

J.W.J.

Great expectations for the new president

By J.W. JOHNSON

The letter "E" is the fifth letter of the English alphabet, coming from the Latin through the Greek, which took it from a Phoenician letter called *he* in Hebrew, representing a sound like the English *H*...and it begins the three words uppermost for this New Year and for years beyond: Energy, the Economy and our Expectations.

ENERGY
Energy is the most specific of and, perhaps, the most significant of these three areas. The economy and our expectations are steadfastly tied to it, i.e., we recently—theoretically—fought a war in the Middle East to protect our national interests in preserving the oil fields of Kuwait...and the world has only 50-250 years of oil remaining.

Alternatives? Coal, solar, tidal, geo-thermal, nuclear and several other exotic possibilities, including (believe it or not) the burning of water, are on the horizon. Some experts offer a convincing argument that solar, tidal or geo-thermal energy will never be economically or logistically feasible on a large scale; that is, these sources are not politically viable because they would mean a severe loss of personal freedom through a logistically necessary change to collective living...in other words, very few private homes, and mostly apartment living. As such, use of such energy sources is not likely to occur.

The use of coal is steeped in decades of inefficient reclamation and, once mined and burned, it does much harm to air and water. But are the risks outweighed compared to being held economic and political hostage until the world's oil spigot runs dry?

Nuclear power also has potential harm to people, water and air. However, other than coal, nuclear energy is the only feasible energy source for large scale, central source distribution, the method essential to keep individual liberty and choice as a priority.

Perhaps the best hope for our energy future lies in research into nuclear 'fusion', a process that theoretically, does not produce radioactive waste or present other environmental problems and dangers to human life found in the current nuclear fission process.

And as we wait, coal and nuclear

research and use seem to be the only two energy forms for which benefits, in total, weigh more heavily.

ECONOMY
A new President, and the potential for change, has helped to spur a moribund economic picture for the New Year. But what has President-elect Clinton told us that he's going to do?

- Cut 100,000 federal workers.
- Cut White House and congressional staffs by 25 percent.
- Freeze spending on federal consultants.
- Create an Economic Security Council to coordinate international economic policy.

- Require federal managers to achieve a 3 percent administrative savings.

- Save 17.1 billion over four years through management reforms at the Resolution Trust Corporation, the S&L bailout agency.

- Increase the minimum wage to keep pace with inflation.
- Enact legislation forbidding companies from permanently replacing striking workers.

- Provide extended unemployment benefits to workers during a recession.

- Give middle class taxpayers a choice between a children's tax credit and a reduction in their income tax rate.

- Extend the earned income tax credit so no full-time workers with a family is below the poverty level.
- Provide a targeted investment tax credit for businesses to encourage investments in new plants and equipment.

- Provide a 50 percent capital gains exclusion for long-term investments in new small businesses.

- Create greater tax incentives for investments in renewable energy uses.

- Reduce taxes for businesses that locate in urban enterprise zones and hire local residents.

- Create a 36 percent tax bracket beginning for families with adjusted gross incomes above \$200,000. (I know many of you would like to have this problem).

- Increase the alternative minimum wage for individuals. (Most of you don't have the privilege of having to worry about this).

- Impose a 10 percent surtax on taxable income in excess of \$1 million.

- Cap corporate deduction for

CEO salaries at \$1 million. (In other words, any company that is stupid enough to pay anyone more than \$1 million dollars in salary is no longer going to be able to deduct the excess on its tax return).

- End incentives for opening plants overseas.

- Increase taxes by \$45 billion over four years for foreign corporations with operations in the United States.

- Increase fines and taxes for corporate polluters by \$10.1 billion over four years.

- Require employers to provide health insurance for employees.

- Reduce the budget deficit by more than half in four years.

- Enact a line item veto to give presidents the authority to strike specific projects from spending bills. (It will be a hot day in Antarctica before Congress will give up its only real authority).

Much of what the new President wants to do starts with a redefinition of the free enterprise system, replacing it with governmental manipulation and regulation of the marketplace with the state intent of being all things to all people. The lack of wisdom in this approach requires only a glance at the shambles left in the collapse of Communism.

Of course, the elimination of the Cold War, and us being held hostage to a war time economy, even in peacetime, also hasn't helped consumer or corporate confidence; and such confidence will not return without some government policies which clearly show how when and where what formerly was spent on weapons and armies will now be spent on the public infrastructure and in other areas.

EXPECTATIONS

What we expect of government is, in large measure, a mirror or what we don't expect of ourselves. The difference is that when we expect it from government, its partially because we have the false idea that someone else is paying for it.

We can and should expect more of ourselves. This nation did not become strong by riding; it became strong because its members chose to walk, heads held high with the pride of self reliance, community spirit and a faith in ourselves as freedom loving Americans. Continuing this tradition would be, as the new President put it, an "investment" in yourself.

Library news

Spring Story Hour sessions to begin Feb. 2

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Book Club of the Back Mountain Memorial Library is accepting 1993 membership dues at the library. The Book Club membership runs from January through December. To date, the 1993 dues paid total has reached \$830 with 89 members joining for the year. Total membership in 1992 was 227 with \$2,070 collected from dues; all monies being used to purchase books for the Book Club shelf in the library. The membership goal for 1993 is set at 230 members; which will allow for the purchase of additional books for the shelf. Single membership is \$10 and double membership is \$15; payable at the library desk or through the mail.

