POINTS OF VIEW

Help group aiding those with MD in many ways

te last year I wrote a

ato last year I wrote a column about a young man I met at a Christinna Evo party. The child, about 3 years old, couldn't walk; at the time, his parenta were waiting to see if the diagnosis was a spinal problem or muscular dystophy. One point of the column was the par-allel to Tiny Tim in Dickens" 'A Christmas Story.' It was Christmas Evo and hore was a small child, unable to walk, happily playing with the host's dog and watching the lights on the tree. Meanwhile, his parents were telling us that the little boy's present, that he had so been looking forward to — his first wheel chair — had failed to arrive in time for Christmas. His parents. first wheel chair — had failed to arrive in time for Christmas. His parents were kind of matter-of-fact about it, but the rest of us were seething that a company could be so insensitive to the needs of a little boy one day before Cheistence

needs of a little boy one day before Christmas. A lot of you read that column and called to see if there was anything you

lly about the same time they received the diagnosis for their son — he is af-flicted with a type of muscular dystro-



I'd also shown up to discuss how we could help the little boy's family. Instead, the boss ordered the first of what would be many, many beers and handed me a letter. I stuffed it, un-opened, in my wife's purse, a favorite earry, adi since I really couldn't read anyway at that point in time, contin-ued the sevening.

anyway at that point in time, contin-ued the evening. The next morning, I opened the let-ter. "You mentioned that over 70 peo-

ple were touched by the article and wondered what they might do to help," it said. "Though wo need a used full-size van to transport our son and his electric wheel chair, in the interest of doing what's socially responsible, we suggest people make donations to the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Muscular Dystrophy Association. "MDA will help us and many others purchase new braces, buy wheel chairs, and pay other necessary medical costs. To provide some perspective, our son"s leg braces for 1993 will cost somewhere between \$5,000 and \$5,800." The little boy's wheel chair came in at \$11,000, and the letter, from the father, notes that even if his insurance pays 80 per-cent of all this, and a few other costs, his out-of-packet expenses will be at least \$4,000, not including modifica-tions to their home, a van, a wheel chair lift, and on and on."

"Your readers are already helping through their tax dollars and their "donations to the various charities," the letter continued. "I can vouch that or-ganizations like MDA put their money to good use. I can also assure them that more money is needed.

"And if you know a family with a disabled child, offer to babysit... they're great kids." His point was that many people feel uncomfortable baby-sitting for disabled children — but there's no need to feel awkward. They need help just like any other child.

The address of the MDA office to send contributions is 2200 Canton Center Road, Suite 170, Canton 48188, or, for additional information, please call 937-9123.

'warriors'

flicted with a type of muscular dystro-phy. At first, they seemed interested in letting us pursue the story by sending out a photographer and reports. Then, they hacked off, asying it was their re-sponsibility and it would be should-end by their family. Then they changed their mind again. I received a call from the father, who said that while they now had the wheel chair, they still weren't as mobile as they might have liked to be, because the wheel chair would only fit in a spe-cially equipped van. They didn't have one, and the price tag on a van outfit-ted with the necessary stuff hovers around \$20,000. And then I met with the bass of the

And that's on one income — the fa-ther's.

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And then I met with the boss of the little boy's father in Plymouth's Box Bar. I had come to visit with him and his wife, since they're great people, but ouble standard exists for some macho Boy does that get The Feminist up-

he Feminist is really steamed this time. I can tell. Otherwise she wouldn't have been calling the White House the other night. Or Don Riegle. Or Carl Levin. Or Bill Ford. In Washington, no less. Couldn't settle for a local call. Oh, no. Anyway, what's got her agitated is all the flap over Bill Clinton's attempt to beep his campaign promise to lift the ban over gays enlisting in the military. It's not Clinton she's upset with, mind you. It's the reaction from the mach/ bozo/bubba crowd that's got her going. bozo/bubba crowd that's got her going. "I don't want to share a shower with some gay guy who's gonna tell me I've got a nice ass," Bubba Number 1 tells

got a nice ass," Bubba Number 1 tells the talk radio host. "And I don't want to sleep in the same burracks with these guys" Bozo Number 2 adds. "I don't want some guy comin' on to me in the Enlisted Men's Club," says Macho Number 3.

Boy does that get The Feminist up-set. "What about some straight guy com-ing on to a woman? What about some macho jerk telling her she has a nice ass and then wondering why she gets upset about it? What's the difference?" The difference, of course, is that when Mr. Mache comes on to a "broad" or a "chick" or some other des-criptive term that can't be published in this nowspaper, he figures that's "nor-mal." She shouldn't make a big deal out of it. Cuys are like that. But if a gay male comes on to a straight "warrior," foch that's different. The fock that a signal — a signal that he could, God forbid, be gay himself. The fact is these "warriors" are scared out of their pants — or they re-

scared out of their pants — or they're afraid they will be. And they just con't



take it. These are the same antediluvian ma-chismos who didn't get it when Anita Hill was accusing Clarence Thomas of sexual harassment. Most of them, of course, didn't believe her anyway. But these who conceded that she *might* be telling the truth figured it was no big deal Laren to live with it, baby. Get a deal. Learn to live with it, baby. Get a life

The fascinating thing about this whole brouhaha is that all of the out-rage is coming from macho males. I ha-ven't heard any women complaining or any men bringing up the point — that lifting the ban on gays in the mili-tary applies to gay women as well as gay men.

The straight women don't seem to be incensed about sharing a barracks, or even a shower, with gay women. At least they're not screaming about it.

And as far as harassment goes, it's the gay men who are getting the crap beat out of them by the straights. Any box who thinks a gay is going to come on to him in a shower occupied by 20 other machos had better think again. Or maybe just think. Who are the vic-tion has a surrow? tims here anyway? A couple of years ago when some

military women attending the conven-tion of the Tailhook Association were

forced to run a "gauntlet" in which they were fondled and sometimes dis-robed, there was no great public outery. Women's groups wore incensed and the Navy promised an investigation, but the bubbas were curiously silent. And in Birmingham recently when the schools introduced a sex education curriculum that dealt, in small part, with homosexuality, a vecal group of protesters were outraged. They didn't want their kids being taught that stuff in school. in school.

All of the uproar that's been sweep All of the uproar that's been sweep-ing the country for the past 10 days is proof to me why that kind of "stuff" should be taught. If there were a little less ignorance and a little more toler-ance, this whole "issue" wouldn't even over

exist. Jack Gladden is a copy editor for Ob-server & Eccentric Newspapers. His touchtone voice mail number is (313) 953-2047 Ext. 2124.



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