

points of view

Unsettling

Reunion of chums lacks Mike

IT DIDN'T SOUND like Dick Simmers. But I really didn't expect him to sound as he did nearly 20 years ago when I first met him at the University of Michigan.

At that time I astounded him with tales of my small northern Michigan home. Did it really have only one stoplight? Was the phone book really as thin as a greeting card?

In turn, he planted his tongue in his cheek and introduced me to the Birmingham-Bloomfield area where he grew up. Did I know, he once asked, that Bloomfield Hills named their schools Andover and Labser because the folks thought Central and Western would sound too inner city?

Simmers and I got along pretty well, but we drifted apart after college. First I went to the west side of the state; then he left for points East and South.

Now he was calling from west of Chicago and telling me, incredulously, that it was 15 years since we left Ann Arbor. I should be at the fraternity house Saturday for a reunion of sorts before the football game.

Of course, I needed to know what happened to these guys.



Rich Perlberg

my wife she never would have made the mistake of marrying me if she had only consulted my fraternity brothers first.

Jeff Stoner is now in Farmington Hills and works for Chrysler. Jerry Spagnuolo crunches numbers in Southfield a few minutes from my office.

THE UNKNOWN proximity of these college chums was reason enough for a mental kick in the pants for missing the first get-together five years ago. We all agreed that we couldn't wait another five or 10 years for only a few minutes of con-

versation. We left with vague talk of a Big Chill weekend — either skiing at Boyne or a summer getaway to Lake Huron.

It may be more than just talk, not so much because of the people who were there, but because of one who wasn't.

When Dick first called, I was surprised that he hadn't mentioned Mike. They were high school classmates and pledged the fraternity together. He lived on the Atlantic Coast, last I heard, and I suspected it was inconvenient to come all the way to Ann Arbor.

But the nagging fear that the story was worse was confirmed. Mike — a strong, strapping type who wrestled in intramurals — had died of cancer. It was sudden, stunning and unbelievable. But it was true.

That's why I think we'll do more than talk about a reunion weekend someday. We all know that the thought of "looking Mike up someday" is gone forever.

Rotary fights for kids others have forgotten

FOR A NUMBER of years now service clubs have been taking their share of public criticism for prohibiting membership to females.

And certainly more than a bit of this column has been used to keep that issue in the public eye. Gratefully, the debate is coming to an end with the advent of court rulings and, in some cases, voluntary changes in regulations.

Barely a service club exists today that prohibits women as members.

Compliance is going to go a long way in helping to boost the many worthy causes service clubs help support through their fund-raising efforts.

With the inclusion of women, a veritable legion of volunteer troops now can be added to the ranks of service clubs in furthering worthy causes.

And a cause worth mentioning certainly is the most recent effort by Rotary International.

BLOOMFIELD Rotary member George Moore called the other day to tell the tale. Now I first met George when invited to a speaking



Steve Barnaby

engagement at that chapter. It is highly unlikely that a more enthusiastic and vocal advocate of the Rotary cause exists on the face of this planet.

In short, George can get you pumped up.

At any rate the erstwhile advocate called to tell how Rotary is in the midst of a world campaign to annihilate some childhood diseases that have been nearly forgotten in this very prosperous and fortunate land.

Rotary's first target is polio. You remember that one. Well, some of us do. Thanks to a wonder drug we've just about eradicated polio in the U.S.

But in regions of Africa, the Philippines, Turkey, India and other

Third World countries diseases like polio, measles, mumps, diphtheria and chicken pox are major cripples and killers.

So the Rotary, in conjunction with the World Health Organization, is fighting back.

Rotary International has set a goal of \$120 million to immunize 100 million children against polio by the end of the decade. Each Rotary chapter is doing its part. The two wards and Windsor will contribute \$1 million to the effort.

The Bloomfield chapter, one of the smallest chapters, is contributing \$12,000. This week they proudly present their first installment to Dr. Mav Sanghvi, the Rotary district governor.

It is especially appropriate. Now a successful professional, Dr. Sanghvi grew up in a Third World country and saw firsthand the ravages polio can bring.

