
KELLY'S CORNER

The insectivorous birds have migrated, seed eaters are left. Between these two groups the black birds gather high in the trees clacking, clucking, whistling and winging. The grackles will swoop into a tree twenty strong.

The racket begins. The noise is that of rusty hinges. Soon the number doubles, triples. The tree has changed color and shape by the time its limbs have collected all the black plumage possible. And then the cacophony, the rusty hinges. You can only think oil when you hear it. At the tennis courts yesterday, this phenomenon was taking place. Jules Brenner, Tony Vevers and Sal DelDeo on one court, Judy Linen and I playing on the other court. We had to raise our voices to be heard by one another. Woosh! The black feathered cloud of life left, the tree left empty and groaning and voices back to normal level. That's the end of another group and now the seed eaters will inherit the earth. Sparrows love October and pass through feeding on weed seeds. Tree sparrow, white-crowned, some Savannah, chipping sparrows, the chunky ground feeding fox sparrow and if we are fortunate, the secretive sharp-tailed sparrow. When all these small and hungry species have passed through, bare stalks of weeds will be left, rigid and stark in the sparse landscape. The underbrush will be cleared of seeds, too.

Most stems of these plants are 12-18 inches high and dry but sinewy. They can last the winter despite heavy snows. Fluctuating temperatures and normal traffic. They are the lean sentinels of greener days past and greener days to come.

I received interesting mail from Vijayawada in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. Vijayawada is the home of the only atheist center in India. Gora, its founder is a contemporary of Ghandi's and on several occasions debated with the Mahatma on the subject of the existence of God. This casuistry led them both to the same conclusion—to start all over again. Both, yet neither of them, was right. Because of his staunch belief in no belief Gora was isolated from all privileges of Indian society and governmental aid. A Brahmin, or the highest caste in the system by birth, Gora separated himself and settled in Vijayawada, married and fathered eight children. His eight children were schooled and trained as doctor, nurse, teachers, an accountant, an engineer, farmers. He had to create a mini-world and satisfy all the needs of his family and followers. He had his first-born son marry a Harijan or "Untouchable," the lowest caste in the system. This caste performs the jobs no other caste will. Gora, by this marriage, showed that the atheist center had no prejudice. This Harijan woman is a teacher in their school. The time I spent at the center I taught and lectured

by Jan Kelly

along with her. Besides its own school, the atheist center has its own hospital, farm complete with milking cows, library, private and communal housing, kitchens, baths, and bus.

It is a world complete in itself, but not isolated. During my time there, that old blue-bird school bus was revved up to transport us to conferences on world peace, women's rights, equal rights for all castes, for Hindus and Moslems, and to endorse liberal politicians. Gora loved to talk and to orate one on one or to a group of any number. He could speak with an ease that caused you to listen to him with interest and understanding whether or not you agreed with him. When I think of him now, one image I get is of him on one end of a long and variably lit corridor, the Pope at the other end. Both intelligent and articulate religious leaders, but ideas poling opposite.

The letter is from Lavanam, son and successor of Gora. Lavanam and his sister Mythri attended the International Humanist Congress in Oslo, Norway August 3-7. The atheist center received an award. Mythri accepted the award and gave an acceptance speech. They are proud and grateful that the center is receiving recognition after 46 years of work preparing for the post-religious society. In 1990 the center will celebrate its 50th anniversary and the international invitations are being extended for this golden jubilee. Lavanam and Mythri were on the lecture tour in the UK, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and West Germany, and arrived in America on October 8th. They will be in the States until November 20th. Being from a Third World country, their government does not allow them to take their money out of the country. A \$20 Traveler's Check and \$8 in cash was the limit and the rule when I was there. The stories of getting around this restriction are myriad and a column in themselves. So Lavanam and Mythri are dependent on our good will and hospitality to insure a reasonable and comfortable stay. They need like-minded people to open their homes to provide lodging. Their contact address is: Dr. George Willoughby, 340 Pine Avenue, Deptford, NJ 08096. Phone: (609) 227-5723.

