

Jackie Klein writes

Reflections Of New Year's Celebration

Winter came in with doubled fists like an unpredictable ruffian flogging the city. Winter is gray bleakness, icy - fingered trees like iridescent confetti, snow powdered lawns and a brown syringa bush that has lost its golden aplomb.

The New Year should come in April, gentle as a young girl soft as the promise of spring, wearing a heady perfume, dressed in shades of green.

New Year is April Fools Day, three months early. The world outside is the colorful coral of dirty brush drawings. Inside of the house it is warm and still.

It has been knitting. My husband is deciding between the Orange Bowl, the Cotton Bowl and the Rose Bowl on color TV. We watch the blue-gold flames dance in the fireplace. We don't make New Year resolutions. The day is a time to reflect.

There aren't any little children in silver tinsel hats playing "Happy New Year" in our living room.

There isn't any off-key tooting of resplendent horns or cranking of noise - makers or dumping of blizzards of confetti.

Only the roar of the football crowd reaches a crescendo on the TV set. That and the tick, tick of the flame and the click, click of my knitting needles break the stillness.

It is a day to reflect. The football commentator yells of fumbles and interceptions. I drop a stitch. Is that what life is all about? Or is it about touchdowns and knitting a fabric that is lasting and long?

I reflect upon the passing of time as the snow falls like soft popcorn. I think, "Youth is a memory, soon." Regret a single moment and another moment passes. Wish the moments away and another moment flees. Opportunity hastens by if you fail to clutch it.

I think about when the children were little and

the house was filled with laughter. Old paths that lure seem smoother in retrospect. But to avoid new footsteps is like tap dancing in your stocking feet to the sound of one hand clapping.

I see nothing in the crackling flames to measure our fate in the new year. Will a war be fought by super chemistry? Will the economists chart Depression? Will the gas tank run dry? Will the rivers run uphill?

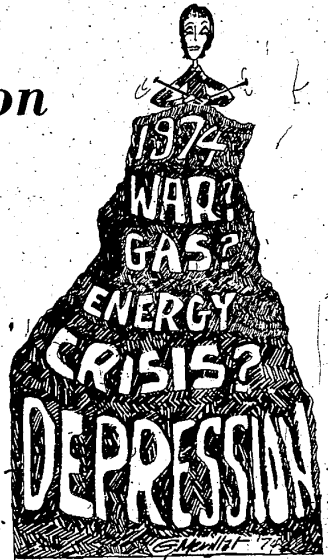
On Dec. 31, as always, we clinked glasses with our friends and drank to a better year. We kept hoping and time doesn't blur the pattern of our dreams. Auld Lang Syne belongs to yesterday.

Do you believe life is a game of chance and cards are shuffled and dealt from unknown sources? You may not like your hand, but you like the game and want to play. You may not win, but you don't want to be counted out.

I put my knitting aside and walk into the kitchen. There stands our grandson's high chair and under it a plastic ring from the toy pyramid he likes to build.

Soon our teen-age Lisa will come bursting in with words colliding in their mad scramble to spill out. The two older ones will call. We have followed the growing footsteps of our children and watched their young hopes run high. But we do not mourn our own lost illusions.

Now, I drink a toast to my husband who sips by my side watching the bowl games. And I take a sip for 1974, whatever it brings.



R. Thompson writes

A Salute To Unsung Heroes

This is the time of the year when residents of Redford Township, Livonia, Plymouth, Garden City and Westland know they are lucky to have the services of the Wayne County Road Commission as well as the individual Departments of Public Works.

Never were the crews of the road commission more appreciated than during the recent snowstorms.

The big one of Dec. 20 and 21 and those that followed during the past week.

It seems just a few years back that main roads were hopelessly blocked after a major snowfall and motorists were lucky to get out of their driveways, let alone get to the major thoroughfares. Then they discovered the roads were still blocked and they had very little hope of getting to jobs if it meant a

drive of more than a block or two.

Time has made a remarkable change when you consider during the recent heavy snowfall. If you were lucky enough to make it out of the drive and over the sidewalks to the main highways, you could go on to work at most any plant in the metropolitan Detroit area.

It wasn't that the roads had been entirely cleared, but the county crews had done an excellent job of getting salt down with the result that all major routes were passable.

That meant the workers had started in the wee hours of the morning to make things reasonably safe and then continued with scrapers to move the snow to the sides while still spreading salt. We have no idea how many continuous hours were spent in making driving much safer. We do know that within 36 hours you could go out any where in western Wayne County without worry.

