

WEDGE

• SOUTH WEDGE PLANNING COMMITTEE •



Commissioner Jeff Swain, Rev. Anne Waasdorp, Stephanie Gradinger, Frank Andolino and Mr. and Mrs. Nguyen in front of the Wedge's newest home on Hickory Street

Open House Held at 12 Hickory Street

An open house was held on July 7th at 12 Hickory Street to introduce the concept of affordable housing to the neighborhood. The Rev. Anne Barden Waasdorp, staff of the South Wedge Planning Committee and key personnel in the project welcomed city officials, especially Mayor Ryan. The new home is through the joint partnership of the neighborhood, the City of Rochester, the State of New York and contractor Frank Andolino. Mr. and Mrs. Nguyen, residents of Averill Ave. will be buying the home. Introduced by Ms. Waasdorp, Mayor Thomas Ryan spoke on behalf of the City "We congratulate the South Wedge neighborhood and the Planning Committee in the creation of this low moderate income house. Hopefully policies will change

nationally after January next year to make it easier to gain access for more assistance in the creation of many more homes of this nature. I am pleased to be here as part of this joint effort by so many to create decent housing."

Vice Chair of the South Wedge Planning Committee Stephanie Gradinger welcomed the guests and stated "it has been a goal of SWPC for several years to see good affordable housing created in our neighborhood. We are delighted with this project and hope that the new family will also be pleased." Contractor Frank Andolino from Nathaniel Development has built the house through cooperative adventure. He had been waiting for the selection of the family before colors and other details were selected. "The Dept. of Community Development," said Commissioner Jeffrey Swain "is pleased to contribute \$5000 for infrastructure to bring the total costs of the home within reason for a family. "We hope to see more projects like this in the neighborhood." Several other City staff, neighbors, and members of the South Wedge Planning Committee were on hand to usher in this new house. The Rev. Waasdorp informed us that an official open house will be held in the fall for any people who have not seen our latest development.



Mayor Ryan congratulating Mr. & Mrs. Nguyen on the purchase of their new home on Hickory Street

South Wedge's Night Out Against Crime

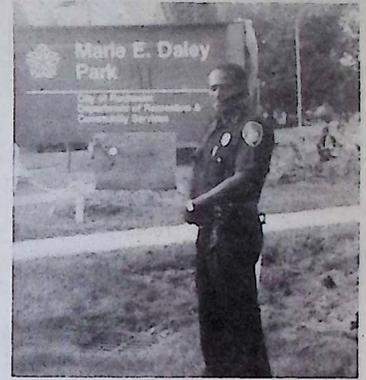
Jacqueline Curry
Crime Prevention Coordinator
South East Area Coalition

On Tuesday evening, August 9, Lillian Dugan glanced around at the balloons and banners decorating Marie Daley Park, just to make sure everything looked ok. Neighbors were starting to stroll over to see what was going on. Some of the neighborhood kids were waiting in line to see Dusty the Clown. They wanted to have their faces painted.

At the next table over, volunteers were setting up a bake sale. The proceeds of the sale go to the New York State Crime Victims' Compensation Board for us in the Rochester area. Bob Rinaldo was busy setting up his herb plants. Across the park at the softball diamond, other South Wedge neighbors were getting in some last minute practice for their game that evening against WCMF. Highland Police Officer Brooks was at the park, too, talking to some of the people who had already gathered. Drawings done by kids were hung up for the children's Clothesline Art Exhibit.

The reason for the activity, Lillian explained, is crime prevention. Tuesday, August 9 was the 5th Annual NATIONAL NIGHT OUT... AMERICA'S NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME. For the second consecutive year South Wedge residents came together to take part in a community celebration and to spread the word about neighborhood crime prevention programs.

This is also the second consecutive year that a group of very committed



Highland Police Officer Brooks sharing in the activities of National Night Out Against Crime.

volunteers put the event together. But then, commitment is nothing new to this group. Most of them have volunteered their time, in one way or another, to help increase the safety of their neighborhood. Planning the activities for National Night Out is just one more thing to do.

Lillian Dugan knows how much effort went into making National Night Out in the South Wedge a success. So does Rose O'Keefe, Rosina Dugan, Bob Rinaldo, Dee Peters, Virginia, Richard DeVito, Audrey Warney, and Charles Dunford. Some of the business owners in the neighborhood also contributed to the success of the evening. Joe Sanders from the Brown Bag Deli, Bruce Basile from Little Venice Pizza and Art Jones from the Gregory Street Market donated goods and refreshments for the celebration. They all know that people working together can bring about positive change. And after Tuesday August 9, they all have a feeling of accomplishment.

