

J.W.J.

## Raining in the summer of '65

By J.W. JOHNSON

It was raining that morning in the summer of 1965 when, as a sophomore in high school, I learned that Tommy Jester, one of my best friends, had died.

Stepped on a mine in Vietnam. And, in open defiance of the drought which would begin that year and last for the next three years, the rain kept falling as it was also in 1965 that Malcolm X, the black nationalist leader was assassinated; additionally, in August, 1965 some 90,000 U.S. troops were in Vietnam; that had increased to more than 184,000 men by the end of that year, notwithstanding LBJ's promise to "have our boys home by Christmas."

Beyond the death of T.S. Eliot, and the release of Simon and Garfunkel's *Sounds of Silence* in May of 1965, the other event that year which still clings to me was release of another song which eventually was banned on some local radio stations throughout the United States.

Given the racist rhetoric found in the songs of today's Guns and Roses, and the sadomasochism found in the lyrics of some of today's 'rap' groups, the song was tame.

It was called *Eve of Destruction*, and was recorded by Barry McGuire, a former lead singer with the New Christy Minstrels.

Even though the song became symbolic of early dissent in the Vietnam conflict, one reason given

for its banning was that its words were said to be inflammatory because, also that year, were the Watts riots in which 34 died and more than 1,000 were injured.

I listened to the song again this week, hearing for perhaps the first time, the enormity of what it said, in the context of when it was written and released.

Sadly, some of its message is as true today as it was then; happily, there have been some changes. Following are those lyrics. You be the judge.

The eastern world, it is exploding violence flaring, bullets loading you're old enough to kill but not for voting you don't believe in war but what's that gun you're totting and even the Jordan River has bodies floating But you tell me over and over again my friend you don't believe we're on the eve of destruction.

Don't you understand what I'm trying to say, don't you feel the fears I'm feeling today, if the button's pushed there's no running away, there'll be no one to save with the world in a grave, take a look around you boy, it's bound to scare you boy, and you tell me over and over again my friend you don't believe we're on the eve of destruction.

Yeah, my blood's so mad feels like coagulating. I'm just sitting here contemplating.

I can't twist the truth, it knows no regulation, handful of senators don't pass legislation, and marches alone can't bring integration, when human respect is disintegrating, this whole crazy world is just to frustrating and you tell me over and over again my friend you don't believe we're on the eve of destruction.

Think of all the hate there is in Red China, then take a look around to Selma, Alabama, you may leave here for four days in space but when you return it's the same old place the pounding of the drums, the pride and disgrace you can bury your dead but don't leave a trace hate your next door neighbor but don't forget to say grace and tell me over and over again you don't believe we're on the eve of destruction.

It was a raining song Later, Credence Clearwater Revival would ask if anyone could stop the rain. And The Rolling Stones provided shelter. Rest warm and dry, Tommy, because it's still wet down here.



## Idetown UMC Couples Club auction will be June 13

The Idetown United Methodist Couple's Club will hold their annual auction Saturday, June 13, at the Luzerne County Fair Grounds, Route 118, Dallas. The auction will begin at 11 a.m., with new and used items put up on the block. The auction will be indoors, but please bring your own chairs. Anyone having items to be donated may contact Richard Ide at 675-1214, Henry Bergstrasser at 675-1214, or Bill St. Clair at 675-0420. Some of the items to be auctioned include assembled entertainment centers, cribs and a high chair, lamps, an oak kitchen table, wrought iron patio furniture, and ten speed bicycle. Shown from left are members of the Idetown United Methodist Couple's Club preparing for their annual auction June 13: Bill St. Clair, Dick Ide, Erik St. Clair, Lois Ide, Brad Burnaford, Henry Bergstrasser. (Post Photo/Eric Foster)

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## Library news

### Library horse show will be June 28

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The display case at the Back Mountain Memorial Library is featuring an unusual collection of cookie cutters borrowed from Rae Ellen Zekas of Shavertown. Rae Ellen is 9 years old and a third grade student at Gate of Heaven School in Dallas. Rae Ellen has titled her display, "It's Cooking Time!". She began collecting these cookie cutters in 1986 when she wanted a variety of shapes to make "Play-Doh" cookies.

Her grandmother gave her an assortment of the red plastic cutters that were given away in five pound bags of flour during the 1950's. Among them are Alice in Wonderland, a gingerbread house, a church and several pieces of the Nativity scene. During the 1987 library auction, Rae Ellen discovered a plastic bag full of unique cookie cutters at the Women of Kiwanis booth. Included were cartoon characters dated 1956 and

cutters with wooden handles. Most unusual was one of a hatchet symbolizing George Washington's birthday. The Planter's Peanut Man was purchased at the Almost Antique booth at the library auction in 1989.

Most of the cookie cutters were bought at yard sales, flea markets and antiques and collectibles shows. Interesting cutters include an American flag, a donkey, a fish, a red plastic pine cone, a cow and a metal lion. Rae Ellen and her mother have discovered that many of the cutters in her collection are now considered collector's items. Rae Ellen had added some canning jars filled with flour and sugar, some food coloring and spices to add zest to the display. They will be at the library until July 1.

The Book Club will meet at the library at 1:30 on Monday, June 15. Program will be a 'show and tell' presented by members. Guests are welcome to attend.

The library has a 1991 Standard & Poor's Register for sale,

which includes 3 volumes. Vol. 1 is the Corporations; Vol. 2, directors and executives; and Vol. 3, includes indexes. The set cost \$525; we will accept a reasonable offer for the set.

The 4th annual Horse Show held in conjunction with the library auction, will be held on Sunday, June 28 at the Luzerne County Fair Grounds in Lehman from 7:30 a.m. to dusk, rain or shine. Dr. John and Kathy Shaskas will chair the horse show again and are asking for baked goods to be donated for sale at the food booth. These may be dropped off at the library on Saturday, June 27 from 9:30 until 4:30. Sponsors of the horse show include: Earl Samuel Agency, Diamond Manufacturing, R.N. Fitch & Sons, Beaumont Inn/Penn State Seed, Sibio's Restaurant, ENCON, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pearsall, Dr. and Mrs. Durelle Scott, Dr. and Mrs. David Rimple, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Heffernan, and Commonwealth Telephone Company.

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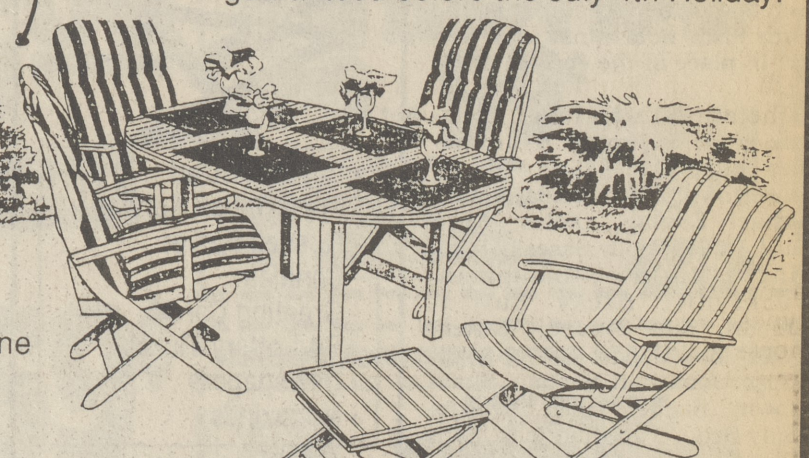
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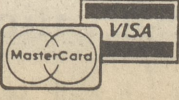
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