

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOL IV NO6 MAY-EARLY JUNE '86

"Shoot if you must this old white head,"
But spare the Empty Nest," she said.



186 THREATENS 816

NEST MAY NOT BE IN DANGER BUT A BRANCH SURE IS!

THIS ISSUE FEATURES ONE OF
PAT DALVIT'S FAMOUS CARDS TO
RAD: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, RON!

1986,
MAY 20

Isn't it time someone
organized Ron's May
birthday Sing-A-Thon?



Not THAT again!!

Jackson, Miss. Pat's card
is actually a booklet, only
1 or 2 pics per page, so
this version will be more
crowded; esp. since I must
squeeze in the news. BUT ENJOY!



In light of the foregoing, it would seem in the best interests of all concerned for you to quitclaim any interest that you might have to the narrow strip of land (NORTH OF YOUR PROPERTY LINE) to District #186 — so that you could hereafter avoid the persistent and unnecessary cost of real estate taxes on that parcel.

Please give us a call — and let us know when it can be convenient for you to meet with us at the property so that we can discuss these matters in greater detail and make certain that the District #186 plans are proceeding in a way that you believe is acceptable and appropriate under these circumstances.

We look forward to meeting with you — and to continuing to work with you in every possible way. Thanks for your interest and your guidance.

Very truly yours,

Jack Billington
Billington & Billington

JAB/tl

cc: Dr. Donald Miedema
Dr. Charles Matthews
Dr. James Cherry
Mr. Adolf Mantei
Mrs. Betty Legg

the other 3, so even if they buy the land, they could annex

LAW OFFICES OF
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SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701

April 30, 1986

Professor Jacqueline Jackson
816 North 5th Street
Springfield, Illinois 62702

Dear Professor Jackson:

As we believe you know, Springfield Public Schools - District #186 would like to purchase additional land adjacent to McClernand School.

We are privileged to serve as the attorneys for District #186, and in that capacity, we are currently researching a number of items which relate to exactly what the best possibilities might be for such expansion.

As you may also know, District #186 has been advised that the Becker Family Estate at 830 North 5th Street is available for sale — and it appears as though that parcel would fit nicely into the District's plans.

In researching Sangamon County land records relative to a possible transaction on the Becker property, we have discovered that you are being charged real estate taxes on a strip of property that lies between the Becker property and the District #186 property that is presently being used as a part of the McClernand School program. In fact, those records seem to indicate you are being charged real estate taxes for considerably more than just the strip to the "EAST" of the Becker property — above and beyond those taxes which are rightfully assessed on your property at 816 North 5th Street.

We are advised that you do not wish to sell your property — and that you want to remain the owner and primary resident of 816 North 5th Street for quite some time to come. Naturally, we respect your wishes in that regard — and we want you to know that District #186 wants to work with you in every possible way to help arrange for the expansion of McClernand School in a way that is consistent with your plans for the continued maintenance and full enjoyment of your property.

Our research to this point, however, does seem to have uncovered that you are being charged real estate taxes on more than your lot at 816 North 5th Street. In fact, it appears that you are being assessed real estate taxes for a narrow strip of land that runs from the NORTH BOUNDARY OF YOUR LOT TO A POINT NORTH OF EVEN THE "BECKER PROPERTY". It is difficult to imagine that the narrow strip would appeal to anyone who did not already own adjacent property. Even more important to you, it is difficult to imagine that anyone would want to buy that narrow strip of land (whenever you might ultimately decide to sell your property at 816 North 5th Street).

NOW AIN'T THIS A SHITTY LETTER? AND INSULTING!
SPED, IL I know what I'm paying taxes on! The ed's house at 816 N 5th is flanked by schoolyard at side & back. A few years ago

they were going to abandon the school, & I was instrumental in saving it. Now they're remodeling it, & have spread it out all over the play yard. They want to buy &

Don't look at me. I was Chairman last year!



raze my house & 3 others, for playground. The catch: I can't sell, and I also own a narrow strip of land behind

it!



O.K. Boys, -start rounding up the Men's Glee Club.