Living With Alcoholism - Generation to Generation

The last decade has shown immense growth in the understanding and treatment of the disease of alcoholism and addictions in general. There are now many more treatment programs and facilities available to alcoholics and their families, as well as growing numbers of self help groups such as A.A. and Al-Anon. This is largely due to the vast amount of knowledge, insight, and understanding that has been gained in the last ten years through research, clinical treatment, and experiences of those recovering from this devastating disease.

As part of the process, it has been documented that for every one alcoholic there is a minimum of six other people associated with the alcoholic who also suffer dramatic effect due to the alcoholics drinking. It has been said that living with an alcoholic is a nightmare, however, research now shows that even if the alcoholic gets help and stops drinking, the nightmare may continue unless the "co-dependent" people closely associated with the alcoholic also seek help to recover from the effects/infection which the disease has had upon them.

The Community Resource Center of

Family Services of Rochester, in conjunction with Calvary St. Andrews Church, is pleased to announce a two part informational lecture/discussion series on Co-Dependency and Family Effects of Alcoholism. These Lectures/discussions will be held at Calvary St. Andrews Church on September 14 and 21, beginning at 7:00pm and will be open to the public and free of charge. Leading these discussions will be Mr. Rusty Boos, CAC, Senior Alcoholism Counselor at F.S.R.

The first night will feature an introduction and definition of co-dependency, symptomatology and progression as it relates to the disease of alcoholism and addiction. Alcoholism as a family dysfunction and how this dysfunction effects the "Family System" will be outlined and discussed along with ample time for questions and answers.

The second night will focus upon the long-term effects of co-dependency concentrating on the children and adult children of alcoholics. This discussion will outline emotional effects, behavioral effects, and sociological effects. Issues such as trust, relationships, self esteem, and assertiveness will be outlined among others. Please feel free to bring a friend and share this learning experience.

For further information please contact Mr. Tom Dietz at Family Service of Rochester Community Resource Center, 232-1840 extension 400.

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South Wedge Planning Committee
68 Ashland Street
Rochester, New York 14620

Neighbor News

Highland Branch Upcoming Events

September 7th 10:00am
Travelog on Tibet
September 30th 4:00pm
Get a Library Card Day
For information call 271-3840

Registration Now For Library Storyhours

The Highland Branch Library, 971 South Avenue, will present two free storyhours for children. Toddler Story Time is designed especially for 2 year olds and parents. The six week program begins at 10am and lasts approximately 20 minutes. The Pre-school Storyhour, for three to five year olds starts at 10:30 and ends at 11am. Both programs begin Tuesday, October 18th. Registration is required. To register or for more information call the library at 271-3840.

New Materials Grant Contract in the Wedge

The South Wedge responded to the offer for materials reimbursement through the City's Special Materials Grant Program with enthusiasm. The contract was completely committed by the first week of August.

A new contract is being pursued with the City of Rochester. Hopefully the request for additional grant dollars will be presented to the city council in September. If it is, the new grant dollars could be available in October.

If you are interested in being contacted when special materials grant dollars are available again please call 325-4950.

South Avenue Recreation Center Fall Program

Basic Crafts
Mon., Tues., Wed. & Thurs.
3:30pm
Ages 6 - 13

Flag Football
Begins Sept. 12
3:30pm daily
Ages 8 - 14

Archery
Mon. - begins Sept. 19
3:30pm
Ages 8 & up

Roller Skating
Fridays
3:30 - 4:45pm

Adult Hand Built Ceramics
8 week class
Begins 10/25 - 12/13

Childrens Ceramics
Begins Wed. Oct 12
3:00pm
Ages 8 & up

Aerobics
Begins Sept. 12
Mon. & Thur. 5:45 - 6:45
Sat. 10:30am
Ages 18 & over

Weight Training
Begins Sept. 12
6:30pm nightly
Ages 13 & up

Ballet
Fri. 3:30pm
Ages 4 & up

For information call 461-4790. Anyone having roller skates to donate - especially smaller kids sizes?

Community Calendar

September 24th 8:00pm
Musical performance by the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus and others. Calvary St. Andrew's Parish. .68 Ashland St. . .Donation \$5.00

October 20th 5:00-8:00pm
Spaghetti Dinner call for reservations 325-4950 to benefit Calvary St. Andrew's Parish

November 6th 3:00pm
20th Anniversary celebration of the merger of Calvary Presbyterian Church and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Combined choirs of Calvary St. Andrew's Parish, Pittsford Presbyterian, and Christ Episcopal of Pittsford. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Troeger phomolactics professor Colgate Rochester Divinity School preaching. The community is invited to attend.