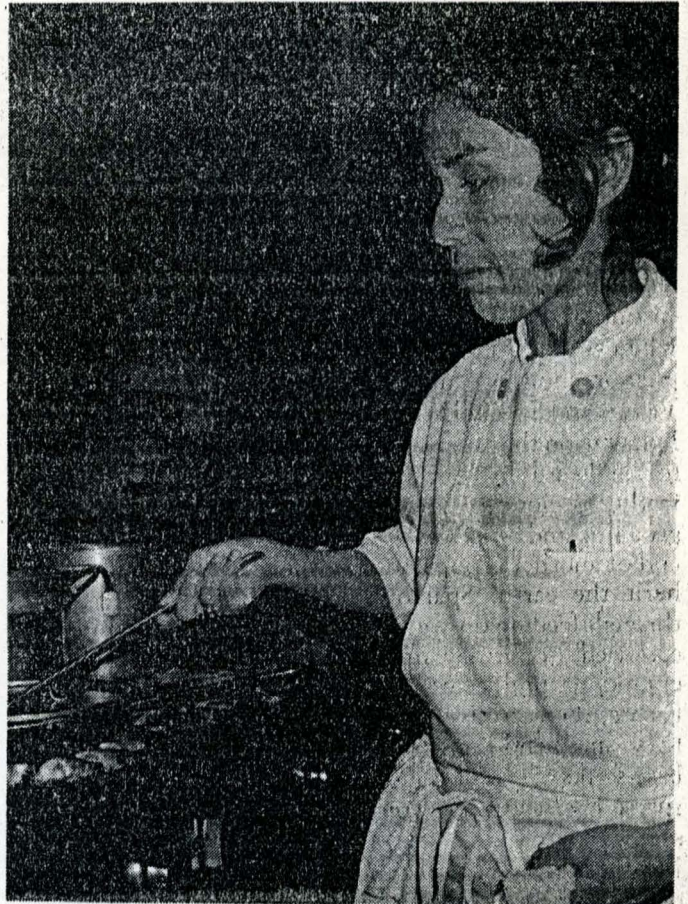
If you have space, time and interest, this visit will be like a bit of world travel for you. You can renew the friendship in Vijayawada in 1990.

One by one our restaurants close. Lack of central heating is the only reason. The tourists are still arriving even on weekdays and they are hungry for seafood and Provincetown's varietal cooking. I hear out-loud wishes for central heat as I sip and munch through my "catch of the day." The future is not so misty. Provincetown is more and more year round annually. Or as the sign at Bryant's Market reads, "Year-around."

One restaurant that is and has been open year around since 1968 is the Provincetown Mews—"Mews"—the building to the rear of the main house where the falcons were kept. The Mews was designed and rebuilt by Ray and Nicky Wells. It took seven years to complete. Cobblestones came from streets of Quincy, MA. That mahogany wall of panels came from the demolition of an old Gothic building in New Jersey. The plaster relief (sounds like an inebriated 2nd shift), at the service bar is from that same building. The chandeliers are beautiful and antique. Besides the impressive lead and copper ribbed antique windows, a bit of humor is there with the red glass A & P panels.

These glass signs were in original A & P's. The downstairs bar is a "sunken" bar. But you won't get wet. Though you are below the high water mark in this cellar bar, two sump pumps defy gravity, tide and your possible distress. The hand-carved wooden panel behind the bar can be your company if you should by chance have a drink solo. The folks behind you will sit on undersized chairs and place their drinks on tables covered with heavy glass from a bygone pharmacy.

Ok, ok, you're saying, but you can't eat decor. True. But don't worry. The food is of equal quality and interest. Allan Johnson, your host, runs a most efficient and specialized restaurant. All your dishes have been time tested, kitchen tested, people tested, and tourist tested. I have spent time by that kitchen door chatting with the staff and being impressed by their easy skill at turning out individually prepared pans and platters. No two meals alike, the freshest of ingredients and interesting and balanced ingredients. For taste, color, nutrition, digestion and general good living and good health, try the kitchen of Lorraine Najar. This young woman, half Mexican, half Apache, can cook so well with an ease and a love of what she is doing. We could talk and discuss and Lorraine would not miss a beat at that range. Diane Stafford was at her elbow, one word orders turning out a plate of particular appeal. A plate to make you salivate. Well, now it's winter and the Mews is going to repeat its Wednesday and Thursday special menu, Mexican Night. Through November, Lorraine will show you that half of her heritage. Lorraine's grandmother left Guadalajara, Mexico for Pasadena, California in the 1920's. She opened Mijares, a Mexican restaurant bearing the family name. Lorraine was raised in this restaurant and worked there 14 years. Her mother, brother, and sister work the restaurant now. Lorraine came east to learn French haute cuisine, but her Mexican heritage gradually takes over wherever she cooks. People demand that first rate authentic food.



Lorraine Najar at the range.

"Most people have tasted Tex-Mex or Puerto Rican style Mexican food, but this is a step in the authentic. We make our own nachos. It takes 6 to 7 hours preparation for this menu. These burritos are famous. The Flauta is a specialty I learned from my grandmother. You can't find Mexican food like this except for here." Lorraine told me she does anywhere from 85 to 130 dinners. Wednesdays are packed with early diners. Satisfied, they rush home to watch *Dynasty*.

Thursday is more sane. Nothing is over \$7. Margaritas, Sangria and Dos XX are poured in gargantuan amounts and the food is healthy. Some people are there every week, some both nights. They're addicted, lucky people. If you're a bit unsure of Mexican food, this is a good place to start; a Margarita will help you through the test. Isn't Allan Johnson both lucky and smart?

Women's Weekend was a success at each hour of the day. The view on Commercial Street is like the mirror of the emphasis of the particular gathering. This weekend I saw women who were proud of being women, women who did not like being women and men who wanted to be women. The transvestites were in town, too.