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Lists of school needs don't contain any frills

Back in the pioneer days, everybody in the community would turn out and volunteer his time and whatever materials his family had to build a one-room school.

After reading about the condition of the Corsicana schools last week, we wonder if it's time for another all-out community effort to get our schools in good shape.

Three school board members — Bill Harrison, Ed Blackburn, and Dr. James Curington — spent 2½ months studying school needs.

Their report, issued last week, indicated that the schools are in deplorable shape.

They made two recommendations: One was for $150,000 in immediate improvements — which the members agree would not bring the schools up to par.

The second consisted of four pages of needs they labeled "additional needs," which they said should be undertaken when the money is available.

The two lists were published Wednesday and Thursday in the Daily Sun, and we ran photos of some of the items Sunday.

If you looked at those needs, you know there were few — if any — frills on either list. They were primarily needs of painting, caulking, drainage correction, sealing and waterproofing, ceiling tiles, electrical outlets and more classroom and storage space.

Those aren't frills. They are basic necessities.

If you want to look for frills, there are some athletic improvements on the "additional needs" list you might consider — new tennis courts, a girls' gym, a swimming pool, and an all-weather track.

We don't consider them frills either. We think they're a vital part of the total program, and we'd like to see a bond issue on them, as we mentioned yesterday. That would give the entire community a chance to judge them.

Nobody would quibble with the fact that virtually everything on both lists is a basic necessity. How can you argue against replacing a missing stair rail at Lee? More restroom space for the Language-Learning Disability Program at Drane? Termite control where they're already eating the wood-work?

Several things are needed.

One is the bond program which we mentioned yesterday. The sports facilities and the extra classroom space can be put into a bond election. That lets the people have a say, and it frees more general revenue for repairs.

The second thing that's needed is commitment from the school board to spend the money that's available. Some of those "additional needs" aren't additional at all. They're present necessities, and they should be treated as such.

The school board currently has more than $170,000 in extra money, some surplus funds left from the last action by the Legislature and some from the sale of property to Safeway. There will probably be more extra money coming from the current legislative deliberations.

School trustees should make a commitment to spending the money for needed repairs before the present situation gets worse and for preventive maintenance to halt deterioration. Nobody's going to call the school board "spendthrift" for painting and puttying and fixing ceilings.

And, third, we all ought to see what we can do to help the schools. If there's a tree to be cut down at Drane and a fence to be relocated, aren't there volunteers interested enough in education to see that these things get done? Are there some electricians who would help out on the electrical problems? Some painters who would donate some time and expertise? Some merchants to furnish materials free or at cost? Perhaps even some volunteer funds to help put the athletic plant back in shape.

That goes back to the one-room school concept. But the work residents put into that school made it "their" school, and they were justifiably proud of it. In fact, it wasn't a bad concept at all.

Send 'em in for IRS to tear up

Never in the course of human taxation have so many people been put to so much trouble for so little purpose.

Each year, American businesses spend millions of dollars and devote millions of manhours to assembling tons of documents which, by law, they must submit to the Internal Revenue Service. The documents detail the wages, dividends, interest and other payments they have made to individuals and other corporations.

Contrary to the general belief that the all-seeing computers of the IRS then crosscheck these records against individual and corporate tax returns, 60 per cent of the documents regarding individuals and 100 per cent of those regarding corporations are routinely destroyed without anybody even looking at them.

This year, the IRS will shred, pulverize and burn about 250 million unexamined documents submitted by businesses to assist the service in detecting cheating, says the Wall Street Journal. The IRS is, in fact, buying 11 new pulverizing machines, costing $80,000 each, to help destroy the documents.

