

Conversation with the Mayor September 2, 2008

Vicky Daly

Thoughts about Palmyra's Then and Now

Over the Labor Day weekend, I had the opportunity to just sit and read, a rare and highly valued pastime. My tastes are eclectic as Marsha, our local bookseller, can tell you. I enjoy everything from British mysteries to biographies to silly, make-you-laugh out loud nonsense to anything canal related of any sort - biography, history, fiction. On Labor Day, I re-visited an old friend thanks to a new friend who lent me his 1945 copy of Arch Merrill's The Towpath. It has been reprinted, although copies are hard to find, but reading it in its 1945, first printing self, gives one an extra sense of the canal and its author.

Arch Merrill was a long time columnist for the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, from which these essays were reprinted. Now more than sixty years later, the essays still ring true and for those of us lucky enough to live in a canal village, his words reinforce what we already knew about the place we call home. The column on Palmyra concludes:

Palmyra carries her many years with grace and dignity befitting a Grand Dame. She is pardonably proud of her heritage of tradition. Few villages have so rich a background.

His words pre-date those on the plaque we added to our 1892 flagpole and the Pal-Mac student mural: *Palmyra - a community with pride in its past and faith in its future.* The feeling is still there as is the energy to make it so.

A good bit of that energy was expended at the September 2nd Village Board meeting. The trustees addressed a long and varied agenda. Did you know that in addition to the action items the Village Trustees and the Mayor make regular reports which inform the other trustees, public, and press what is happening in each of the village departments since the last meeting? These reports cover everything from new volunteers for the Fire Department and Ambulance Squad (always very welcome) to the monthly report on the water and sewer plants or the current projects being undertaken by Highway and Building & Grounds crews. The New/Old Business (action items) portion of the meeting dealt with, among other

Conversation with the Mayor September 2, 2008

things, a discussion of new welcome signs at the 4 entrances to the village; the Canal Town Days street closings and the prohibition of use of annoyances like silly string; the village's decision not to accept an offered AC unit because of the cost of running it; postponing of discussion until the September 15th meeting of a possible local ordinance which would expedite the installation of new traffic signs on village streets (not NYS highways). There was more, but you get the idea. Last night there was nothing really major, just the usual day to day business of making Palmyra an even better place while watching your money. Every meeting generates questions to be asked, other questions to be answered, resources to be checked. That is usually how the next morning is spent - follow up to the evening before. My preference is to get to my 'to do' list ASAP because the list, as with everyone's list, just keeps getting longer.

Are you intrigued? Then come to a meeting. There is always time for public comment and question. You will learn, painlessly I think, about your community and how it works. The more people who know that, the better off we all are. If you have a specific question and want to address the Board, call the Village Hall at 597-4849, and asked to be put on the agenda. If you have handouts, it is to your advantage to provide them to the Village Clerk a week before the meeting so the trustees and mayor can read them prior to the meeting. We are back on the regular schedule now that summer is over - 1st and 3rd Mondays (unless Monday is a national holiday) at 7:00 PM in the Village Hall. We very rarely run past 9:00 PM. Come join us. You are always welcome.