FORMER 816 OWNER IS ALIVE + WELL AT 104

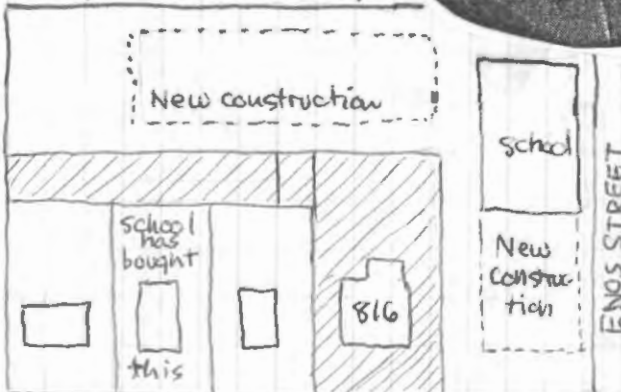
Spfld. A good fall-out of

all this property brouha is that JJ was galvanized to call Nannie Fain's daughter, + found that N.F., who owned 816 from 1917 to 1970, is alive + well! JJ paid a visit and had a memorable time. She always intended to, but that 1st year at SSU was a killer; then came the divorce, + all JJ's extra work to support the family, + by the time there was any breathing space, she figured N. F. was long dead. But no! She's frail, + needs a walker + a hearing aid, but is bright-eyed + alert. I'll go visit again; learn more abt 816; + daughter Frances will come see the Alice and Earthsea bathrooms!

MERDE



Spfld. The diagram below shows the 4 properties the school covets, and the strip they were astonished to discover I own. (It was access to an old coach house, long gone.) I hired a lawyer who insists I own only the top 10 feet, SIXTH STREET

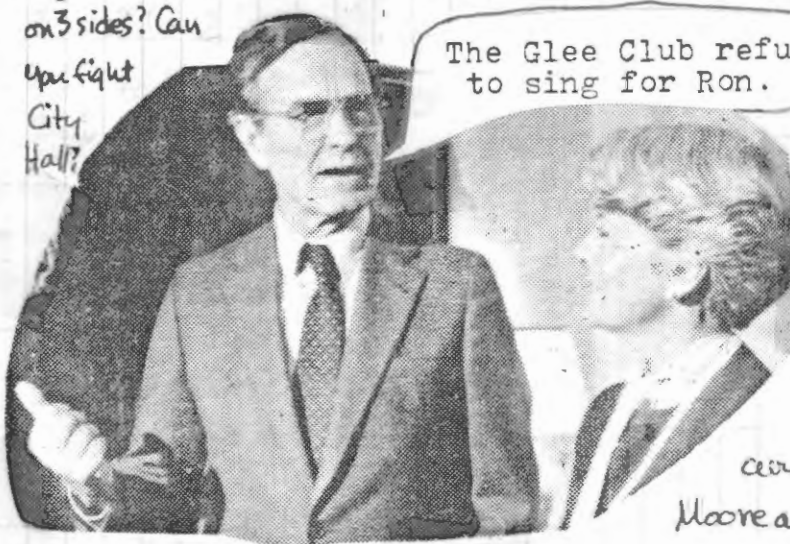


FIFTH STREET

(the Nannie + I have paid taxes on all of it for a total of 69 years!) but even if true, 10 feet are as good as 20, for blocking the school. Do I give them a right-of-way? And be surrounded on 3 sides? Can

you fight City Hall?

The Glee Club refuses to sing for Ron.



In all conscience I cannot sing 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow'

ABE LINCOLN AT 816

Spfld. Nannie Fain says the house was built in 1859, + that Lincoln was entertained there, once. I now picture him in the rooms I live in, as well as the streets I walk on.

GETS ALL A'S!

Reno. Gilliam Jackson has had a v. successful semester at U. Nevada-Reno.

The 'No's' have it!!



SPEAKING OF GLEECLUBS...

