

Features

Excuse Me, There's A Fly In My Soup

by Andrea Willard

Lately, when eating out, I've started to worry about picking up a disease or two along with the check.

Food service has become big business, and area restaurants seem more concerned with cleaning up profits rather than cleaning up their silverware.

I'm referring to what are commonly advertised as "family restaurants" (perhaps descendants of the Borgia family). These little restaurants surround area shopping malls and live off weary shoppers looking for an inexpensive hot meal. What does the customer get for his money? Maybe trench mouth.

Customers must wade through smashed salad bar-droppings to be seated at a sticky table, and then are served the "catch of the day" (broiled salmonella surprise). This, the waitress brings to you on a food-encrusted plate--only the food is not yours.

One of the worst of these is Bob's Big Boy restaurant. Bob's trademark is "Big Boy" who, dressed in down-home bib overalls, smiles at customers as they enter Bob's restaurant. Big Boy's gargantuan stomach is a testimonial to Bob's homecooking.

Deciding to be adventurous, my sister and I decided to risk it and take the ptomaine tour at Bob's. It didn't take long, though, to realize our error.

When the waitress brought us our beverages, I noticed that some food-like object was stuck to the side of my glass.

"Could you please bring me another glass," I asked in my sweetest and sincerest "waitresses are people, too" voice. "There seems to be some avocado hanging from the side of this one" (my quick mind determined this was avocado because it was green and kind of mushy--at least I think it was avocado).

Now, if this had been iced tea or lemonade, I might have been fooled into thinking it was a garnish. But, I had ordered milk. Even I know that milk is never served with green stuff.

"It's only food," the waitress said. "It came from my hands--see." I saw. I noticed that food ran up her arm like a free-flowing natural tattoo.

She replaced my glass of milk, all the while mumbling something about troublemakers.

I must say that the service was fast and, before long, our blue plate specials were sitting before us (mine with a wandering single green bean that I hadn't ordered--I don't want to speculate about where it may have come from).

Then my sister noticed that her fork had a small piece of spaghetti entwined in its prongs. When we brought this to the attention of the waitress, she grabbed the fork and stomped into the kitchen. Returning, she informed us that this was the cleanest silverware we'd get between 5 and 8 p.m. If we wanted clean silverware, we had better come in after 8 p.m. After this speech, the manager waited on us. She refused to deal with troublemakers.

We ate our deep-fried haddock (deep frying seemed a safe way to go), and paid

Central PA. Drives Home the Gold

by Andrea Abolins

If America had a Driving Olympics, Central Pennsylvanians would bring home the gold in rubbernecking, brake riding, and red light running. Everyday, at high noon, I'm forced to drive through Harrisburg. Everyday, by 12:30 p.m., I have uttered words that would embarrass a sailor. Six blocks, 30 minutes--I've just been through downtown Harrisburg--Central Pennsylvania's training ground for Driving Olympic hopefuls.

First, there's the area where the Senate Theater is being demolished. Old men reminisce about "Debbie Does Dallas" as they stop their cars to stare. Women slow down to see what they've been missing all of these years. Meanwhile, I'm in the middle of the intersection and the light's just changed.

Next, we have the downtown dining scene. The guy who was supposed to meet his girlfriend for lunch can't remember where. Instead of parking and walking down the block, he hopes his flashing brake lights will attract her. I've got whiplash after bouncing on my brakes every five seconds to prevent running into his rear bumper.

Finally, there's the massive intersection. The kind where the people in the wide street think they have precedence over the people in the narrow street--no matter what color the light is. Some lady is so glad to be over the Harvey Taylor Bridge that she decides to make like an ambulance and rush through the red-turning yellow. I decide I like my car and will give her the right-of-way.

A couple of my friends and I didn't learn how to drive in Central Pennsylvania. We feel pretty lucky about that. We have decided to form our own team for the Driving Olympics. We feel pretty lucky about that, too.