HILP Loans - A Good Deal

1. Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP)

It pays 35% of a home improvement bank loan to live-in homeowners in the low and middle income brackets. The subsidy can be as much as \$1,750.00 Any improvement that cannot be removed from the property is eligible. The income limits are:

| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | HILP INCOME LEVEL |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | \$20,900 |
| 2 | 23,900 |
| 3 | 26,850 |
| 4 | 29,850 |
| 5 | 31,700 |
| 6 | 33,600 |
| 7 | 35,450 |
| 8 | 37,300 |

For information about the Loan Program call 428-6890.

2. Personal Investment Program (PIP)

Also pays 35% of the home improvement costs, up to \$1,750.00 but is used by homeowners in the low and middle income brackets who do not want to take out a loan and prefer to use their savings. The income limits are the same as those for the Loan Program.

For information about PIP call 428-6890.

City Parks, Recreation and Human Services

Edgerton Recreation Center, 41 Backus Street, KNEEHUGGERS, A PRE SCHOOL program that introduces young children to recreation through games, music, special events and crafts, for boys and girls ages 3-5, four eight-week sessions: Tuesdays, 12noon-2pm and Fridays, 11am-1pm. First session begins September 13 - November 15; second session November 22 - January 31, 1989; third session February 7 - April 11, 1989; fourth session April 18 - June 13, 1989. Fees per session: \$15.00 one day/week; \$30.00 two days/week. Pre-registration requested. For information call the center at 428-6769.

Travel Tips

When renting a car, test the light, horn, turn signal, windows and windshield wipers. Also, check to see if spare tire and tools are in the trunk with lug wrench.

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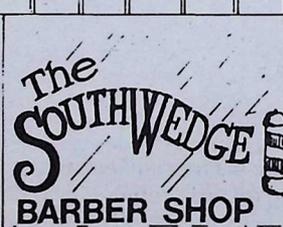
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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER *The* OF THE SOUTH WEDGE
WEDGE
South Wedge Planning Committee
68 Ashland Street
Rochester, New York 14620

- Editor
Art Jones
- Contributors
Rev. Judy Lee Hay, Jacqueline Curry,
Art Grimwood, Dorene Duane,
Rev. Anne Waasdorp, Alison Clarke,
Minda Valentin and Laura Rosa
- Photography
Rev. Judy Lee Hay, Jacqueline Curry
- Layout and Typesetting
Graphically Speaking
- Production
Nancy Curry, Art Jones, Lynn Campbell,
Art Grimwood
- Printing
Webster Printing
- Advertising
Nancy Curry, 35 Menlo Place, 473-9435
- Distribution
Queen Taylor, Millie Smith, Jane Northrup, Art Grimwood, Art Jones, and the U.S. Mail

The WEDGE is a newspaper published bi-monthly in a cooperative effort by the South Wedge Planning Committee and South Wedge residents. This organization, it's members and staff make every attempt to provide accurate coverage of neighborhood news as well as local, state and national news that affects the neighborhood. Articles in this paper do not necessarily reflect the view and/or opinions of the above mentioned organization, its staff or its members. Please send any story suggestions, news releases, etc. to: The WEDGE, c/o The South Wedge Planning Committee, 68 Ashland Street, Rochester, NY 14620, before the 15th of each month preceding the issue in which you want the information announced.

NEW STUFF HAPPENING AT:

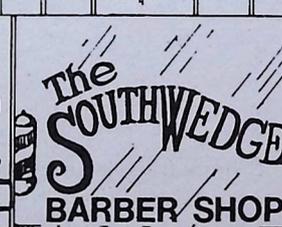


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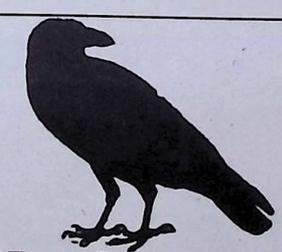


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LIQUIDATION**



Rev. Richard Kessel breaking ground for the Affordable Housing Project on Gregory Street

A New Vision

by The Rev. Judy Lee Hay

The Morris dancer dressed in white with ringing bells lead a parade of people from Calvary St. Andrew's Parish to the proposed site of a low-income owner occupied house at 17 Gregory Street in the South Wedge. The traditional May Day dance was "to awaken the ground," Mr. Sperry explained, "in preparation for our new housing project." The dance was part of a gala groundbreaking celebration for the new house sponsored by Habitat, Pittsford Presbyterian Church, The South Wedge Planning Committee, Inc. and Calvary St. Andrew's Parish. For several months representatives from each of these organizations have forged land negotiations, building designs, zoning delays, family applications, and funding packages to unanimously support low-

income housing through the Habitat model.