That \$12,000, by the way, will save a heck of a lot of kids. Each immunization costs only 12 cents.

Nice work fellas, oh, excuse me. I mean ladies and gentlemen.

Airline lauded for its concern about passengers

IT WAS NOT like turning the clock back. The faces were familiar and the memories were shared, but there were huge gaps. How could Don Gidding, the basketball-playing engineer from Rochester, have a daughter in junior high school? And when did he buy his own business?

Gary Glessner, a former swimmer for Birmingham Seaholm, is now a dentist in Algonac. It's not the end of the world, he said, but you can see it from there.

Dick Lessia, now a San Francisco attorney, is his lovable self. He told

THANK YOU, United Airlines.

That expression of gratitude should be expanded to include Capt. Fred Harris and his crew of United flight No. 374, the Denver police department and the security staff at the Denver airport.

It was just one week ago today that the 131 passengers on this flight's Boeing 727 thought they were within moments of taking off from Denver right on schedule at 3:21 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time, for a non-stop trip to Detroit. Then over the intercom came the voice of Capt. Harris saying there would be a "slight delay."

In seats 7E and 7F, Mother Goose and I could hear a murmur of "Oh, no, what now?" from co-passengers undoubtedly familiar with the fact that we're in an era in which airline problems have become all too common.

BUT THAT murmur halted instantly when the aisle suddenly became alive with men whom any trained reporter could tell were law



through bifocals
Fred DeLano

enforcement officers. They had "that look" even in civilian attire.

They had joined us because Capt. Harris had been alerted by a flight attendant that at the last possible moment, a young woman had left her seat and had rushed back toward the terminal without carrying so much as a purse. A search of the aircraft was ordered.

It didn't take a wizard to see that these trained, efficient specialists were looking for anything in which an explosive device might be hidden.

Luggage was examined and everything aboard, coats, purses, gift boxes et al, had to be identified by their owners. In due time, all were.

The experience so frightened two passengers near us that they took their belongings and left.

THE CONFIDENCE radiated by cooperative flight attendants was reinforced when Capt. Harris came on the speaker again and said the plane had been cleared for takeoff. In effect, he was saying that he was willing to bet his own life we would have a safe flight. All but the two people mentioned put our faith in his decision and when those wheels touched down at Metro, we knew it was the biggest bet we had ever won.

For us this was a first-in-a-life-time experience. But for that matter, the entire week had been too. It had been spent at Lake Tahoe as a gift upon Mother Goose's retirement from our daughter and her husband, Betty and John, who live in Plymouth, and our son and his wife, Bob and Debb, who are making their

home in the Tahoe area at Incline Village at the north end of the lake.

The scenic splendor of the majestic Sierra Mountains which surround the lake is awesome and so are the hotels and gambling casinos such as the Cal-Neva Lodge, which straddles the California-Nevada border, the Hyatt, Del Webb's High Sierra Harrah's, Caesar's and others.

Sure, we left a few quarters in the slots and did a tourist "must" with the 76-mile drive around the lake, but Tahoe's greatest memories with us lie in the people we met.

IT WAS OUR good fortune to be able to peel back the glitter and tinsel and get acquainted with the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker, so to speak. In this we saw pride, respect and love at every turn, be it the restaurateur, engineer, sign painter, insurance salesman, secretary or priest.

A Boy Scout Court of Honor, Sunday services at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, a surprise potluck with more than 30 guests to decorate a Christmas tree and exchange gifts, plus an ever-present community aura of good will blended to create the same sort of confidence we were to find later in that United Airlines pilot.

Yes, they debate the same local issues we do here and have about the same complaints: a paving job that wasn't up to snuff, zoning regulations, and, of course, taxes. I doubt if their arguments last as long as ours, at 7,500 feet above sea level a guy can run out of breath in a hurry.

One last word: not only did we love every moment of it, but when we landed at Metro we had almost made up the time lost from the bomb scare. And United didn't lose a single piece of our luggage!

keeping up with government

LOOKING FOR information about state government? The League of Women Voters has a toll-free telephone service (1-800-292-5823) that may be helpful.

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