Continuing the excellent work, the crews shifted their scraping efforts to the side roads in such communities as Redford Township and Livonia, giving motorists a big break for the Christmas activities.

Meanwhile, in those communities which have their own public works departments, crews were doing the same thing. Especially was this true in the city of Plymouth where the DPW takes pride in getting streets cleared as rapidly as possible.

This was an exceptional performance in that Plymouth residents had safe driving much quicker than any of the other communities in what we like to call Observerland.

The sad part of the situation is that efforts of the workers from the road commission and the various DPWs too often go unnoticed. Folks take it for granted that the streets will be cleared quickly for the simple reason that they were in previous snowstorms.

Few if any consider the conditions the road crews face and the long hours they put in to get the job done.

We doff our hats to the heroes of the storms. They have to brave roads covered with deep snow, hidden icy spots and risk their own lives to make things safer for us ordinary drivers.

The next time we are hit with heavy snows or sleet rains that make the driving so bad, take a few seconds to offer thanks for the unsung heroes of the highways.

Fred DeLano writes

New Lawyers Get Challenge To Solve Today's Disputes

As we near the mid-mark of the 70s, a decade which has yet to gain the permanent identification by which historians will know it, there continues to be indications that if nothing else this era of social turmoil will go down as one of significant change. For better or for worse it is too early to tell.

Not the least of the areas under scrutiny is our system of criminal justice. A subject to which Wayne County Circuit Judge George E. Bowles devoted considerable attention during remarks welcoming a recent new class of lawyers into the State Bar.

Bowles is a Plymouth resident, who is among the most respected jurists in Michigan, a devoted student of the law whose counsel commands attention throughout the legal profession. When he speaks, people listen.

Thus, when he revealed two of his own greatest concerns in his address to the newly admitted lawyers, it was worth the time for society in general to pay heed.

"The lawyer who looks upon the law, principally, as a money-making calling deems both the law and herself or himself," said the judge as he challenged the neophytes to give part of their time and skill to the profession itself in keeping with a canon of the American Bar Association which states:

"Changes in human affairs and imperfections in human institutions make necessary constant efforts to maintain and improve our legal systems. They (lawyers) should participate in proposing and supporting legislation and programs to improve the system, without regard to the general interests or desires of clients or former clients."

Two fields of the law which, said Bowles, "invite fundamental re-assessment because of inadequate present knowledge or questionable presuppositions" are family law and the criminal justice system.

"Through no-fault divorce, we have made it easy to divorce; but even before no-fault, and even more so now, we do not know whether people are happier after divorce, whether the ease of dissolution finds them unready, and whether the best interests of children are achieved through easier divorce."

There are many theories but no solid empirical data to enable the judiciary to do its job. The force of the court and the marriage counseling

division, to know whether public policy is begetting more breakdown or better family life. In this venture, the lawyer's skills would not be enough. You would need to work with other professionals.

Turning to the criminal justice system, Bowles characterized it as an area "where debate is swirling as never before."

There have been successive tides of public sentiment for reform for more than a century, he said, with the setting about the same riots and strikes by prisoners, followed by suppression of insurgents, the media clamoring for investigation and finally, broad agreement that "something must be done."

"This time it would appear that change is going to occur," conceded Bowles as he cited contrasting claims on whether a hard prison system does or does not work to society's best advantage.

"The winds of change are blowing in at least two very different directions," he cautioned the new lawyers. "These two approaches are on a collision course."

"The one is the approach of strengthening and improving correctional management that is, re-enforcing the system."

"The second approach is to challenge that system frontally and to look toward its eventual abolition through reducing the discretionary powers of correctional officials, through improvements in the

10 Things '74 Should Bring

- Now is the time for all good politicians and public officials to get those 1974 resolutions in writing for the new year.
- In case, our public leaders were late in drafting their resolutions, we have a few suggestions in which they and their constituents will certainly benefit.
- First, suburban officials and the Southeast Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) should step up efforts to get an effective public bus - and - or - train commuter system going to discourage people from using their cars from getting to and from work.
- Second, elected officials should by word and deed support Gov. William Milliken's proposed "clean politics bill." That bill requires full, public disclosure of campaign financing and tells voters who have their hands in whose wallets.
- Third, candidates in the 1974 congressional, state, and county elections should promise to mount clean issue - oriented campaigns instead of the "anti - school busing, my opponent is a bum" style seen too many times in the past.
- Fourth, the state legislature should local governing boards should move away, if not actually, abolish the frequent executive sessions where public business is decided in private without the benefit of public input into those issues.
- Fifth, suburban officials should stop knocking the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments at regional government while, at the same time, pleading for more money from state and federal agencies.
- Sixth, the state legislature should make a meaningful effort to reform public school financing so that local property taxes aren't the primary source of support for Michigan children.
- Seventh, local school officials and state legisla-

tors should start thinking of positive alternatives to cross - district school busing instead of wasting time turning out form resolutions explaining why they are opposed to the concept.