City Council representative Maxine Childress Brown spoke of the need for low-income owner occupied housing within the City of Rochester. She praised the cooperative efforts of the organizations in the project as a model for other areas of the city.

The construction funds were given in honor of the retirement of Rev. Richard Kessel from the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsford, and in honor of Mary Kessel. They have dedicated their lives in the service of Jesus Christ, so it is fitting that a vision for honoring them is being manifested in the development of a house for a family. The Rev. Kessel recalled his role over 40 years ago working with Calvary Presbyterian Church, and 20 years later in the merger with St. Andrew's. We've moved into the neighborhood at Manor Parkway to be close to work," the Rev.

Kessel proclaimed.

The land for the house, and two additional ones has been purchased from developer Peter Monacelli through the Urban Initiative Grant of the State of New York by the South Wedge Planning Committee. Parcel 17 will be then sold to Habitat. During the groundbreaking ceremony a lovely cake with a picture of the house on it was donated for the occasion by Pittsford Presbyterian Church. Over 50 people from the organization were on hand to celebrate this momentous occasion. Steve Letter, representing Habitat reminded everyone that he hoped to see each person back on site in a few weeks, ready to lend a hand in the construction of the house.

Low-income housing is a priority for each of the organizations and can become a reality through the dedication of people of all faiths.

Ministries. . . all these programs were bursting at the seams and all were needing more funding.

After many suggestions one member said, "I think we should have a Faith Rally" and call people as my mother did, to help us pass this Challenge Budget (\$15,000 above the regular budget!).

Plans are going forth for this service to celebrate all the exciting ministries of Calvary St. Andrew's, a congregation committed to the South Wedge as an important little chunk of the world.

Come and join in singing with praise and thanksgiving.

288 Sanford Street Rehab On The Move

Lugging huge rocks from the fallen wall at 288 Sanford St. was not what South Wedge Tool Librarian had in mind for the rehab project. Phil Stukas and Garfield Jones spent three days carrying dirt and rocks from the basement after the rain washed away the foundation wall. The wall has been replaced and a new concrete floor poured. Several adults from Twelve Corners Presbyterian Church donated three days of time; they moved the main header, framed the stairs, and laid a new floor upstairs.

Ty Electric Company has been contracted for the electrical work and Boojer for the plumbing. The urban Workcamp will insulate the walls. This project has taken the South Wedge Planning Committee, Inc. a year longer than originally projected due to code changes. All permits are obtained which enables the rehab to progress quickly. If everything stays on schedule we anticipate an October-November open house. Stay tuned to the next WEDGE for information

Calvary St. Andrew's Features Faith Rally

by Alison Clarke

On September 25 at 10am the sanctuary of Calvary St. Andrew's will resound with gospel music featuring several area musicians. Residents of the South Wedge, family and friends are welcomed for this special occasion.

It all began last December when the Parish Council held a special meeting to assess the budget for its ever growing program. Its TRI Program advocating for and building skills among disabled families, its Nursery School helping many neighborhood children prepare for school, its housing programs working with the South Wedge Planning Committee and Pittsford Presbyterian Church, its Urban Workcamp and many other Special

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Neighbor News

ABVI's Great Diamond Anniversary Lockup!

From across the prairie to the big city comes Sheriff "Go Get'em" to round up some city slickers and lock them in the hoosegow! The fun takes place on September 19 - 21st when Midtown Mall is transformed into an old west jail, complete with a "hanging judge."

Prominent citizens will be lassoed and taken to jail (unless they do the honorable thing and turn themselves in). When the judge hands down the sentence (after a completely fair and honest trial, of course), the scoundrels must raise bail from family, friends co-workers to secure their release.

The sheriff is determined to fill his saddlebags for the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired of Greater Rochester, Inc. (ABVI), so citizens of Rochester, BEWARE! The money raised will be used to expand and improve programs for children who are blind and visually impaired. For more information, call 232-1111, Ext. 217.

PROMINENT CITIZENS FOR THE GREAT DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY LOCKUP

Sep 19, 20, 21, 1988 10am - 2pm
MIDTOWN PLAZA

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

ABVI: 232-1111



Nude National II

On Friday, September 16, from 5-9pm The Wedge Gallery, 684 South Avenue, will hold an opening celebration for Nude National II.

164 Artists from 33 states entered 433 works for the competition. Jurors' Maria Bernardo and Gerry Thies selected 52 works by 48 artists for exhibit in The Wedge Gallery's second annual juried national competition.

The exhibition includes highly imaginative paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, and sculpture.