Hinesburg, Vt. Audrey Moore, inspired conductor of the Champlain Valley Union High School Chorus, whose Kids win top honors wherever they go, was aiming for 100 singers for fall, '86. Did 100 sign up? No. 125? No. 150? No. It was 172, and now the officials are trying to find a room large enough to hold everybody, to practice in. That's about 1/5 of the school, going out for chorus! Congrats, Audrey! And how many of those singers are cross country runners, too? (Audrey + Don Moore are Hinesburg Pond dwellers + ENWL readers)

ELLIE GRADUATES D'MOUTH JUNE 8

Hamover, N.H.

But that's for next issue. JJ+ Megan will be there.

Got any other ideas?

How about a troupe of tap-dancing nuns?



LOSES FANGS

Reno While her mom was floating down the San Juan River in Utah, Cressida Breten fell off a slide at her day-care, got scraped up, & knocked out her 2 front teeth. They were put back, & may grow. Ex-rays show her permanent teeth unharmed. ENNL will carry regular updates on how the implants are doing. Drefful sorry, Cressida!

JEREMY, WENDY, GILLIAN AND JACKIE (+AL) GO DOWN THE SAN JUAN

RIVER IN UTAH ON ARAFT MAY 23-26

Bluff, Utah It was a grand adventure & super trip, and the ENNLed will try to Recapture some of the highlights in the next issue of ENNL (due mostly to the Or a Children's Chorus? format of this issue.)

COULDN'T FALL OVER

Peterborough, N.H. Megan's concert with the Monadnock Community Chorus (Faure's Requiem et al.) was a smash, according to reports. Megan loved doing it -- but confessed she was scared. "Did you knees shake?" I asked. Said Megan, "They couldn't -- they were LOCKED!"

ETERNAL VIGIL

Beloit Every evening at sundown a mother coon goes from the big maple in the front yard of Chez Nous to a smaller tree & down the trunk head first. Coeur starts watching at

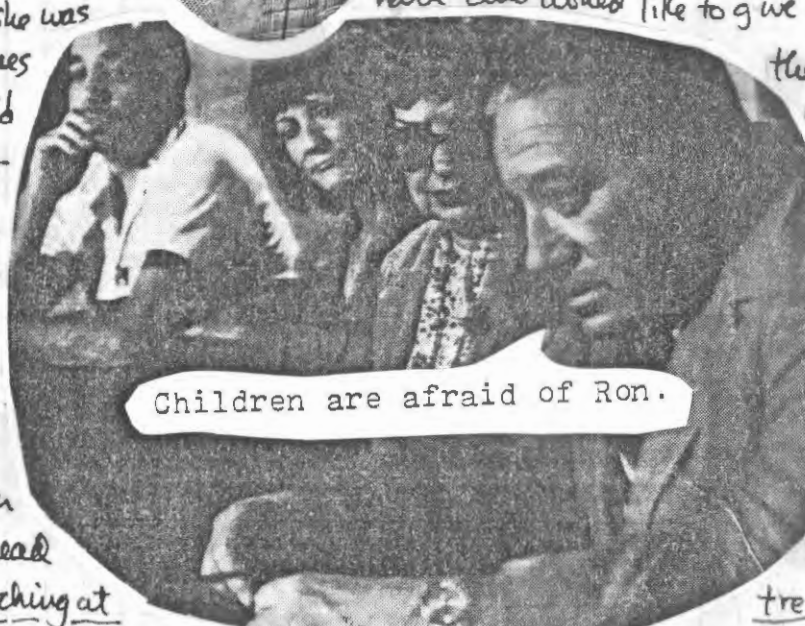


MIps. While thrashing around in a cornfield at 4 AM one morning this spring, Damaris Jackson somehow lost her Dougan Cow tag. (plus keys.) Anyone who doesn't cherish the one they have and would like to give it to Dennis, please contact

the ENNL Ed. (What was she doing in a cornfield at that hour? Well, looking for Halley's Comet, of course! (It was an appropriate place to lose the cow tag!)

abt 3 PM, on her stool by the window, never relaxes her guard, & goes into a frenzy when the coon shows. She has a nest in the tree (babies) & forages at night!

Children are afraid of Ron.