You see, it's doubtful we'll place in the patiently waiting or kindly disregarding events. But, our recent training grounds make us the hands-down favorites to bring home the gold in creative passing, brake slamming, and obscene gesturing.

Reminder

Don't Forget that the Capital Times office has been relocated to W-337 of the Olmsted Building. Our phone number will remain the same: 944-4970.

our check.

As we were leaving, we passed the smiling Big Boy. My sister commented that perhaps Big Boy's stomach is not round and plump because of homecooking. Perhaps it's distended because of all the bacteria Big Boy has ingested over the many years eating at Bob's.

Strolling Survival for Students

By Derrick Stokes

Dorm students, beware! Walking to the Olmsted Building may be hazardous to your health.

The signs posted around campus state, "Caution: Pedestrians on this campus have the right of way." But anybody who has ever walked across campus knows that the crosswalks are a shooting gallery and pedestrians are the ducks.

These automobile assassins blatantly ignore the signs. These maniac motorists would have a hard time reading the signs traveling at the speed of light. Where's a good cop when you need one? At Hardees?

To be honest, there are few campus cops; too few to be everywhere all the time. If they would concentrate on enforcing the crosswalk ordinance, who would be left to place parking tickets on the windshields of cars parked 16 minutes in a 15-minute space?

There are no easy answers but something has to be done. If not, some students may be injured. So until the Keystone, ahem, campus cops get their act together, I have devised some classes on *Strolling-Survival* to help Penn State Harrisburg pedestrians.

Running 101: This course will place students in the hypothetical situation of being in the middle of a crosswalk while a speeding Saab approaches. Students are instructed to dash to the closest sidewalk. (Credit: another day to live.)

Fibbing 200: Students learn how to tell lies to professors to explain their tardiness. Who would believe the truth: The Fruehauf employees don't obey the crosswalk statute, so you had to wait until they were gone to cross the street. (Credit: a Humanities degree.)

Obscene Gestures 310: Students learn an international array of obscene gestures to demonstrate to passing motorists who narrowly missed them. (Credit: personal satisfaction.)

Faking 426: This course teaches students how to fake being hit, grovel in pain, and select the proper attorney. Students will select the lawyer who will not sue the driver but the university. The school can be sued because its campus police are supposed to enforce the crosswalk ordinance. Besides, Penn State is loaded. (Credit: free tickets to a current Pia Zadora film.)

If police services won't provide transportation for the students who failed these courses, the roads may become littered with mangled bodies. So, move over Mr. Bashed Bunny and Mr. Squashed Squirrel; make room for the newest road-kill -- the smashed student.

Did You Know That...?

Student debt has doubled between 1976-77 and 1983-84, according to an American Council on Education study. The study examined graduates who held full-time jobs one year after commencement and found the average debt was \$4,970 for the '83-84 graduates. Officials say that a debt burden of three to 15 percent of pretax earnings is "reasonable," and that in 1987, the average debt for students graduating from four-year public schools will be \$6,800.

A New Student Loan Survey by the Consumer Bankers Association reports the profitability of Guaranteed Student Loans is low at most financial institutions. What's more, if proposed federal policy changes are adopted, they could drive many lenders from the program. Lenders said the most objectionable proposals were reductions in the amount of loans the government would guarantee, and in a special interest rate for institutions providing GSLs.

This information has been provided by the National On-Campus Report, a national information service on the contemporary campus scene.

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ACNE STUDY

Needed: Men (over 18 years of age) with acne to participate in a 16-week study to evaluate a topical anti-androgen lotion (vs. placebo) in the treatment of acne.

\$200 will be paid to each subject upon his completion of the study.

The study is being conducted by Dr. Donald Lookingbill at the Division of Dermatology, The Pennsylvania State University, College of Medicine, Hershey Medical Center.

For further information, contact Pat Young at (717) 531-4507.

APOLOGY

To Clemmie Gilpin whose first name and title were omitted from the April 27 issue of the *Capital Times* in an article entitled, Students, Faculty Speak Out.

Gilpin is an assistant professor of Afro-American Studies.