Rochester artists included are: Nancy Stuart, Carol Acquilano, Brian Zink, Debra Stewart, and Elaine Feehan.

Nude National II runs from September 16 - October 8. The Wedge Gallery hours are: 9:30 - 5:30 M-F, 10 - 4 Sat., or by appointment. For further information, contact: Gerry Thies 473-6400.

Southeast Community Resource Center Asking for Community Input

In June 1983 The Southeast Community Resource Center, a part of Family Service of Rochester, Inc. began operation in the Southeast area of the city. The Resource Center's purpose is to enrich the lives of the residents of the Southeast area by identifying needs and connecting those people in need with the available resources in the community. The Center also attempts to identify need for education and informative presentations and programs in the neighborhood.

The Resource Center has just entered into its sixth year of operation and as we look toward the future we are asking you for your input. As we attempt to identify the needs of the community your opinions and ideas are very valuable. We are asking you to take a few minutes and respond to our questions either by mail or by phone:

1. Have you been in need of any emergency services during the past year? Where did you go for help? Did you receive the help you needed?

2. What types of informative programs would you like to see offered in the neighborhood during the next year? (Some examples might be Parent Training, Informative Programs about Alcoholism and its Effects on the Family, etc.)

3. What types of non-emergency services would you like to see in the neighborhood that are not presently available? (Some examples might be Teen Centers < Evening Recreation Centers, Etc.)

We have attempted these past five years to respond to the emergency needs of the community. We have served as a source of information and referral about and to other agencies in the community. With your input we can meet the needs of the community in the best way possible.

Please take a few minutes to respond by writing (our mailing address is 835 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620) or by phone (our number is 232-1840 Ext 400).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dorene Duane,
CRC Coordinator
Tom Dietz,
Community Worker

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St. Boniface School Prepares for Fall Term

While teachers and students are still enjoying their summer vacations, plans are progressing well for an encouraging and exciting Fall Term.

Registration is up over the 1987-88 year which correlates with the generally predicted increased number of school aged children for the next several years.

The school building is being given its customary "house cleaning" so that the students will enter a spic and span edifice.

This year again, in addition to the prescribed curriculum, enhancement programs such as a foreign language (French) and creative art will be available to the students. In addition, despite budget restraints, plans are being worked out so that hopefully a computer sciences program will be available to the students.

Families planning on considering entering their children in St. Boniface School are asked to register them as soon as possible. Prior to August 22 tentative registration can be made at the parish rectory, 330 Gregory St. After that date registration can be made at the School offices, 9:00am to 2:00pm daily. For any information regarding the school call 473-4271, prior to Aug 22, after that date call 271-6370.

The Urban Workcamp of 1988

by Minda Valentin and Laura Rosa

The Urban Workcamp is made up of teenagers from the ages between 16 and 19. I am the college assistant. My name is Minda Valentin. There are more students; Reynaldo Reyes, Laura Rosa, Jose Rosa, Maria Orengo, Maribel Cuadrado, Marilyn Quintana, Ramon Diaz, John Farrell & Rayon Wong. I have been working for the Urban Workcamp for the past two years. One thing we do is go over job ethics. During the time we work, we learn about different tools and how to use them. Since we work with different tools, one of them is a ladder, we learn about safety around the ladder. We have a tremendous amount of responsibility to take care of that person that's up the ladder. The major job we do is painting, scraping, sanding, caulking, replacing windows and glaze panes. We learn about repairing steps, gutter work, vinyl siding, concrete, insulation, landscaping, estimates and calculation of proposals. We just finished a house on Hickory St., a total rehab of the exterior. The owners were very pleased. Most of the time the husband came outside and helped us. It was like we do our job and he had something to do with helping us & talking to us which was very pleasant. While working there we got to meet new people

from Kentucky. They got to work with us. We enjoy working with people because we learn more about them and they get to know more about us. On Averill Ave. we did some landscaping and gutters. Now we have started on Comfort St. This is another total rehab of the exterior. We have already scraped and primed. We are starting to paint. In conclusion, our experience is something new and exciting and we even get paid for the knowledge.

Classes cost \$35-\$85. Call 271-5920 for a free catalog and registration information.

In addition to classes, Community Darkroom also provides darkroom rental, black & white photography services, and photographic exhibitions. Call 271-5920 for more information on these services.

Fall Photography Classes at Community Darkroom

Community Darkroom in the Genesee Co-op at 713 Monroe Ave. is offering its fall session of photography classes starting September 26. Classes include: Basic Camera Techniques, Basic Black & White Photography, The Photo Essay, Black & White Darkroom Techniques, Breaking the Rules: Non-Traditional Photography, View Camera Techniques: An Introduction, Fall Nature Photography: Waterways & Power Places, Composing the Photograph, Hand-Coloring/Toning of Black & White Photographs, and Fall Photographic Retreat. The duration of the classes varies from 1 day workshops to 8 week classes.

