

## View from Right Field

Rick Ohler



## A Reunion Limerick Challenge

As this edition of the world's best hometown newspaper arrives in a mailbox, retail outlet or online platform near you, EAHS alumni, former residents and expatriates who long ago traded in the 14052 for another set of numbers are descending upon the village for three or four or five days of reunion, revelry, reminiscing and head-scratching as they wonder why they left in the first place.

One of the questions that we townies will hear floating around the village all weekend is "Hey, what's new in town?" Well, the answers to that question depend on your point of view and run the gamut from "Not much" to "You hardly recognize the place anymore."

Out here in Right Field, we thought it would be fun to help with the "What's new in town?" question with a little quiz. Here are ten limericks, each containing a missing word or phrase, like they do on NPR's quiz show "Wait, Wait, don't Tell Me." In the five-line ditties that follow, we'll take a tour down Main Street. I'll describe new or fairly new businesses in the village and then ask you to remember the store or restaurant that used to stand in its place. Get 10 right answers and you might win a prize. The first 10 readers who bring correct answers to the *Advertiser*, 710 Main St., between 10 and noon on Friday, July 23, will win a drink token for the Right Field Satellite Office, southeast corner of Oakwood and Elm, where the 139-year-old stand-up bar has finally re-emerged after being desecrated with tables and stools for the past 16 months.

With that incentive in mind, here's your first limerick, an easy one to start with:

- In the village, it's easily the most tall,  
And now houses three restaurants in all.  
Try Red's for a dog,  
Taste or Griffon's for some grog.  
Back in the day, it was called \_\_\_\_\_.
- You can shop here for an organic food sampler,  
Where your membership into discounts does transfer.  
It sits by the tracks,  
But many years back  
It was Spike's deli, also known as \_\_\_\_\_.
- Stop for beef on weck and other butchers' goodies,  
For drinks, gas, lottery tickets and cookies.  
But many years back,  
He put your car on the racks,  
And dispensed Gulf gas when we all called it \_\_\_\_\_.
- Today, you can get a Singer that stitches with lasers,

And 10,000 fabrics or more, I would wager.  
But there once was a time  
When we all trooped to No. 659,  
'Cause everything we wore came from \_\_\_\_\_.

5. For gas pumps, the move was pure folly,  
Demolishing an old beautiful home is a shame, by golly.  
At Willow and Main,  
Do you remember the name?

It was the \_\_\_\_\_ Station before it was Pasquale's.

6. In the '60s it must have been quite a sight,  
With grocery stores on Main St. left and right.

This one's now a tutor  
Between the dentist and middle schoolers  
In our day, it was Stan and Fran Lowes' \_\_\_\_\_.

7. It's gone today, replaced by a grand parking lot,  
Near the CVS where you get the flu and Covid shot.

It was next to Ess & Fones  
Down the street from Nelson Holmes.  
They sold Studebakers until it became Kelter's \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Today it's the excellent Village Cafe,  
But it's been so many different stores in its day.

One memory is still clear,  
Of getting our camping gear  
At the \_\_\_\_\_ as we went on our way.

9. This isn't on Main Street, but it's not far at all,

Where village and town abandoned their solipsistic\* thrall,  
And finally agreed  
On a joint facility  
In the building we knew as the old \_\_\_\_\_.

10. McDonald's reign on Main didn't really begin

Until they built on the site where Jesters had been  
But do you remember the swank  
Of the place run by Frank?  
Once upon a time there was \_\_\_\_\_.

\* RIP Snake

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Columnist Rick Ohler invites readers to find past columns and articles on his website, [www.rickohler.com](http://www.rickohler.com).

## The Last Day of School

by Stephanie Baker  
Guest Writer

The day before our last day of school, my sixth-grade teacher, Mrs. Angel, made this announcement. "Class, because tomorrow is a half-day and the last day of school, you may bring one thing from home for show and tell. It may be anything you want, a toy or a pet, or something special to you, but you'll have to tell us something about why it's so special." All the way home I thought about what I wanted to bring. Running up the stairs to our apartment on Bank Street, I hoped my mom would say it was okay. She smiled as I walked into the kitchen.

"Mom, tomorrow we can bring one thing from home for show and tell. Mrs. Angel said it can be anything, as long as we can tell something about it. Can I bring Karen?"

Mom stopped peeling the potato in her hand, tilted her head and asked, "It's just a half-day?" I nodded my head. "And you'll be home by lunchtime?" I nodded again. "Well, I think it will be okay, Stephe. After all, you watch your baby sister at home, and this would be for a short time, just someplace a bit different." Mom said she'd check with Dad, but she was sure it would be okay.

