

The Enterprise opinion pages are an open forum for our community. We encourage readers to express their thoughts about issues that appear in this newspaper or affect the community. Letters should be brief (with an outside limit of 1,000 words) and must include the writer's address, name, and phone number for verification. The editors may reject letters that have been printed elsewhere. Letters concerning elections will be cut off one issue before the election at the editor's discretion. No unsigned letters. Deadline for letters is Tuesday at noon.



To the editor

Thanks to Santa and the gang for making Christmas merry for 140 kids

To the Editor:

On Dec. 7, a Christmas parade was held in the town of Berne.

We would like to thank the following:

— The Berne Fire Department for the use of its truck for transporting our special guest;

— Jan VanEtten, of VanEtten Christmas Trees; Jean Forti, and Jeff Grippin for making the wreath in front of the Mason Hall. This was later decorated with eatable decorations for our feathered friends;

— The Boy Scouts for cleaning the hall. That was a huge help;

— The Berne Fire Department Auxiliary for its generous donation;

— The Albany County Sheriff's Department for helping us with traffic;

— The leaders and children of the organizations for making cookies that the children later decorated;

— The Altamont Enterprise for coming and taking our pictures;

— The Town of Berne Highway Department for hanging the

children. So, we would like to extend a big "thank you" for all your years of service to the community;

— Also, to Jodi, Staci, and Linda.

And let's not forget two very special people for taking time from their busy schedule to be in our parade and taking time to greet the children at the party. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

We had over 140 children — thank you, parents! Thanks to all for making this day a huge success.

And let's not forget two very special people for taking time from their busy schedule to be in our parade.

banners and making the town look festive;

— The Masons for the use of their hall, hot chocolate, popcorn, and their generous donation. They have been doing this for over 20 years for the Hilltown

Merry Christmas!

Bonnie Conklin
Town of Berne Historical Society

Old Men of the Mountain

Tall tales of ice woes from storm, coping with generators and wood stoves

By John R. Williams

On Dec. 16, the Old Men of the Mountain met at the Home Front Café in Altamont. The attendance surprised many of the OFs because of the power outages, and basically the weather. We did have a good group.

Now when an OF takes a shower many times it is work. Even getting dressed is a task that is looked at for some time before starting.

It puts the OFs in good stead when they go through all this, and then challenge the weather and make it to the breakfast. Good for us.

Of course, the main topic of discussion this morning was the weather. All the OFs had stories to tell about themselves, their relatives, and their friends.

Our voices this morning joined the chorus of many who had their own tales of ice woes. Those with trees down, power out, holes in the roof, tree limbs on cars, wires down, pots exploding, roads closed, animals in distress — the whole ball of wax and for once we were there among them.

Some of the OFs (in fact many of the OFs) have whole house generators, as well as standard shop-type generators. In situations like this, these are worth a million dollars.

The OFs with the whole-house generators, found out how much fuel they use if they run them for a long time. With power outages like the one the northeast just experienced, it is good to have a large tank of propane and have it full because the ones with the 30 horsepower engines use two gallons an hour under full load.

Some of the OFs have wood furnaces, and wood stoves. These, too, were a big help with the power out. Those with the outside wood furnaces need electricity for them to work. With this type of unit, a generator is also a requirement. We have an OF with

this type of heat supply, and his neighbor had power and they ran a lead to the furnace so this OF made out fine for heat.

We talked about the old wood-type kitchen stoves and how practical they would be in this kind of situation. Not many of those old Kalamazoos are around anymore.

We also noted how the shelters were set up and where they were. One OF said they went to work in one and very few people took advantage of it.

The OFs assumed that those on the Hill are ready for weather like this and many, if they have lived there any length of time, have been through some miserable storms on

and the waitress fills his cup with coffee and the OF continues with his conversation, and nods a thank-you to the waitress. He then reaches for the stainless-steel-covered pitcher-type thing, and continues to talk while pouring the contents of the pitcher in his coffee, stirs and drinks. (Here is where the scribe wishes words could be turned into pictures.)

The look on his face is so contorted that even the wrinkles didn't know where to go. The OF said, "Has anyone tried syrup in their coffee?"

Then he started blaming the OF across from him at the table for ordering pancakes. Then he blamed the restaurant for not having two separate containers — one for milk and one for syrup that didn't look alike, and then he wanted to palm the coffee off to anyone who said they used syrup in their coffee.