It is not that the tax collectors place all that much trust in the honesty of the Ammerican taxpayer. They are simply overwhelmed. But if this revelation tempts any individual to fudge a bit in reporting his sources of income next April 15, he should bear in mind that the chances are still four out of 10 that his return will be cross checked against data supplied by his employer, bank, etc., and that the unrelenting goal of the IRS is to improve those odds — in its favor, that is.

the small society — by Brickman

Your Money's Worth

SYLVIA PORTER

Mopeds are catching on

At one of the busiest and classiest shopping corners in New York City a couple of days ago, I saw two attractive young women demonstrating a bicycle to which a motor had been attached. Along with a few dozen others, I stopped to look, listen and consider buying the vehicle for short-distance, fuel-sarting trips during this new era of major energy conservation.

On a highway out of the city this past weekend, I watched a middle-aged man and woman pedaling similar motor-bicycles at a respectable speed of 35-40 miles an hour. They wore helmets, seemed comfortable and just as much at ease (if not more so) than the auto drivers going at 55-60 mph in the faster driving lanes.

THE MOPED — a form of motor bicycle that has swept over Europe in recent years — is finally getting its wheels on the ground in the U.S. after a hard fought campaign by its manufacturers. The vehicle is still relatively unknown here but, as a result of becoming legal in New York state a few months ago, the forecast is it will quickly gain wide acceptance.

It could be a boon for the short-distance driver, particulary the younger among you, eager to save money on fuel. It can go as far as 200 miles on a gallon of gas. It sells for $300 to $500 and maintenance costs are low. It can make its way through traffic jams with enviable ease.

Pollution is no problem. Emission levels have not been high enough even to warrant study by the Environmental Protection Agency. The noise level is below that of cars or motorcycles. Insurance costs as of now are about the same as for a small motorcycle, about $100 a year for a typical policy covering an adult driver.

AS FOR further safety regulations, this question is now being reviewed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The NHTSA's tentative conclusion is that the accident pattern for mopeds is similar to that for motorcycles rather than bicycles.

While the motorized bike has long been very popular in Europe, it was only a short while ago that its European manufacturers decided we in the U.S. were ready for a low-gas means of transportation. Passage of the New York legislation for the moped (pronounced MOE-ped), toughest in the nation, well may set a guideline for other state regulations.

Under the New York rules, a moped that can travel at more than 17 mph must be registered and carry insurance. Drivers of mopeds that can travel at 30 or more mph must be licensed and wear helmets.

All drivers must be at least 16 years of age. Mopeds not engineered for more than 17 mph are free of regulation.

EARLIER, New Jersey had legalized the moped with few restrictions, but it is now weighing more stringent rules.

In Bermuda, where the moped has been a standard vehicle for resident and tourist alike, accidents and rules have been minimal. In fact, the island some time ago loosened the ban on two-on-a-bike, because it found accidents soared when new husbands anxiously looking back for the safety of their brides on separate bikes, ended up in ditches along the narrow roads.

A category of accidents in the U.S. has involved adults whose driver's licenses had been suspended or revoked and who had turned to mopeds for transportation.

ON HELMETS, concern is expressed that a commuter who buys the moped as an economy energy saver will object to wearing a helmet with a business suit. Some states have dropped the helmet requirement.

Even without the intensifying drive for energy conservation, a cheap motor-bicycle probably would have become a part of the U.S. transportation system. It has a use for short-distance commuting, assuming you are young and agile enough to ride a bike and handle the pedaling. It can get through urban traffic congestion without inviting heartaches among all nearby automobile drivers; a young homemaker easily could use it for many neighborhood chores.

WITH THE spur of President Carter's energy proposals, the moped's manufacturers have received a tremendous boost.

For tips on mopeds, write the Motorized Bicycle Assn., 1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 and request a copy of "Motorized Bicycling ... Made Safe and Sensible." It's free. —

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Ann Landers

Retracting a little

DEAR READERS: Recently I printed a letter from a woman whose husband enjoyed dressing up in her clothes. I said, "Some psychiatrists say all transvestites are either homosexual or bisexual."