Fall Classes at the Genesee Co-op Pottery Start September 26

The pottery offers classes for all ages with experienced teachers. There are several levels of instruction from beginner to advanced. Students learn basic wheel throwing techniques as well as handbuilding techniques.

Classes are held in the Genesee Co-op Pottery at 713 Monroe Ave. This session begins on September 26 and the class are 9 weeks in length. Tools and materials are included in the class fees which are \$90 for adults and \$55 for children. Registrations are being accepted now thru September 26. For a free brochure or more information call the pottery at 271-5183.



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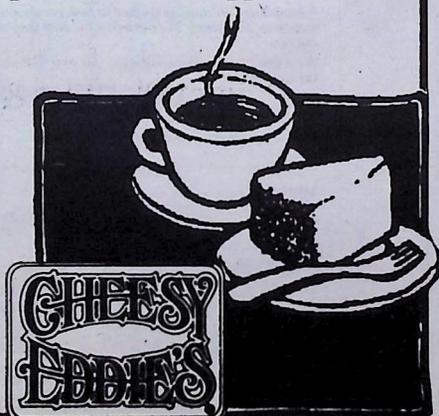
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The First Civilized Man

by Art Grimwood

A lawyer (L), a philosopher (P) and a historian (H) continued their conversation which began in the June *Wedge*:

L. H has promised us an instructive tale he has dredged up from the depths of antiquity.

H. Amenhotep III presided over the zenith of Egypt's power and magnificence, a legacy of his warloving grandfather Thutmose III, who boasted of having conquered Asia 17 times. As Pharaoh, Amenhotep III was president, legislature, supreme court, pope and commander of the army, all rolled into one. His authority devolved directly from the gods.

Religion pervaded every aspect of government and public life. Herodotus wrote of the ancient Egyptians "They are religious to excess, beyond any other nation in the world." Dozens of gods existed then, if only in people's minds. Some derived from mythicized ancestors, some from animals, some from localities, some from natural phenomena, but most powerful were those identified with aspects of the sun, such as Amun. Already ancient by Amenhotep's time, the Egyptian religion was extraordinarily complex and arcane, indeed its priests labored to make it so, in order to ensure their positions, much as the guardians of our legal profession

perpetuate themselves today.

L. That's a cheap shot! I want to respond...

H. Motion denied. While "ruling for ever and ever", as his harpers told him, Amenhotep III could afford almost any enterprise he could imagine. He loved grand palaces and extravagant festivals, and he heaped the wealth of his empire upon the priests and temples of Amun, preeminent deity at the time. In theory the Pharaoh's power was absolute but these priests wielded tremendous influence that could make or break any professional career, perhaps even his.

P. Let us pause to reflect on the federal budget, and the influence of private industry over public affairs.

L. I would conclude that we worship weaponry and are eager for war.

H. During the last years of his reign of forever and ever Amenhotep III evidently suffered from senility or some chronic illness. He became increasingly disinterested in affairs of state and concerned himself with seeking magical cures for his ailments while ignoring letters from his vassals and allies in Palestine and Syria who pleaded for assistance in defense against the menacing Hittites. Magic having proved ineffective, he was succeeded by his son Amenhotep IV, better known as Akhenaten, who assumed the title of Pharaoh at age 13 in 1375 B.C. This Pharaoh turned out to be a man utterly out of place and time. Historians argue about him to this day and have labeled him as

everything from an incompetent freak to a visionary genius.

While ruling under the capable regency of his mother, the teenaged Pharaoh exerted powerful influence on the arts, instructing the royal painters and sculptors to abandon the rigidly stylized forms adhered to for centuries, to portray their subjects naturally and to experiment with abstract styles. During this time he came to regard the priesthoods and temples as obstructions to social progress and advancement of thought, and began formulating a new religion that, when fully empowered, he would impose as the cornerstone of a new social order.

Shortly after having assumed full power at about age 18, Akhenaten proclaimed that one god alone existed, Aten, formerly the physical aspect of the rising sun but now the solar globe in every aspect, and its motive force or radiant essence that had created the world and all life. To those whose minds were open Aten imparted "wisdom, justice, truth, perfect order, rightness and loving-kindness." This is the first expression of monotheism known in history and the first god devoid of human or animal representations or physical characteristics. Aten was also the first cosmopolitan god, ruling over all lands and all people; Akhenaten observed that while the Nile was for Egypt Aten had provided a "Nile from heaven for the foreign peoples", meaning rain. Of foreigners he said that Aten had "distinguished the peoples" by speech, skin

and culture, but he made none of the usual claims of Egyptian superiority. Although these ideas may seem crude and teleological to us, in historical context they are strikingly rational.