MAKES FRENCH-INTENSIVE GARDEN

MIps. Damaris Jackson & Sugi Mudge had their house sold from under 'em; at their new place they've inherited a "French intensive" garden in the back yard: raised beds in "pillows". The results are "produce intensive" -- lots of veggies in a small space. Jackson & Mudge are now finding out whether such a garden is also "work intensive."

Nuns?



Ron wont hurt you.

NEWS BRIEFS

Hinesburg The Dell camp was broken into, screens slashed, and other minor damage. The boat, believed stolen, was found

adrift at Moore's.

We cows would jump over the moon for Ron

Minneapolis

Sam Mersky

says he's as

competitive as the Western competition, & vows to win in total no. of entries next time. Report on Sam's 70th hasn't been received yet but Sam & Polly visited Jo & Karl in Madison, & reported the menu: salmon from Scotland, baked potatoes, etc. (also reported the good fun) went on to visit RAD & Ned, then on to Rockford, & Polly's 40th reunion. Says Sam, "When's the next contest?"

Hinesburg, Vt. Mary Ann Case is pregnant!

Mississippi Pat Dalvit reports that one Mother's Day when Stephanie was small, her card read, "Somehow or other, You are my mother."

Minneapolis New address for Demi Jackson &

Suzie Mudge: 3317 Elliot Ave S.; Mpls MN 55407. (phone is the same.)

...but we don't have a conductor



Madison Lda Yde, Kate's mother-in-law, asked for NO Mother's Day gifts, but 2-3 hours of work from everybody. The lawn got mowed, trees sprayed, garden rero-tilled, etc. Lola fed 'em all, but what a SMART MOM!

Beloit Besides Sam & Polly, visiting Groun & Groun, Bert Prather has, too; Jo & Lola; Don & Louise King; Demi; the Kenneth Shermans, Muriel Pollock, & others. The guest who's stayed the longest

is Ms Muffet. Birthday plans are finally shaping up! I just spoke with Mother Teresa...

son, who visited her cousin Cover D'or for 9 days while the Empty Nest Ed. went on a river trip. Ms. Muffet was heard to say, "I'd like to stay all summer!"



EATS FIRST VENISON

Groun Jct., Co.

Jo & Gillian met Mimi Baldwin's cousin on the Utah trip, & on our final night, Laurie Hick was our host, meeting our bus, & taking us to our respective planes. Laurie served a dinner of venison stew, from a deer shot by her son. Delicious! and Gillian's first! I extended IL & Vt. hospitality to our new friend, but who knows when she'll come East? She gave my own philosophy about doing things for others, when she said, "PASS IT ALONG!"

NEWS NOT KNOWN HERETOFORE

Reno The Foley-Belsaw Institute has awarded Gillian Jackson a diploma in recognition of satisfactory completion of the prescribed course in Small Engine Service, 7/12/84



You do now!

APOLOGIES TO SAM!

Whose prize winning caption was inadvertently left off the picture of Uncle

Cle Lewie in the last ENNL. Winner in the Family Division, Sam Mersky's caption was, "I'm being tickled from behind!"

...and you say these nuns will do anything for money?



Almost anything

Mother Teresa wants permission to do WHAT??



THIS ITEM MAY BE THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU READ ALL SUMMER!

The moment-of-truth will soon be on us, & here's how to rid your house of FLEAS. Put a shallow pan of detergent water on the rug of the flea-infested room. Bend a goose-neck lamp low over it, bare bulb! Keep on all

I've never performed with tap dancing nuns before..

night. The fleas will jump at the light, fall in the water, & drown. Repeat regularly to keep your house flea-free!



We must encourage both political parties to participate in R.A.'s celebration!

No problem if it's televised!

BLESS YOUR HEART!

The ENN Ed has concluded that there are 2 kinds of people: those who say "Bless your heart!" and those who don't. Those who do have a sub-genre, those who say, "bless your little heart!" (or "his little heart" or "her little heart.") Now I don't have anything against people who say "Bless your heart," it shows sympathy, empathy, compassion,

The overture is about to begin!

warmth-- some of my best friends say "bless your heart." (I'm not sure that any of my best friends say "bless your little heart.") But it's simply not an expression I've ever used or ever would use. Is it Roman Catholic? (I don't even mind having my heart finally (& really, this time) decided to RETIRE: sell the blessed.) The ENN Ed invites you readers to write in about this, or other expressions you have pondered about, bless your little cotton-pickin' hearts!