That sentence unleashed a flood of angry responses from hundreds of transvestites, their wives and sweethearts. I was told in no uncertain terms (and unprintable language) that I am "off my nut," "crazy as a loon," "ill-informed," "living in the Dark Ages," and to "crawl back under that rock."

From Tucson, Ariz.: Take it back. You made an awful lot of trouble for me. I enjoy dressing up in women's clothes — have for years. My wife loves to see me put on a fashion show. I am neither bisexual nor am I homosexual. Our sex life is great. After your column appeared, my wife kept me up half the night insisting that I tell her what guy I am seeing on the side. Please print this letter so she will get off my back. I swear I am straight.

From Louisville, Ky.: Listen, you creep, I have been cross-dressing for 20 years and anyone who calls me a homo gets a fat lip. It's a great way to relax and have a little fun. No one has seen me in my outfits but my wife. She thinks it's O.K. and it's nobody else's business.

From Orlando, Fla.: My wife and I have been married 12 years and I have never looked at another woman — or a man. I resent your statement that just because I enjoy dressing in ladies' gowns and slippers that I am a homosexual. We play these little games about once a week in the privacy of our home. Once in a while we invite another couple in who enjoy the same thing. But we never swap partners and I have no desire to make love to a man. Please get your facts straight.

From Berwyn, Ill.: My boyfriend is beautiful. I wish I were half as good-looking. He surprised me one day by bringing a complete female wardrobe along on a weekend trip. The two of decided to go to a first-class restaurant for dinner with him wearing his best dress. It thrilled me when heads turned to look at the gorgeous "gal" — not ME — him. He is straight as a rail and is a fantastic lover. If a man makes a pass at him when he is dressed up he becomes very indignant. I can't speak for the others, but I can tell you my guy is no homo. Run a retraction, Kiddo.

So now, Dear Readers, I will repeat my original statement: "SOME psychiatrists say all transvestites are either homosexual or bisexual." Please note the word "SOME."

I have checked further and have additional opinions from two of Chicago's most distinguished psychiatrists. Both Dr. George Pollock, Director of the Institute of Psychoanalysis in Chicago, and Dr. Harold Visotsky, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at Northwestern University Medical School and Northwestern Memorial Hospital, said as follows: Approximately 20 per cent of the cross-dressers are either homosexual or bisexual, but the majority are heterosexual and have no interest in other males. They get their jollies dressing up and that's as far as they go. When I asked Dr. Pollock if such behavior was "normal" (a word most psychiatrists deplore) he replied, "Not if the cross-dressing produces an orgasm."

— now you have an idea of what my week has been like. How was yours?

DEAR ANN: A friend (?) who thinks she is the world's best cook served a very nice souffle at a luncheon recently. I asked for the recipe and she gave it to me — grudgingly.

I followed the instructions carefully (I'm no beginner) and it turned out to be the worst mess I ever saw. I phoned her the next morning and asked if perhaps she had left something out of the recipe.

She screamed, "That's an insult! There must be something wrong with your stove," and slammed down the receiver.

Now I suspect she DID leave something out. Was it wrong to call her? — **Out Ten Eggs And Lots Of Cheese**

DEAR OUT: Souffles are delicate and capricious things. It may well have been your stove. I don't feel you insulted her, however. She must have an awfully short fuse — poor thing.

Address letters to Ann Landers, P.O. Box 11995, Chicago, Ill. 60611, enclosing 50 cents in coin and a long, stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Dr Lamb

Check exercise pain

By Lawrence E. Lamb, M.D.

DEAR DR. LAMB — I tried the exercises of raising my feet up, out, back together and down. I did this 25 times to tighten my belly.

After doing the exercises on two occasions, about two weeks apart, I question what I am doing wrong. After each time my legs felt heavy for about three days.

I am 43 years old, male, weigh slightly under 150, am 5 feet 10 and run a mile in seven minutes five times a week.