P. On the banks of the Nile it is easy to believe that life emanates from the effulgence of the sun. The Aten concept is no more teleological than modern religions or, for example, the currently popular Gaia Theory, which is likely to become corrupted into a creed for New Age toxic polluters.

L. We still don't know the extent of influence of our sun's solar winds. Pioneer 10 is now 4 billion miles from Earth, far beyond Pluto, and it has yet to detect the boundary between our heliosphere and the true beginning of interstellar space.

H. More than any other ancient people the Egyptians sought to deny the reality of death. They conceived of the world as eternal and unchanging; there was no finality to things or events. An afterlife was guaranteed by a complex set of rituals, formulas and procedures. Suddenly the representative of the gods, the new Pharaoh, had turned their cosmology inside out. He rejected magic and said nothing about the afterlife. No longer could the Egyptians pray with confidence that Anubis would guide them in death to the Land of the West where they would become one with Osiris and live again forever among the gods. The multifarious superstitions, gods and beliefs in magic that had

continued on page 8

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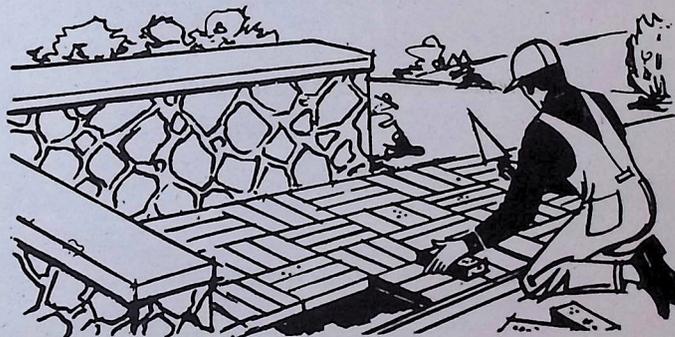


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continued from page 7

cemented society together for centuries were in a stroke repudiated. Akhenaten had begun to make enemies.

In order to establish his religion the Pharaoh had a Temple of Aten constructed at the capital city of Thebes. Although it was colossal enough to dwarf the Great Temple of Amun, it failed to supplant the old religion and probably provoked open conflict with Amun's priests, so Akhenaten commanded that a new capital city be built, thus relegating the gods of Thebes to the status of local deities. The new City of the Horizon of the Globe was complete enough to allow habitation in only 2 years, a feat of enormous expense but one Pharaoh could afford.

P. And one that created a lot of jobs.

L. It was a better use of resources than giving money to the priests for adomment of their temples.

H. In the new capital Akhenaten moved freely among the people, without the customary guards. His generosity and charisma made him popular, even if his religious ideas were not fully understood. He often appeared in public with his beautiful and influential Great Wife and their children, openly displaying deep affection for them, and he encouraged his artists to depict and convey this. Pharaohs had not behaved so informally before, but Akhenaten saw himself as an ordinary man rather than a descendant of gods, and as a teacher who taught by example.

Soon after taking residence in the new capital he made another attempt to institutionalize the new order by formally changing his name from Amenhotep IV to Akhenaten, meaning Beloved of Aten. There is a popular theory that he was at this time sharing power with his father who still ruled from Thebes, a notion based on shaky evidence. First, references to Amenhotep III and pictures of him have been found at the site of the City of the Horizon, but what son would not keep mementos of his late father? Letters from Palestine to Amenhotep III have also been found there and are said to be copies sent to his co-regent, but no corresponding copies have been found at Thebes, and what administration would move to a new capital without bringing documents pertaining to current diplomatic affairs? Third is a letter from the king of Mitanni congratulating Akhenaten on his accession and mentioning the death of his father. The date is purported to be year 12 of Akhenaten's reign but is in fact chipped and unreadable, and probably year 2. Furthermore, the letter appears to be addressed to Akhenaten's mother, which suggests the Pharaoh was too young to

address directly. The co-regency theory is necessary to prop up another popular error: that Akhenaten was the elder brother of the famous child-Pharaoh Tutankhamun, which would make their mother almost 50 years old at the time of the latter's birth. Moreover, it is hard to believe that Akhenaten could have imposed a religion and social reforms, built a new capital, which he vowed never to leave, and discarded his father's name, all while his father still lived.