My mom was not one of those "helicopter parents." She was more of the "crop duster" variety, dropping us into situations that might improve our self-confidence, sort of like fertilizer on crops. As kids, we never realized it, but as adults we realized where my dad would be happy to keep us in the nest, reminding us to be careful, my mom would be pushing us off the tree branch to experience the adventure.

Here's something I should have put first: I was 11, soon to be 12, but Karen was just 18 months old. She was potty-trained and could talk a blue streak. She was easy to babysit and loved to mimic whatever someone else was doing or saying. Also, our school was only a block and a half away.

As I helped Mom with the dishes, she told me that Dad agreed to let Karen come to school. I was so excited.

"Mom, can she wear her pink dress and her white high tops?"

"Sure, and maybe we'll polish her shoes before bed."

The next morning as we left for school, Mom stood on the sidewalk waving goodbye. "Have fun, girls," she said.

My sister, Pam, walked next to me holding a present for her kindergarten teacher, Miss Green. With Karen on my hip, we walked to Columbian School and in through the double doors. I set Karen down and walked up the

stairs to my classroom holding her hand. Mrs. Angel stood outside the door and I introduced Karen to my teacher.

"Say hi to Mrs. Angel."  
"Hi Missum Angel," Karen replied. As the kids filled our classroom, I saw one dog, a lot of favorite toys, a hamster in a cage, but no one else had brought a baby sister.

The morning flew by with kids explaining what they brought and why it was special. Jimmy Hart's dog did his tricks. We watched as Joanie's hamster went round and round on its yellow plastic wheel. When it was my turn, I stood up, took Karen's hand and walked a few steps to the front of the class.

"This is my sister, Karen. She's 18-months-old. She's the youngest one in our family and she can talk and sing and count, too. We wanted a baby brother, but now we're glad we have Karen. She's smart and funny and she minds me when I have to babysit her. She likes to chew the corners of our Golden books, but she doesn't eat them."

That got a lot of laughs. The kids clapped, and so did Karen as we went back to my desk. As I sat there with my sister, I felt pretty special. Then Mrs. Angel said it was time to pass out our report cards and get ready to go home. She wished us all a safe and happy summer vacation as we filed past her out the door of our classroom. Some of my classmates caught up to me just to talk to Karen and pat her on the head or say goodbye. She had been a hit for sure!

We met Pam outside and started for home. I held Karen's hand until she tugged at my shorts and said, "Picka me up, Foofie."

I put her on my hip, gave her my report card to hold and rounded the corner toward home. As we walked in the door, Mom was smiling at us so hard it looked like her mouth might break. Nodding to me she asked, "Well, how did it go?"

"Great, I was the only one who brought a sister."

As we sat eating our lunch, with summer vacation stretching out like an endless ribbon, I kept thinking about the morning at school and how much fun it was to take my baby sister with me.

Today, the 11-year-old that still lives inside me, can conjure that last day/beginning of summer feeling, along with unspeakable gratitude for having such great parents, especially a mom who quietly gave us the belief that we were capable of just about anything.

Stephanie Baker is a retired first-grade teacher who grew up in Hornell, NY.

## Do You Want Your Voice Heard?

We need your opinions.

We suggest that letters intended for publication be around 300 words or fewer, and ask that each letter address a single theme or topic.

Letters over 800 words will not be considered.

If you disagree with the opinions you have read in today's paper, we encourage you to write a letter of your own.

Email letters to: [canews@eastaurorany.com](mailto:canews@eastaurorany.com), or mail them to:  
710 Main Street, East Aurora, NY 14052.

Letters must be received before noon on Monday to be considered for Thursday's edition. Visit [www.eastaurorany.com](http://www.eastaurorany.com) to read the full policy on letters.

## READERS' OPINION

### A Nice Day Indeed Within Village

Dear Editor,

I wanted to share a lovely event that happened at the Elm Street Bakery this past Tuesday morning.

In 1982-84 we lived in East Aurora and enjoyed the wonderful village atmosphere. As I was catching up with a college friend from the area Tuesday, a kind lady approached us with an envelope for each of us 'to make our day.' We were introduced to two young ladies who have been creating magnets with special messages-mine is a wooden butterfly with a

note that reads 'This butterfly is here to say hope you have a very nice day'. The mother, daughter and friend have been making these gems and handing them out to people.

I just thought someone should know that, as a former East Aurora neighbor, I am very proud of my new East Aurora gift and have my new butterfly on my refrigerator here in Indianapolis. Thanks again for my wonderful gift!

Peggy McMahon Gailey  
Indianapolis

### School Board Works Together for Progress of All

Dear Editor,

While I agree with editorial license, I would like to respectfully respond to the July 8 editorial. Freedom of speech and freedom of the press are guaranteed rights under our constitution. A constitution and laws are meant to codify the process by which a group will function as individuals but is also meant to serve society as a whole.

