

THE PORT WEEKLY

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What Sputnik Means to PDSHS

To every educational institution in America, it is disturbing to relate that there is a satellite whirling around the earth, a Sputnik not fostered by the United States. We, at PDSHS, are only one school out of thousands and yet our interest and concern is a sample of what is taking place on a national scale in all the schools of the country. However, interest and concern are not enough. We, along with other schools, must convert our energies into work — work that will make the world a safer place for our children, the future generations. It's up to us, the high school students, to pull America up by her boot straps, to raise our scientific advancement to the plane of Russia's by increased understanding, training and knowledge. This last statement may sound trite or foolish. Yet even while this paper is going to press, there are activities, in PDSHS that are trying to do just that. Retort has begun a rocket project. When they are finished, the product may not be of direct use to the American government, but consider of what great value will be the understanding and training and knowledge gained by the experimentation of these students. It will be a basis for future study and achievement.

Elsewhere in the student body, increased understanding of our problems is being gained through other channels. Science and history classes are discussing Sputnik, openly and objectively. Through an exchange of ideas and opinions, the students of PDSHS are getting a new perspective of the missile program. In a democracy, an uninformed, uninterested people really is the only deadly threat to independence.

Mr. Hendrickson has just returned from attending a conference at which an attempt was made to evaluate our schools and our system of teaching and learning. In Albany, there are education experts who are trying to decide how to make PDSHS and others, better institutions, more efficient instruments to propel the age of rockets and missiles in the United States.

Our job? — Never to lose faith in the abilities of our country because then we admit our own failure even before the fight has begun. Our watchword should be "preparedness" — for rockets, for missiles, for Russia, for the future.

Faculty Xmas Party

With a little imagination, it should not be too difficult to picture this faculty Christmas party, as the editors have dreamed it up.

Everyone is assembled, except for a few familiar faces, and all turn expectantly toward the door of Mr. Mac's living-room. The sound of bells is heard. Sure enough, there is Mr. Kezar playing Santa Claus and beaming with Christmas spirit.

There doesn't appear to be tree, but all of a sudden, Mr. Pickett enters with a spruce right from the New Hampshire woods. Mrs. Englebert and Mrs. Barnhouse sing Spanish carols while Mr. Mesrobian plays the piano. Never to be out-done, Miss Buckley and Miss Duffy take turns singing French and Latin verses to "Oh, Come All Ye Faithful."

Then the door of the living room bursts open and Mrs. Huggins and Miss Dickson enter with the Christmas turkey. Now everyone is present, and the faculty Christmas party is complete.

IMPULSE

by Ann Thomas

The dime store was cheerfully lit and Ashley's blonde hair shone in the overhead lighting above the card counter. It was pleasantly warm. A persistent cold rain beat on the decorated windows at the front of the store. But Ashley couldn't make up her mind about a card now that she had decided to send everybody the same design. The choice was important. She wasn't up to it.

Her gaze wandered and noticed a tiny shrivelled and toothless old woman coming through the front door. The large paper sack she carried was wet from the rain. So was her tattered brown coat. Her appearance distressed Ashley and the person who followed her did even more. She couldn't stop looking at him.

He was a man of about twenty-six, stockily built and wearing a black knit hat that came down over his ears. For a moment Ashley was not certain of what was wrong with him, not until he started to grin, slightly at first, then broadly, inanely. Then she knew. He was one of those adults whose mind is forever a child's mind.

She watched him twist his fingers and look about him, not moving his head only his unhappy eyes. His gaze met hers for a moment. Then, suddenly, terrifyingly, all of his teeth were displayed, like someone making fun of a tooth paste ad.

Sickened, feeling every bit of desire to be part of Christmas leave her. Ashley made herself look away. She bought a sample card, intending to ask her mother if it would do for everybody.

She started out of the store. Then near the cosmetic counter she saw that black knit hat again. As though bewitched she moved in its direction. The man's back was turned slightly. The old woman wasn't in sight. He was fingering a bottle of nail polish, red, exploring the curves of the container with his fingers, admiring it with his eyes.

Suddenly while Ashley watched fascinated he pushed the container into his mouth, felt it with his tongue. He removed it again then and clasped it, holding its image before his eyes, as though he feared some one would spirit it away.

Almost immediately the old woman did see him. She came behind him, the top of her head barely reaching his shoulder. Ashley was now absolutely involved in the scene. She was afraid the old woman would resent that and tried hard to appear very interested in some nail files, although she could hear as well as see all that went on between the strange pair.

The old woman put her hand up and tried to take the bottle from the man. But he resisted, frantically like a child.

"Mine," he cried.

"No, no," she said, "No money for that."

"Mine," he repeated. His face contorted like a child's.

"No," she said again. She slapped his hand sharply, seized the bottle and replaced it on the counter.

"Come," she ordered. Obediently he followed his head bent toward the floor. Ashley felt deep pity when she saw him turn and look back with infinite longing at the nail polish.

He was crying. Tears were running down his cheeks.

Wildly Ashley picked up the bottle of polish which was streaked with his saliva and paid a clerk for it. Then she darted among the people and through the front door. She caught up with him in the cold drizzle outside the store.

"Pardon me," she murmured. "I want to give you something." She pulled the little bottle from its bag and held it up. "For Christmas, for you."

At first he started at it blankly. Then his grin came. He grabbed the bottle. "Mine," he said.

"Yours," Ashley said. She hurried away.



FUNNY

By Harry Vexer

This column is supposed to be funny. "Make 'em laugh, hack it up," the editors tell me. Yuk, yuk, yuk.

Let's look at the facts. I'm failing physics and art. I had to walk two miles to school in 15 degree weather. There are almost 200 more days to suffer before school lets out. Is it funny? I ask you is it?

(continued on page 3)

Letter to the Editor

Dear Disappointed Student:

It seems that you are misinformed about the driver training course. Its purpose is to teach the beginner how to drive correctly and to improve the driving of those who have already obtained a license. Its purpose is not to obtain a senior license at 17 years of age or the reduction of up to 15% on insurance premiums.

Naturally every one who applies is not enrolled, as N. Y. State law requires a student to have at least one 20 minute driving period per week, and three 45 minutes classroom periods per week. Time permits only two persons to drive per period. The result is that total enrollment is only 120 with two instructors teaching eight periods daily.

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