L. H. you are becoming esoteric. What of the social reforms?

H. Much will never be known. We can safely assume that many priests, officials and bureaucrats, who composed much of the upper class, lost their jobs and sinecures, and resources were redirected to public works projects and the arts. Akhenaten respected honesty, integrity and straightforwardness, and disliked ostentation, affectation and excessive formality. He believed people were born as equals and differed only by "degree of wickedness", therefore he appointed and promoted officials according to merit rather than circumstances of birth. He permitted the use of common speech in official documents, enabling large classes of people to participate in affairs of business and justice. He advocated education for women and elevation of their social status. He forbade mistreatment of prisoners and there is evidence that he abolished the death penalty. He put an end to animal sacrifices. To Aten, whose beloved son and sole prophet he was, Akhenaten offered sacrifices of bread and fruit.

P. Perhaps Aten displayed pleasure with such sacrifices by sending flocks of birds to consume them. Something similar occurs when I toss bread into my backyard.

H. While certainly influenced by associates and family members, Akhenaten's ideas and policies were without historical precedent and truly extraordinary in the context of such a stiflingly conservative society. Tradition, however, being a foundation of social order, always resists change. Much of Egypt and all of the rest of the world were out of step with the philosophy of the City of the Horizon. Akhenaten had gone out of his way to stultify the old religion but had tolerated its practice, prohibiting it in only his capital. Despite having made many enemies, he would not retreat from his beliefs and in the 11th year of his reign he commenced more aggressive assaults against the intractable old order, probably in response to conspiracies originating at Thebes. He prohibited written references to plural gods and had them removed from public monuments throughout Egypt, to no great effect.

Meanwhile, the troubles in Palestine and Syria had worsened. Hittite intrigues had caused defection of provincial cities and numerous regional insurrections. Even Egypt's powerful allies the Mitannians were threatened. Appeals for help became more desperate and then came warnings of invasion. Akhenaten did not believe that Aten had created people for the purpose of killing each other, therefore he repeatedly refused to send the mighty Egyptian army. This infuriated the generals, who already were quite fed up with Pharaoh's preoccupations with art and literature and his continual contemplations of nature and truth.

Akhenaten attempted to solve the troubles by means of diplomacy and negotiation but was tricked by duplicitous opportunists and perfidious politicians. Members of his own administration may have withheld information and otherwise plotted against him, for it is hard to believe, despite his pacifism, that he knowingly allowed his allies to be slaughtered. Soon the Mitannians were crushed. The empire was crumbling beneath his feet and he surely knew it. So great was his abhorrence of war that he still refused to send the army. Palestine and Syria were lost and the tributes Egypt depended upon no longer arrived.

Shortly thereafter Akhenaten died at age 30, in 1358 B.C., possibly of natural causes. Several members of the royal family died in youth from hereditary infirmities caused by generations of intermarriages. It is suspicious, though, that many of his relatives disappeared from history without a trace after his death. The Temple of Aten at Thebes was destroyed, the City of the Horizon was abandoned and razed, Akhenaten's name was removed from public monuments, his tomb desecrated and his followers persecuted. He was vilified as a criminal, a heretic, a blasphemer and "The Great Scoundrel". The old gods and customs were restored to power. Within 15 years a general became Pharaoh.

Leaders have always made the mistake of underestimating the intelligence of the

public, as any number of current political campaigns will demonstrate. Akhenaten made a far rarer mistake: he overestimated it. He thought his teachings would enlighten the world, bring peace and advance the arts and sciences.

L. One can no more effectively govern by moral benignity than by brutal oppression, both being artificial and in opposition to the immutable laws of politics. Government must take people as they are, not as it would have them be.

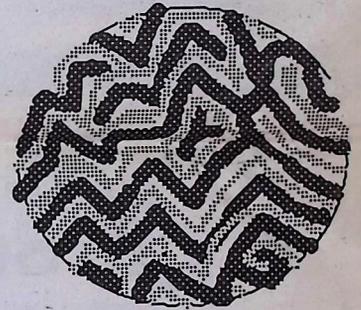
H. Before judging Akhenaten for a collapse of Egypt's empire, we should remember that as Pharaoh the empire and everything in it belonged to him, to treat as he pleased.

P. More importantly, we should ask what right the Egyptians, the Hittites, or anyone else had, or has, to build empires by subjugating foreign populations.

L. Let us praise the merits of private life.

P. Confucius observed "A virtuous ruler is like the north polar star, which keeps its place while all the other stars turn toward it." Was he wrong?

H. In the field of astronomy he is considered a less than towering figure.



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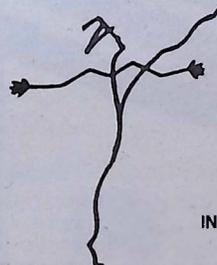
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