Eighth, local school boards should recognize that high school girls, who make up about half of a school's enrollment, are getting the short end of the athletic budget and correct the problem.

Ninth, church leaders should concern themselves more with raising the spiritual levels of their constituents instead of just improving their social life and patting them on the back for perfect Sunday church attendance.

Tenth, all elected and civic leaders should work harder for solutions to community problems instead of merely enunciating more clever variations of the problems facing us.

By LEONARD POGER

Many Kids Unwanted

EDITOR:

A response to "Don't Abort, Offer Child For Adoption" letter by Verda Bonello.

The "Life" people are using the same tool, fear, guilt and anxiety. Now it is Senate Bill 221, "Contraceptive Injunction in the Schools." They loudly and emotionally expressed their religious beliefs at the hearing in Lansing, like Verda Bonello did. Veneral disease, drug abuse, problem pregnancies among the young are increasing.

The representatives in Washington authorized \$50 million to study child abuse because that battered child is not only in the hospitals; he is in the mental institutions, criminal and divorce courts, our schools and streets. Who is responsible for that and what to do are the reasons for the research.

Mrs. Bonello said "there are no unwanted children." There were 29,302 children waiting for adoption in Michigan in July 1972, according to the Social Service Office. Where are the homes and parents for those children? Have the "Life" people found homes and adopted those children who happen to be malformed, mentally retarded or undesirable? What is the difference between those living children and the unborn?

Mature, responsible understanding of one's reproductive ability and its control will help to prevent the unwanted pregnancy and abortion or adoption. Who can know the degree in the evil of an abortion or adoption but the mother who knows the pain and anguish of parting, whether it is before or after birth?

We must concentrate our efforts and work together to prevent it. Permit those parents who do not know how to teach their children at home or anywhere else to include contraceptive information with sex education, which is permitted now in schools.

Write to your representative in Lansing and the Committee on Education. Urge the committee to get it off the floor and your representative to vote for it. Rep. Lucille McCullough, the chairman, is not in favor of the bill. She wants to table it in committee.

SOPHIE DRUTCHAS
Redford Township

Tim Richard writes

Bullard Bill Poses Problems

In all honesty, I think I've earned a decent reputation among women's liberationists inasmuch as I castigate female politicians as severely as males, chess, do reporters as well as the bucks and make my wife clean her share of the fish.

So it's no male chauvinist pig who says that State Rep. Perry Bullard has gone too far in a bill requiring "equal language" for women in some of our state laws.

Bullard, the long-haired Ann Arbor Democrat, says words like "person" should be substituted for "man" in some of our labor and military laws, and "chairperson" should replace "chairman" in some of our state laws.

Ann Arbor Democrat, says words like "person" should be substituted for "man" in some of our labor and military laws, and "chairperson" should replace "chairman" in some of our state laws.

Are we to hound the company which owns the copyright on Charles Darwin's book and get it to change the title to "The Descent of Person?"

What about the "Peasants' comic strip? Are the kids to organize leagues to build "snowpersons?"

We who write headlines for a living will have a heck of a time getting "chairperson" into a one column head.

To theologians, "man" is a generic term referring to a body and soul or spirit. In that context, you can't substitute the word "person" because a corporation is a person, too.

Lovers of the sea will find their talk chaotic. Is a ship never more to be referred to as "she?" Since women as well as men wear the military uniform of our glorious land, is a "man-of-war" now to be called a "person-of-war"? Are those in the

shipping business supposed to call their craft "merchant-persons" instead of "merchantmen?"

We on Observer Newspapers copy desk, the final arbiters of questions of literary style, look in our modern dictionary and see: "The Man" as black slang for a white authority. Should we change all articles to "The Person?" The NAACP and the ACLU might have something to say about that interference in a sub-culture.

The problem both intriguing and pains me, Margaret Miller, who edits our Women's whoops! Observing Life section, found that women who in the mid-1960s identified themselves as Mrs. John Jones changed it to Mrs. Mary Jones by 1970 and just plain Mary Jones by 1972. That's all right by me.

But "cowperson???" Never !!!

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