The Spring Story Hour sessions will begin at the library on Wednesday, Feb. 3 for 3 to 5 year olds; a special toddler story hour will begin on February 2 from 11 to 11:30 in the morning. Most of the sessions are already filled; however

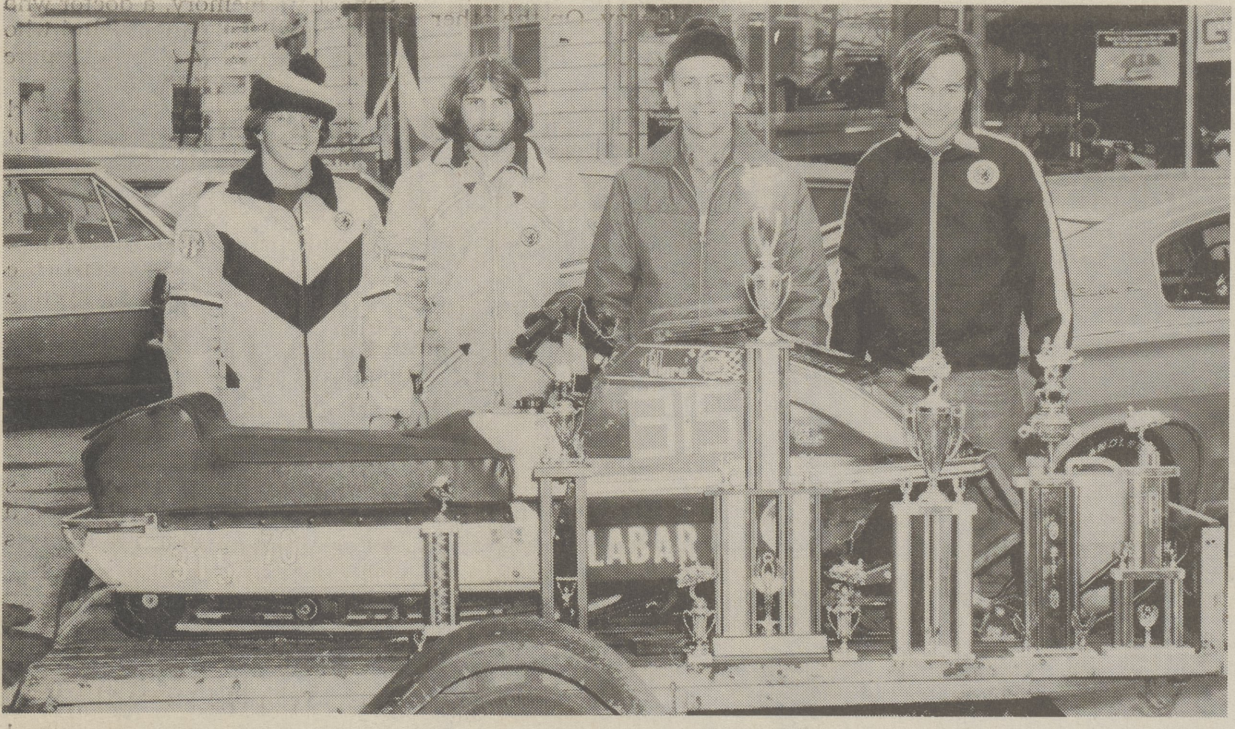
there are a few vacancies in some of the time periods. Inquiries may be made at the library, for available spaces. The story hours will run through the month of April.

New books at the library: "This Day And Age" by Mike Nicol is a novel of extraordinary intensity, lyricism and levity; telling the story of Enoch Mistas, and the strange voices in his head. Enoch is a black youth with a Bible chained to his wrist who leads a messianic rebellion against an imperious, bewildered government. The story begins with an oracle. Before his inauguration, the new president seeks the advice of Maria, a fortune-teller who sees long years of national harmony and the rule of law—but then plague and famine will sweep the land, and in time a prophet will spread revolt among the populace. Asked where this man can be found, she replies, "He is not yet born."

"The Venetian Mask" by Rosalind Laker is a lush new novel of

romance and adventure set against the background of dazzling pageantry and tarnished splendor that was the 18th-century Venice. Although the city is still an exciting and glamorous center for arts and culture, it is by this time past its prime. And it is not only decadent but dangerous. Violence hides behind the fanciful masks that Venetians wear to disguise their identity; women are in thrall to their husbands...and life is cheap in 'the brothel of Europe'.

In the heart of this city stands the Ospedale della Pietà a renowned music conservatory for orphaned girls and within its cloistered walls three children meet and become lifelong friends. Adrianna, the oldest becomes the solid base of the triangle; Elena, bright, blond and vivacious is betrothed to a rich and powerful man; and golden-voiced Marietta weds a Torrisi, sworn enemy of the Celanos. Readers will be swept to another time and place.



Winter fun

This week's old photo brings back memories to many of us who once enjoyed snowmobiles as a winter sport. There were snowmobile clubs, races, trails, teams, you name it, they had it. Times change, weather changes and so do our hobbies. Not enough snow was probably the first reason the interest started to dwindle. Pictured in this week's Old Photo is one of the winners sponsored by La Bar's of Dallas. Can you I.D. the people shown and maybe tell us the story of this group of snowmobilers? Memories and "good old fun" are sure to surface this week!

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