School boards are one of the last bastions of individual voice of the people can be heard about taxes and policy which directly affect local citizens. Elected board members come from many different backgrounds, which allows the board to be sensitive to a variety of perspectives. Currently, our board of education has a lawyer, a business manager, a communications major who manages a business, a former elementary teacher, a former administrator, a bank manager of a foundation and an RN and special education teacher. Collectively, we bring a diverse group of opinions to the table and I can honestly say we neither agree all the time nor are shy about sharing our opinions. However, I must say I cannot think of a single career where you are not under some authority which requires col-

laboration and cooperation to accomplish the job. We are individuals who use our personal expertise to stand up for, to question and to recommend actions. We also understand our limits under the law. Most importantly, all of us understand, as with any business, the importance, in the end, of proceeding with one voice to move forward.

During every board meeting we make time for the "minority voice"...visitors comments...which are not prescribed as necessary under school board law. However, even during the pandemic we welcomed and read letters of public concern. Further, at any point in time, a citizen can make an appointment with the superintendent to discuss a concern.

School boards are bound by county, state and federal laws. So what about consensus...that one voice? I hear a lot in the news about the need, or lack thereof, for bipartisanship in government. Why can't our representatives get along and work together to write laws? Is bipartisanship a "hive mentality"? Are following the rules of the road, consensually, so we can all have a measure of safety a "hive mentality"?

No, both have a legitimate purpose for both safety and

progress.

I learned many things while teaching behavioral students. One, they benefited from learning the value of cooperation and rules which kept them and others safe. Second, they, as human nature would have it, hate to be embarrassed. We all deserve the dignity of a measure of privacy. There is a vast difference between a public election and an appointed position. I have never known a business to conduct employment appointments or interviews in public. All interviews I ever had were in confidential settings. How many interviews has the *Advertiser* held on Main Street for any passerby to observe? I wonder if we would have had 15 well-qualified individuals apply if the interviews for an appointment were held in public.

Every symphony is made up of multiple parts. It is in the harmony that we hear one voice. You see, the uniqueness of harmony is that it takes committed parts, which work well together to create a pleasant and sustaining result. We need to hear all voices and then prescribe one direction forward with progress and safety as the priority.

Judy Malys  
East Aurora

## ITAC Partnership Highlights Efforts To Prevent Underage Drinking

The following was submitted by  
Bette Dehr of ITAC:

It Takes A Community

Alcohol compliance checks are a type of environmental prevention that deters alcohol outlets from selling alcohol to underage youth. Law enforcement officials supervise undercover youth who attempt to purchase alcohol. These checks are a tool law enforcement can use to reduce the availability of alcohol to underage youth from commercial sources such as bars, restaurants, liquor, grocery, and convenience stores. By preventing youth access from commercial sources, communities can reduce the negative consequences associated with underage drinking, thereby creating a safer, healthier environment for youth.

On June 24th the Erie County Sheriffs conducted an Underage Drinking Initiative in our community. Thirteen establishments were checked, and we are proud to say all were found to be in compliance.

The following businesses were in compliance and did not sell alcohol to a person under the age of 21: 7 Eleven at 5281 Broadway, Lancaster, 7 Eleven at 2180 Bullis Rd., Elma, Speedway at 6640 Clinton St., Elma, Speedway at 661 Jamison Rd., Elma, Kwik Fill at 11615 Clinton St., Alden, Kwik Fill at 2170 Transit Rd., West Seneca, Red Apple/Kwik Fill at 5 Ernst Rd., East Aurora, Reed's Liquor at 163 Main St. East Aurora, Aurora Liquor at 123 Grey St. East Aurora, Elma Liquor at 2350 Bowen Rd., Elma, Sunoco Gas at

5665 Seneca St. West Seneca, Crosby's at 11566 Big Tree Rd., East Aurora and Crosby's at 950 Maple Rd., East Aurora.

We congratulate and thank these establishments for their part in reinforcing community norms and expectations with regard to serving minors.

Our community can take positive steps to raise awareness for why compliance checks are needed and can take action - through town hall meetings to increase the understanding and awareness of underage drinking and its consequences, as well as to encourage individuals, families and communities to work in unison to address the problem. Please join us at an ITAC Town Hall Meeting on Aug. 3 at the Elma Village Green Park on Bowen Road from 6:30 to 8 p.m. to learn more about current substance use trends, and data specific to our community regarding underage use.

ITAC and the Erie County Sheriff's Department are offering Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) to interested establishments that serve or sell alcohol. This training will educate and provide training in the responsible service, sale, and consumption of alcohol. TIPS training provides benefits, including lower insurance premiums, reduced exposure to alcohol liability lawsuits, decreased penalties for alcohol violations, safer communities and improved customer service. Contact ITAC at [www.itacemw.org](http://www.itacemw.org) for more TIPS Training information.