Each of the schools has a swimming pool, each has an excellent track for track and field meets, and girls at each have been pressing for recognition.

Our advice: Continue pressing, parents and girls. If such a program is good for Northwest Suburban League schools, then it is good for all others that have facilities to support the various sports.

DISSENT

View points expressed in DISSENT do not necessarily reflect those of Observer Newspapers Inc., but are presented in the belief that publication of all segments of thought on a public issue is a prerequisite to understanding and progress.

By JOHN and BERNICE MUTCH

Redford Township

This letter is written by the parents of four football sons. Our four sons had the great opportunity and privilege of playing football at Thurston High School under the coaching of Bill McDonald. As by now you may have guessed, he, Bill McDonald, is the real subject of this letter.

Our bitter disappointment at not naming Bill McDonald "Coach of the Year" cannot be measured. How could these facts have been overlooked?

1. Thurston had its first undefeated season in 16 years under McDonald.

2. Thurston was labeled the underdog twice and came out the victor.

3. Thurston really beat the co-champs of three leagues: Mid-Wayne, Taylor Center; Suburban Six, Redford Union; Inter Lakes, beat North Farmington who in turn beat Stevenson.

Whose record tops this?

HOWEVER, AS PARENTS, we have other points to bring out. Bill McDonald lives for his team.

He's dedicated and devoted. He's there when they win. He's there when they lose. He's always there when they get hurt.

He takes care of them. He also teaches them character and discipline. His team so respected him that each member got a quarter-inch crew hair cut before practice began. In these days of long hair, that too is an accomplishment.

The opportunity to coach and develop a winning, undefeated team in a tough league, doesn't come often... Our year is here. The facts too are here. You gooned...

We are proud of our association with this great man, Bill McDonald.

Sense And Nonsense

In the competition between Ford's Maverick and the Volkswagens, the Maverick promoters would do well to cater to the American paternal instinct. An authoritative auto magazine quotes a new VW owner as saying, "I just felt the little thing needed me." Come to think of it, VWs are rather cuddly.

Dennis L. Pajot writes

McDonald Amazes

New Coalition Democrats of the 19th Congressional District (Livonia, Redford and Farmington) have a candidate in mind to run against incumbent Republican Jack McDonald next year, but...

They may have some difficulty fashioning a broad campaign attack against the second term so-called conservative.

Just before announcing their decision to ask Mrs. Gerry McNabb of Orchard Lake to run for that ballot spot, the Livonia New Democratic Coalition (NDC) newsletter published the following:

"THAT AMAZING REPUBLICAN..."

"Jack McDonald (U.S. Rep.) has been something else lately.

"He has joined the Urban Alliance, voted against ABM, has introduced a resolution to impose a stoppage on MIRV (missiles) testing, has signed the presiden-

tial primary petition, has been behind action for the 18-year-old vote, and has sponsored a congressional reform bill that would reduce seniority influence and provide for a new method of selecting chairmen for Congressional committees.

"There isn't one thing on that list an NDC member would even argue against."

SO SAID the New Democratic Coalition of Livonia newsletter of Sept. 25, 1969.

Don't bet that the NDC won't have an attack against McDonald a year later however.

The newsletter is edited by Mrs. Jeanne Havstad, a leading NDC Committee For Peace member helping organize the war moratorium activities locally.

McDonald has been a strong backer of President Richard Nixon's conduct of the Vietnam war, especially since Nixon's Nov. 3 "I have a plan" speech.

Tim Richard writes

Female Companion Makes Big Difference In Lunches

Taking a lady to lunch has certain drawbacks. No, it's not the cost, and the company is pleasant. It's the menu that kills you.

When you take a lady to lunch, you can't saunter over to the saloon to order a hamburger or a Polish sausage and a shell of Bud. You've got to take her where SHE wants to go, and the restaurant knows that it has many female clients.

At a pub where the males are predominant, the menu is direct and to the point: Hamburger, cheeseburger, steak sandwich. It's functional, objective.

THE MENU AT the restaurant where the lady wants to go to lunch, however, is full of "puff," which is what newsmen call PR stuff and advertising. Items from the menu where I recently took a lady to lunch:

"ROSY-PINK SHRIMP, Nestled on Garden-Fresh Salad Greens.

"JULIENNE SALAD BOWL, Crisp salad greens with Julienned Strips of Ham, Turkey and Cheese.

"HOT BEEF SANDWICH, With Creamy Whipped Potatoes and Old-Fashioned Brown Gravy. "ASSORTED SEAFOOD PLATTER, A Delightful Assortment of Seafood Favorites, Fish, Scallops, Frog Legs and Shrimp. (Note: It took 15 words to describe that item, but the species of fish was never identified.)

HERE AT the Observer Newspapers, we insist on coverage in depth - not just who did what when, but also the "why" of the story. But I can only guess at the reasons for the flowery menus where ladies like to go for lunch.

It's as if the writer of the menu thought he had to persuade his customers that they're hungry. It seems like a silly assumption; if they weren't hungry, they wouldn't have come in in the first place.

Yet the restaurant where this lady likes to go seems busy and successful, so one can't accuse the menu writer of being ignorant of his business.

PERHAPS the menu writer

lacks confidence in his own cooking. It has been proven that if a plain sedan and a sporty T-bird are driven by at the same speed, witnesses on the sidewalk will invariably swear that the T-bird was going faster, simply because it looks faster.

In the same way, perhaps the menu writer figures that plain food garnished by adjectives will taste better than plainly labeled food. At least, he can charge a fancier price.

Perhaps it's the psychology of ladies. You take a man - he's direct about admitting his needs. A lady has the same needs, but she must be wooed, if you know what I mean. You have to go through the same kind of ritual to feed her that you do when - well, never mind.

Today when I go to lunch, I'm going to have a hamburger and a beer, then after that maybe a cigar. It won't be an elegant, aromatic, finely-wrapped, neatly-tapered, hi-falutin' cigar. Just a plain cigar.

Editorial & Opinion

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