STOP PRESS!

Milwaukee Tom Schmidt got the job w/ the Milw Journal! Tom, congrats! And

send us your job-winning letter THIS time!

Animal Writes

with Charlie E. (Marin Co. Humane Officer)

Dear Charlie,
For Grandpa R.A.'s birthday I sent him one thoroughly chewed red sock, and half a milk bone. Was this overdoing it? Yours truly, Dr. Wardner (Craig & Barbara Samoyed)

Dear Dr. Wardner, No bones about it, sock it to him! Yuck yuck. Charlie Esq.

Another day, another dollar!

GLAD

(BUT I'M SORTA SAD)

NEWS: Dorset, England. Jessie

Perkins writes, "Terrific news!" Seamus Hugh has

finally (& really, this time) decided to RETIRE: sell the Kennels, house, cottage, land, & move to a bungalow near daughter Sue & family. I've watched Howard Hugh (& everyone) work, & agree it's for the best--but how I'll miss that lively establishment! (Site of Torti story) Perhaps now H & June'll come visit US? We'll still visit them, & watch Dallas & Dy nasty in the bungalow. Question: Can Hugh find happiness in a bungalow? Tune in next issue.



COOKS
IN GAR-
BAGE CAN

Arches Nat. Mon-

ument, Utah ENNL
reader Mimi Bald-

win of Glenwood

Springs, Co., with

her son Scott & cousin

Laurie Hickof

Grnd. Jct, met

Jackie & Gillian

at the Gr. J.

airport & drove

them to Arches

to meet Wau-

dy Schmidt.

Mimi brought

sloppy joes for a

picnic. Due to

gale winds sweep-

ing thru the amazing

rocks, her camp stove

wouldn't stay lit anywhere!

With considerable ingenuity

(Please jump cow & moon

for rest of this article)

Les

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

Love,
Pat & Lew
MAY 1986One more install-
AcademicsSPEAKING OF TAP
DANCING...Reno Cressida Broten, 3/2,
is putting to use the tap
shoes sent her by Erin Quins,+ taking tap as her day
care. Cressie would tap
for Gr. Grandpa, huh!

MORE DANCING...

Philadelphia Ann Jacq-
ueline Guthrie would dance
for Gr. Grandpa, too! She's
taking dancing lessons, nwo.

AND MUSIC...

Green Bay Sonja Yde,
would be glad to play
for Gr. Grandpa, on her
new Baldwin conservatory
model piano! The Ydes boughtit recently in Madison, + drove it
to Gr. Bay in their van. Now
Sonja is practicing diligently so thatshe can accompany the Singathon next year!
Got from over cow) she removed the
plastic liner + trash from a garbage
can, lowered her stove to the bottom,
+ heated the sloppy joes! Picnic &
scenery were enjoyed by all. Selah!by Jeremy
Schmidthe gave up a singing career to fish? "When I turn a
page, I turn a page."Finally, after eight hours, he is finished. He mo-
tors toward shore, anchoring 200 yards off the
beach. His brother comes out to help him clean the
fish. They slit the bellies and yank out the viscera,
carefully setting aside the larger cod livers along
with the stomachs. They will make a liver pâté with
onion greens and spices, stuff it into the stomachs
and boil them in a stew with potatoes and other
vegetables. "It looks terrible," says LaCroix, "but for
me, there's nothing better in the whole world."Soon the boat is slippery with slime and guts. One
cod is particularly large, more than 100 pounds, and
together, the brothers heave it into a box, creating
a splash of various liquids. "It's dirty work," says
LaCroix."But the money's clean," notes his brother. "When
you fish alone, you've got no boss. It's just you and
the ocean."And, one might add, the fish plant, where LaCroix
sells each day's catch. If he averages \$100 before
expenses, he feels he has done well. His independ-
ence, much as he loves it, is hard-won.Singer-turned-fisherman Donat LaCroix: "Singing is my
life; I refuse to let it be my death."

