

Seagull: 'It was one of the highlights of my life; I really enjoyed it'

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pen. They wrote me back and everything. They would have considered (the paper), but because it wasn't on a schedule, they wouldn't. That was part of their criteria. But it was nominated. It's the only community newspaper that I ever heard of that was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize."

Although its readers often had to read through the lines, The Seagull provided plenty of informative news about the lake and those who lived around it.

Among these things were updates about fishing, boating activities, bird watching, meeting announcements and proposals relating to the neighborhood.

Back in black and white

Undoubtedly, Bernard was not a strong believer in the necessity for straight forward news reporting, which perhaps occasionally resulted in more true to life reporting such as when he inserted the word "damn" in front of the words "brief directors report" in his announcement about an upcoming meeting.

Also adding a humorous twist to the papers were Bernard's selections of drawings and photographs with a couple of his classics being a photograph of the castle at Disneyland accompanying information about new homes planned on the lake's north shore and a group of young sailors adjoining a story, titled "Lake Greenhaven association board pilots course."

The publication also served as a venue for young, inspiring writers, including Tiffany Fong, who as an eighth-grader living near Lake Greenhaven in 1978 shared the following poem, which she personally penned: "The peaceful Greenhaven Lake is calm and cool during hot summer days. The ducks and swans cause water to ripple against their sides as they glide through the lake toward a little island. Occasionally, a seagull will swoop down and pick up a fish. As the sun sets, one can hear the crickets chirping or the frogs croaking happily."

Anne, who spent her earliest years growing up in England before making her way to Canada and later California, where she attended Holy Names College in Oakland,



Photo courtesy of Bernard Kitt
The Seagull was published by the Lake Greenhaven Association from 1974 to about 1985.

is not shy when it comes to admitting that Bernard carries a tad more enthusiasm about The Seagull.

Nonetheless, she said that she enjoyed her years assisting with the paper and would support a return of the publication.

"I had fun with (The Seagull), but not as much fun as (Bernard) did, but it was still a lot of fun and I would still assist with its return," Anne said.

Bernard, who along with Anne has two children and four grandchildren, said that time will tell if The Seagull soars again, but no matter what transpires, the paper will remain as one of the most memorable endeavors of his life.

"It was really a lot of fun (creating The Seagull)," Bernard said. "It was one of the highlights of my life. I really enjoyed it and now we'll see what happens (with its future)."

You and your teen Dealing with drug use

By STEVE DEBENEDETTI-EMANUEL
Special to The Land Park News
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Not long ago I received a frantic phone call from the father of a 16-year-old boy I see. John (not his real name) came home from school and put down his bag. A zipper was open and drugs came tumbling out.

He confronted him about the drugs, and he responded by giving him the age-old excuse that he was "holding them for a friend." His father decided that it would be best not to talk further until his mother came home, and at that time they held a family meeting. As before, John repeated his claim that the drugs weren't his. On top of that, he denied ever using drugs. Although his parents doubted his story, they didn't know what else to do.

I suggested that they bring John in for a family session to discuss the issue. At that point, his parents shared their concerns about him using drugs. Again, John denied that the drugs were his, and he added that his friend had asked him to hold the drugs because nobody would ever suspect him of using.

I presented some options to John's parents. They could choose to believe that he was only holding the drugs and deal with that issue. Or they could choose to doubt his story and take further steps by having him tested for drug usage. They wavered back and forth, and ultimately chose not to have him tested and gave him consequences for holding the drugs.

When parents are first faced with that possibility that their teens are using drugs, it's an overwhelming moment. I advise parents to have a frank discussion with their kids about their concerns. If they aren't satisfied, I encourage them to investigate a bit and decide what to do based on what they learn.

Perhaps you've noticed that alcohol is missing from the liquor cabinet or old prescription painkillers have disappeared. Perhaps you've found drug paraphernalia or empty liquor bottles in his closet. Maybe his eyes are frequently red and his personality seems different. Maybe his eating and sleeping habits have changed drastically. Perhaps his friends have changed, and his grades have fallen dramatically. Or maybe something in your "gut" tells you that something isn't right with your teen, and you feel the need to know for sure by having him drug tested.

Should a parent make this decision, a logical starting place is the Internet. I did a search for "drug tests" and was surprised to come up with over 54 million hits. Without specialized knowledge of tests and their reliability, I wouldn't know which test to choose and if I could trust the results.

I advise a simpler path: setting up an appointment with your teen's pediatrician and talking to him about your concerns. My hope is that after hearing about the situation he would test your teen comprehensively for drug use.

It's important to note that the decision to test comes with risks. Despite all of your evidence, the possibility exists that the test could come up negative, and there could be unintended consequences. I've talked to teens that have felt frustrated that they've worked hard to stay away from drugs and are devastated that their efforts aren't recognized. A number of times I've also seen teens make negative choices to "get back" at their parents. So it's important that a decision to test your teen for drug use be made very carefully.

In the end, teen drug use is one of the biggest fears and challenges parents face, and there is no foolproof way to respond. If you're concerned that your child has recently started using drugs, yet he denies it despite strong evidence, I suggest taking the risk and having your teen tested by a professional. What you learn will help guide your response.

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Clever, cute costumes?

See a good costume this year while celebrating Halloween? Share your favorite Halloween costume photos with the community. E-mail photos to ryanrose@valcomnews.com.

