

editorial opinion

Servers' dilemma of '70s is woman lib customer

A good friend has been lobbying for me to write on the trials and tribulations of women footing the bill when dining with male companions.

The problem, she says, is waiters and waitresses who have been programmed always to give the check to the guy. An independent sort, she feels it is only fair that occasionally she pick up the tab.

But because of the role playing developed in our society it has been difficult for her to enforce this doctrine of fairness.

A VICTIM of chauvinistic practices, I always felt guilty if a woman companion offered to pay for a meal. But thanks to her, I'm becoming quite comfortable in sitting back, chewing on a toothpick, and watching as she dives into her purse, much to the waiter's chagrin.

It really must be something of a traumatic experience for restaurant personnel to run into such militancy—especially when the person is so darn good looking. Most of the uninformed are under the impression that women's libbers are the ugly girls who couldn't get a guy anyway. They know better after having encountered my friend.

It has been an amazing experience, though, watching the shenanigans she must go through to pay a check. The scenario always is the same.

The person waiting tables always puts the check on my side of the table. My friend, being of a bold nature, indignantly grabs the check and noticeably slams it down next to her plate accompanied by an appropriately annoyed frown.

This brings a look of consternation across the server's face.

(For the sake of brevity, and in the spirit of his article, waiters and waitresses shall be referred to as servers.)

My friend diligently surveys the check, figuring out the needed amount for a tip. Meanwhile, I bury my face in a cup of coffee to hide a smile from those around us who begin to watch the action.

After much shuffling through her purse, my friend flips the money onto the tray. The server, after informing colleagues a strange phenomenon is taking place at table six, walks up, flashes a



crooked smile, grabs the check, money and tray and escapes.

Now for the best part.

MY FRIEND feverishly waits for the server's return. So do half the restaurant patrons.

To whom will the server give the change? A hum of debate can be heard throughout the restaurant as my friend loudly proclaims, "Why do they always bring the check to you?"

At this point even my smile gets a little crooked. Crusaders are great folks, but one must learn to grin and bear it if fraternizing (or sortizing or whatever) with them.

Meanwhile, the victimized server debates with colleagues in the corner. This has to be the ultimate challenge for the server of the '70s.

After what seems hours, the server sets out on the long trek to our table. All eyes are fixed in our general direction.

Servers' decisions have been split. Some defiantly approach the table and bravely let the change tray on my side and, with a glassy stare, march away. Others place the tray in the middle, somewhere around the dim candle. Still others have taken the hint and present the tray to the lady—with some trepidation that my male ego may have been bruised.

Whatever the outcome, my friend grabs the change, plunks down a tip and triumphantly marches from the scene.

Another victory has been recorded for women's liberation—and that extra cash in my pocket doesn't feel bad after all.



Spicing up senior clubs

Weeks have gone by since a woman from Troy filed for suggestions on how to form a seniors without partners group and how to encourage the men to attend.

She spoke of senior parties where the married ones dance with their husbands and the rest sit. She also added that the few single men who do show up often are overwhelmed with attention from the single ladies.

It is a sad situation, but far from unusual in the ranks of singles. No matter what the age, it is easier socially for single men than women. Some of them may disagree and I only realized a short time back when talking with one of the men that it's not all roses.

Some, married for many years who now find themselves single, don't know how to cope with attention. Others find it silly and some of the actions border on disgust. Some revel in the attention and strut and flutter like a bantam rooster.

A few retreat and hole up.

AND THE OTHER part of this picture is equalizing. This young oriented society overlooks or takes light of the fact that older people thrive on an interesting social life as much as their younger counterparts.

Long-time friend and Southfield senior coordinator Willow Lippert is keenly aware of all of these problems. She has developed an excellent program (or programs) for seniors in her area. She stays away from a seniors without partners group.

"I don't like to segregate. Besides, if you try to organize senior singles, you'll start with an almost total female group. I get a number of calls about this very problem."

"I don't think most single senior men want to

be pegged as single. But men will turn out for our meal program and the men, both married and single, come to play pool. We're reaching the men through specific programs such as bowling and as many of our women as men bowl. I am also using men on my staff—both as paid and unpaid volunteers. If men see other men involved, they'll come out."

THIS AGE GROUP, says Mrs. Lippert, are conscious of sex roles. While the men attend sculpture classes, few, if any, will join a table of women doing handicrafts.

"The men who are crafters are doing it quietly on the side."

In January, she plans to start a woodcrafter program which she feels will appeal to men.

"But don't," she warns, "let the women do all the programming and planning. Get the men involved. For meals, let them help with the serving. If they're involved, they'll come out."

Mrs. Lippert has dispelled many of the myths about seniors with her dynamic programming. There may still be senior coordinators who think cards, bingo and punch are the answer to senior needs, but the number who believe there isn't much more than three no trump to life after 60 is shrinking fast.

The best way to meet members of the opposite sex is still through friends or in hobby and interest groups. Not too many of us are Lana Turners who can sit on a drug store stool and be discovered.

And off the subject... no better time than New Year's Day to sit down and take another look at those goals which can play such a guiding role in our lives. Happy New Year.

Your ecology calendar

Ecology-minded persons who wish to save cans, bottles or newspapers recycling may use these facilities:

To prepare glass, thoroughly wash containers, remove all metal caps or rings from the glass and separate glass by color.

To prepare cans, clean only. Paper not to be removed.

Newspapers should be tied in bundles with heavy string or rope or secured in heavy paper bags.

• PONTIAC—Oakland County Recycling Center, 500 S. Telegraph, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. every Saturday. Groups bringing in more than 500 lbs. of glass will receive \$10 per ton for glass.

• BIRMINGHAM—Daily newspaper pickup with regular trash. Newspapers must be bundled separately.

• LATHRUP VILLAGE—At the Public Services Building, 19101 Twelve Mile Road, adjacent to the high school. Newspapers are collected 10 a.m.-2 p.m. by volunteers the first Saturday of each month.

• SOUTHFIELDFIn the old city of fies, 28000 Berg Road at Ten and One-half Mile, block east of Telegraph.

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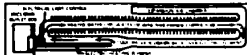
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CARRIER WINS PORTABLE TV

Keith Abbott, 15, proudly displays the new portable television set that he earned as a Farmington Observer & Eccentric carrier during November. Keith is a student at Harrison High School and has been delivering the Observer & Eccentric to the residents of the Spring-Wellington-Eastbrook

Beech Hills - 13 Mile Rd. - Chermood Ct. - Westbrook
Jolley - Middlebelt - 12 Mile Rd. area since January, 1971. The portable television is only one of the many prizes that carriers have the chance to win, in addition to their monthly receipts.

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