There is no more engaging example of that sense
of self than Donat LaCroix, an independent inshore
fisherman based in Caraquet. He is a striking man,
over six feet tall, spare with an intriguing, weathered
face and a receding hairline that finds compensation
in a long shock of hair off the back of his scalp.
LaCroix looks a good bit younger than his nearly
50 years. His father, also a fisherman, sent him to
Laval University in Quebec so he would not have
to make his living on the sea. The heritage, however,
was strong: LaCroix walked away with an engineer-
ing degree in fisheries. Following graduation, he
taught for a number of years at the Memramcook
Branch of the Université de Moncton, during which
time he became known as a singer and songwriter.
For two years, CBC in Moncton hired him to host
the television variety programme *Pistrolli*, which
was aired on the Atlantic network during the winter
and went national during the summer. Well on his
way to a professional career, LaCroix began per-
forming throughout eastern Canada.

"He could have been famous," recalls a friend,
"but he was dying. So many people around him
saying, 'You do that, you do this. It was not Donat's
style. Donat likes freedom, and this is why he's a
fisherman.'"

LaCroix's professional career ended in Montreal
on the night his third daughter was born. He was
scheduled to sing, and he did, but it was his last
performance. No job, he said, should keep a man
away from the birth of his daughter. Returning to
Caraquet at the age of 41, he bought permits from
a retiring fisherman and took up the trade of his
father. He continues to entertain, but at a pace of his
own choosing. "Singing is my life," he says, "I refuse
to let it be my death. I am not a singer; I am a man
who sings."

In truth, he is a fisherman who sings. Every morn-
ing for half the year, he gets up hours before dawn
and goes out after whatever the season provides.
During August, he long-lines for cod. In the first grey
light of predawn, he pushes his 20-foot launch,
which he built himself, into the sea from the sand
beach in front of his brother's house. By that time,
his brother Leopold is already a mile out in the foggy

dark, pulling sleek mackerel from a gill net. He has
a cooler full of them waiting as LaCroix motors
alongside. The mackerel, cut into triangles, will
become cod bait. The brothers make small talk for
a few minutes, then head off in opposite directions.

Fifteen minutes later, LaCroix arrives at his first
buoy. Tying to it, he sits on a wooden box and cuts
his bait. When he has a bucketful, he stands in the
bow and pulls up the longline. It has been sitting on
the bottom, 23 fathoms down, for a day and a night.
It has a hook attached by a leader every four feet or
so. He begins to pull himself and the boat along the
line, baiting each hook as it comes over the gunwale
and removing the fish that have been caught — cod,
hake, sole, a few mackerel, rarely salmon or tuna.
Many hooks are empty. Some of the fish, having
swallowed hooks deeply, have died and been eaten
by crab; they come up as ghostly skeletons shining
in the dark early waters. Occasionally, the crab
themselves are caught or starfish of brilliant colours,
sea urchins, skates, bits of coral and pink sea anem-
ones still attached to their rocks. LaCroix likes this
part of the job: "It's always a surprise box."

As the sun rises, the day turns warm. There are
other boats scattered across the calm sea. Hump-
back whales break the surface and the silence with
the rush of their breathing. Seagulls gather, hoping
for scraps. He talks to them, enjoying their com-
pany, warning them off the baited hooks. Despite

his efforts, a gull is sometimes hooked, and LaCroix
has to kill it. Then he drags it along behind the boat;
as long as it is there, no other gull will come near.

Cod feed at dawn and dusk. LaCroix has two lines
to pull, each about a mile long. If he gets to the first
one early enough, he can clear it and drop it in time
for the dawn feeding. Then, after pulling the second
line, he comes back to the first, in effect doubling
his take on that line. It makes for a long day — three
miles of line, a hook every few feet. As the hours
wear on, LaCroix's motions become slower, more
mechanical. His tiredness shows. He says he feels
it mostly in the legs and knees, standing in a rocking
boat all day. Does he like it out there alone day after
day? "Oh, yes. Out here, you can think." Is he glad