No takers.

Condolences

The Old Men of the Mountain wish to offer their condolences to Jim Rissacher on the passing of his father this past week.

Tough or stupid

As the scribe sits pounding this out on the computer it is snowing to beat the band, and the temp is 17 degrees. Should the OFs that stay here really brag about their toughness, or are we just stupid, and it is the smart ones that have flown south.

Those OFs that did hang around to face the elements and commiserate about the weather on Tuesdays were: Skip Skinner, Arnold Geraldson, Carl Walls, Miner Stevens, Roger Chapman, Robie Osterman, John Rossmann, Steve Kelly, Mace Porter, Harold Guest, Ted Pelkey, Paul Paulsen, Jim Rissacher, Harold Grippen, Ted Willsey, Willard Osterhout, and me.

The Old Men of the Mountain wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, and may all your wishes come true.

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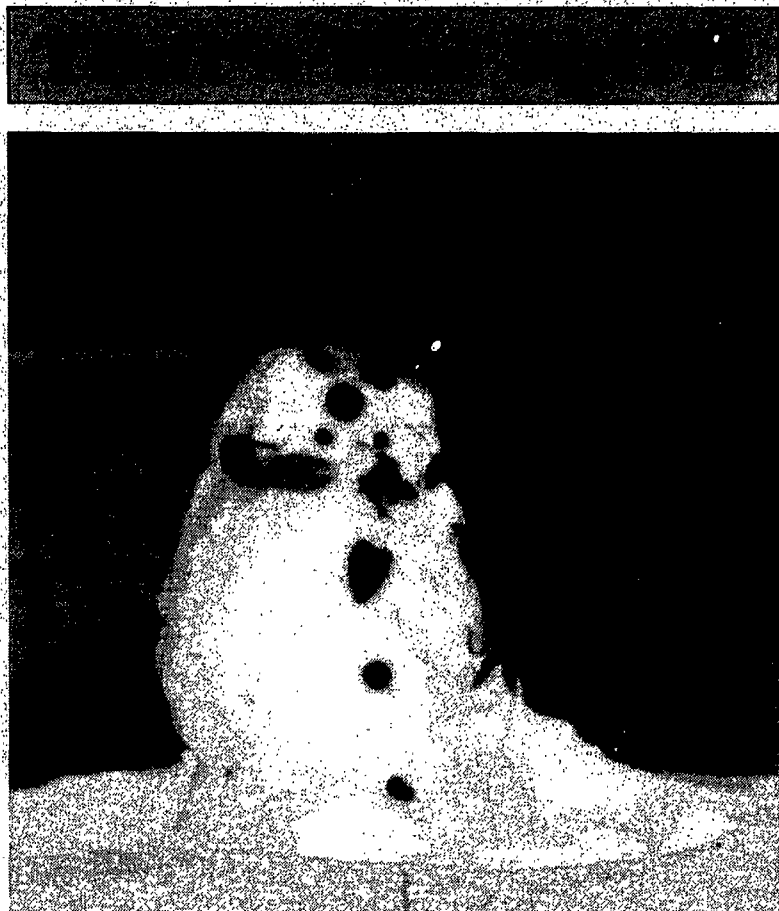
the Hill. This also brought out how people checked on other people to see if they were OK.

On the Hill anyway this goes on even if there isn't a major event like this ice storm. If it is noticed someone on the Hill has a change of habit, such as not being out and about as usual, someone goes and checks to be sure that nothing has happened to them. This is nice to know.

Now to something a little more normal for the OFs. In almost all the restaurants the OFs attack, they have milk either in the little plastic things or in stainless-steel-covered pitcher-type things. Also if they don't have the syrup for the pancakes in a syrup bottle, they have them in the stainless-steel-covered pitcher-type things. At the Home Front Café they use the stainless-steel-covered pitcher-type things.

When we first arrive, the waitresses serve us the coffee, and many of the waitresses know who is regular and who is decaf.

This morning, one of the OFs is in the middle of a conversation



The Enterprise — Michael Koff
Frosty is well-dressed in a bowler and smoking a pipe; he wears his heart on his chest as he stands watch on Sir Charles Way in Guilderland.

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and best wishes for a
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