



Last month, right about this time, I had this really nifty story all typed up neat and pretty, I even spell checked it so that General Editor would have a marginal idea of what I was trying to say. I named the document, I saved the document and it slipped peacefully into that mystical computer memory bank. It is here that I encourage the literary fermentation process to take over. Fermentation, to an amateur scribe like myself, is *de rigueur*. During the twenty four hour period that lapses between input and printing, creative sugars bubble interactively. This process magically transforms the nebulous prattle that I have typed into the semi-literate prattle that you read. I do not question the process, I am grateful for it. Well, as luck would have it, the fermentation process on this particular morsel somehow went amok. I can only surmise that this story was simply a literary feast; a veritable cornucopia of tastefully present concepts. It must have been so rich, in fact, that the fermentation sugars simply OD'd on themselves. Instead of improving on this banquet, the computer simply ate it. Chewed it up. Swallowed. Digested. And, flatly refused to burp back any of it.

Attempting to recreate a column, especially a jewel of a column, is tantamount to me explaining the internal combustion engine. Too many important things are going to get left out. So, it appears I have no recourse but to come up with a new idea that in no way relates to the digested feast - just in case it all comes back to me in a dream.

The first lesson taught in Creative Writing I is that anything and everything is grist for a writer's mill. Students are encouraged to invest 49 cents on a little spiral notebook into which ideas, thoughts, dilemmas, solutions and fifty cent words can be jotted down. Periodically the notes should be reviewed in the hopes of discovering a clever array of concepts that can be massaged into a work of literary merit. Well, being in such a bind, I reviewed all fourteen of those little spiral notebooks that have been judiciously kept all these years. I discovered gobs of irrelevant and uninspiring phrases, a few old shopping lists, a handful of thirty five cent words and the agenda for a 1982 staff meeting. So much for Creative Writing I.

Being desperately close to picking up the phone to inform Editor that the well was dry, I sat back to mentally prepare my lame excuses by staring at the art work, plaques, cups, ribbons and trophies scattered about the walls and filling bookshelves in our office. That got me thinking about our friends and how their walls and shelves are

similarly decorated. I recalled how we periodically moan about having to dust and polish these symbols of success, how we complain about having to rearrange them periodically to stave off total boredom with our past. Then it hit me. Why not come up with an award that won't require nails in the wall, that doesn't demand dusting or polishing and will never need to be rearranged? Why not have an award that recognizes both our distinctions as well as our foibles? Why not, indeed.

Awards are risky business. There seems to be a fine line between recognition and being recognized for something one has done. Herewith are the SUZIE'S - a random selection of indiscriminate performances, some tongue in cheek and some from the heart. Receiving one will not improve your bank balance, will not get you elected to office and certainly will not earn you a free subscription to this newsletter. All a SUZIE will do is to let you know that your behavior has been observed by at least one person who appreciates irony as much as she applauds a robust character. Absence from this year's list doesn't mean you haven't been ironic or robust, it probably just means I haven't come up with a clever enough category for you yet! So, without further ado, here are the winners of the 1988 SUZIE'S.

In the BELABORING THE OBVIOUS category, the winner is the NYS Department of Transportation for their creative use of 4 million of our tax dollars to erect digitized highway signs telling us we are in a traffic jam or encouraging us to "Have a Nice Day."

The FUNK AND WAGNALLS ABUSE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE award goes to the Hess Oil Company for the word "detergency."

Winning the LITTLE KNOWN BUT USELESS INFORMATION category is the author of the GI's for the event I call the "Sasquatch of Rallydom," the annual Out In The Streets event.

In the PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE category, the undisputed winner is Don Hagen, who knew that the 4000 1986 Out In The Streets commemorative painter's caps he had made would sell like hotcakes at the 1988 event.

The 1988 DIRTY HARRY award goes to the

faceless Bozo who forced a horse and rider off the road in his quest for a zero at the May running of Sybil Ludington's Ride. The JOHN FOSTER DULLES DIPLOMACY AWARD goes to my TH for calming down said rider's father when he arrived at our checkpoint.

The NOT IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD, YOU DON'T category winners are the vocal one third of the attendees at the Plymouth, Vermont town meeting who voted against permits for the 1988 running of the Coolidge Divisional Pro, resulting in its cancellation and likely demise.

In the CAST YOUR FATE TO THE WIND category, the winners are the organizers of this year's STPR who neglected to apply for road use permits until three weeks before the event.

The TRUTH IN ADVERTISING award goes to Rich Mooers and Gary Webb for obvious reasons. (If you don't know what this is for check the classified advertising in this newsletter several months ago.)

In the A SIMPLE THANK YOU WOULD HAVE SUFFICED category, the winner is John Buffum for the good natured manner in which he greets each unsolicited toss in the pool.