Does lifting the feet cause the blood to flow in an unnatural way and therefore cause the problem?

When I lift my legs without spreading them out and back I don't seem to have the tiredness in legs.

DEAR READER — It shouldn't affect the circulation to your legs but if you have any tendency to have back problems the way you are doing it may affect spinal nerves to that area.

What are you doing wrong? Quite a bit. First you should start at a low level — perhaps five times a day and gradually increase the amount.

Then you need to be sure you are contracting your lower abdominal muscles and not simply straining your back muscles. You do that by consciously tightening your abdominal muscles as you do the exercise.

I think it is better to change the way you do your leg lifts too. First bring your feet up to your buttocks, then push them up, out and back down to the floor. You will be making a circle with your feet. Since your feet will be up with a short lever arm, because of the bent knees you won't put so much sudden leverage on your back muscles as you are doing with a straight lift of your feet from the floor with your current method.

After you have done this for a couple of weeks and have built up your lower abdominal strength, then as you straighten your legs with the feet off the floor in the last half of the cycle you can stop and hold your heels off the floor for a short interval. Be sure you are able to hold your abdominal muscles tight during this phase.

Individuals with weak backs should check how they plan to do such exercises with their doctors before starting a program or they may have more trouble than you have had. For very weak people you can do one leg at a time until you gain more strength.

And you should be consistent. One day of overdoing it followed by a week or more of doing nothing will not help you and can be harmful.

DEAR DR. LAMB — Would you please explain what platelets (thrombocytes) are? What effects do they have on people?

DEAR READER — Platelets are small oval shaped cells found normally in your blood. They are important in blood clotting mechanisms. Individuals without enough healthy platelets may have blood clotting diseases. The platelets tend to clump together at the site of bleeding and also influence the contraction of the clot.

There are about 250,000 platelets in one milliliter. There are about three to four ml in a teaspoon.

(NEWSPAPER ENTERPRISE ASSN.)

May 9

Today in History

Harris president at NJC

Here

May 9, 1977

Secretary W.J. Rochelle and Lion J.H. Evertts of the Corsicana Lions Club left today for Houston, where they will attend the state Association of Lions Club meeting.

May 9, 1952

Orrie Harris of Corsicana has been selected president of the Navarro Junior College Student Body during a college election held this week. Don Pevehouse, Corsicana, was elected vice president.

May 9, 1967

Mr. and Mrs. Hollis Riggs and Mr. and Mrs. Darwood Garrett attended the Texas Hair Stylist and Barber Convention held this past weekend at Western Hill Inn in Euless.

Elsewhere

Today is Monday, May 9, the 129th day of 1977. There are 236 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history:

On this date in 1936, Italy annexed Ethiopia, and King Victor Emmanuel was proclaimed emperor.

On this date:

In 1502, Christopher Columbus set out from Cadiz, Spain, on his fourth and last voyage to the New World.

In 1926, U.S. Navy Commander Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennett became the first men to make an airplane flight over the North Pole.

In 1944, during World War II, the Soviets recaptured the Black Sea naval base of Sevastopol.

In 1967, President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress during a visit to Washington.

In 1963, an agreement was reached to halt racial violence in Birmingham, Ala.

In 1974, the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee began its formal inquiry into the conduct of President Richard Nixon.

Ten years ago: Zakir Husain became the first Moselm president of India.

Five years ago: Hundreds of U.S. planes and a naval force struck anew at North Vietnam after American mining of the country's ports to cut off supplies.

One year ago: New earthquakes hit northeastern Italy, bringing the known death toll to 753.

Today's birthdays: Singer Hank Snow is 63 years old. The activist Catholic priest, Daniel Berrigan, is 56.

Thought for today: "A thing is not necessarily true because a man dies for it" — Oscar Wilde, Irish writer, 1854-1900.

Berry's World

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"This has been a particularly rough day! I just heard Bert Lance is discouraging government agencies from using consultants!"

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