10964

FEBRUARY 1988

This community newsletter publishes information, events, problems and concerns affecting the people of Palisades. 10964 needs your moral and financial support. Please send a contribution for 10964 to Box 201, Palisades, NY 10964. With your help you'll find 10964 in your mailbox every month.



FROM THE EDITOR:

In this issue we pay Valentine's Day homage to a group which brings happiness into so many of our lives, engendering the tenderest feelings in us of protectiveness, pride, commitment, respect, awe, amusement — but mostly of deep joy and love: our pets. How does it happen that creatures from another kingdom get under our skin so intensely? Is it because they need us? Or is it we who have this great need for an uncomplicated love relationship, a love object to whom we can safely give our ingenuous, uncalculated, unadulterated love? My animals don't care whether or not I wash my face

or brush my hair that day at all; whether I wear my old torn bathrobe or my swinging new cocktail dress; whether I remember to call the plumber or my kid's teacher or that restaurant for reservations; and even whether or not I remember them that day. Is it for their forgiving natures and their total acceptance of us, which we do not find elsewhere in our lives, that we feel this tenderness in our hearts for our pets?

We hope you will enjoy sharing with the writers their loving tributes to their animals. Happy Valentine's Day.



OLDER BUT WISER Betty Batchelder and her cocker spaniels

To me the best of all pets is the old dog. Since 1968 I have been breeding and showing English cocker spaniels with never less than four in residence. The present puppy is my fifth generation. His antecedents lived long and well, finally departing at 14, 15, 16 years of age.

My greatest pleasure, even surpassing the delights of puppies, has been sharing the twilight years of the grand "old ladies." Theirs is a gentle calm acceptance of the limitations age brings failing sight and hearing and the inevitable arthritis. Each new day is still greeted with joy and anticipation of food (lots of it), the evening trot down Oak Tree Road with the young dogs and car trips to Shop Rite.

The oldsters are fun - a little addled at times and always a step behind the young ones but determined not to be left out of any activity. Sometimes their efforts are clownish, but I wouldn't dream of offending their dignity by laughing. Young dogs are handsome, active, amusing and challenging. Old dogs are grizzled, patient, always gratefully accepting, never demanding.

Looking into the old dog's eyes, I see reflected the many years of companionship, exciting dog show wins, adventures and tribulations that we have shared. Now I see autumn in the old dog's eyes, and that is my favorite season of the year.

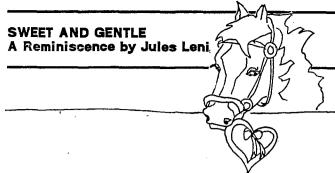
ABOUT GILBERT AND SULLIVAN Dorothy Davis describes some squirrelly friends

I don't know whether Gilbert and Sullivan could pass for pets, but they were certainly about love.

It was late September when the arborist finally got to taking down a diseased maple on the Palisades church grounds. I went by to pay my last respects. Bruce Langford, the minister then, was standing with a paper bag in hand. "Lunch?" I suggested. "Look," said Bruce. In the bag were two squirrels about the size of very large mice. The arborist had brought them down from the top of the tree. "The vet says they can make it if they can hold out through the next two weeks," Bruce confided. Neither of us considered how much the world, and especially Palisades, needed two more squirrels.

Harry was in California. The cats were in the house. I rigged up a five-foot circular cage, put shredded newspapers over an electric heating pad on the floor. Using a doll's bottle, I nursed them on canned milk (with a drop of whiskey added to that of the puny one). Very soon I was sending my hand down like an elevator platform on which Sullivan climbed aboard. On a high table, he sat up and held the bottle while I held him with one finger and thumb. I could feel the gurgle all the way down.

(Cont'd p. 2)



I didn't intend to own a horse. In fact, I had not ridden one for many years. But a social outing in Staten Island's Clove Lake Park in the spring of 1967 revived memories of my boyhood: My mother had brought me along -- I didn't have a choice -- when she took my sister and her girl friend horseback riding through the hilly trails surrounding Clove Lake. We rented horses from a family-run stable across from the park. And afterward (on condition of good behavior) I could row around the lake while the girls set up a picnic.

So that spring afternoon nearly 20 years later, I strolled across Clove Lake Road to see if the stable was still there. Indeed it was. The father had passed away, but his widow and two children were actively running it. Mrs. Franzreb inquired as to my mother. Together we remembered some adventures, such as the time my mother's horse (appropriately named "Impetuous") ran away without my mother's even realizing it ("I thought she was going a little fast," she remarked afterwards).

The temptation was inevitable. "Do you think I would remember how to ride?" I asked. "We'll give you the gentlest horse in the barn to find out," I was assured. That was a quiet ride, but enough to reinstate my weekly outings. I quickly moved up to more spirited horses, winding up with a young half-Arab mare which John Franzreb had brought back with several other acquisitions from a buying trip to Virginia that summer.

That mare was a handful. She tested me my first time on her back by almost immediately throwing me off. With mixed feelings (anxiety, hurt pride and determination), I soothed her fears and climbed back up. During the next couple of months we became good friends, so much so that John threw me into a state of shock when he told me that he had to sell her. He couldn't afford to keep her because she was too spirited to be a hack horse. I could have her for his cost (\$200).

Anyone who has owned a horse knows that the purchase price is the smallest part of the cost, so I asked him to let me think about it overnight. There was never any doubt. I was single, comfortably employed, and obviously in love — with a horse. I spent a good bit of time that evening, deciding not whether to buy her, but what I would name her. Behind the sometimes excitable facade was a disposition as lovable, sweet and gentle as that of a household pet. Her name would be Dulcie.

The next day I returned to Staten Island with my check, and Dulcie was moved to a box stall in the rear of the stable where the privately owned horses lived under an arrangement known as "rough board." This means that the stable fed her and cleaned out her stall. The rest was up to me. On two evenings each week, plus week ends, I would travel an hour each way (usually by motor bike) to clean her thoroughly and ride (usually in the adjoining ring). In time it became apparent that the attachment was mutual.

The trips became somewhat arduous during the winter months, so in February of 1968 I took leave of the Franzrebs and moved Dulcie to a schooling stable in Long Island (still an hour's trip), where a professional groom cared for her and exercised her when I was traveling or otherwise preoccupied.

For the last 14 years, Dulcie has lived at the northern tip of Westchester County, a pleasant one-hour drive up the Saw Mill River Parkway. Today she is still being ridden or exercised every day. On a nice day, I will take her for a stroll through the lovely wooded countryside. She is oblivious of her age and strides forth with the vitality and eagerness that won my heart the first time we met.

Let me close with an incident that occurred soon after I had bought her. While shopping for an apartment, I stopped in the rental office of Manhattan's huge Lincoln Towers complex. In the course of the interview, the agent asked me if I had any pets. "Yes," I replied after a short pause, "a horse."

ABOUT GILBERT AND SULLIVAN
by Dorothy Davis (Cont'd from p. 1)

Then Gilbert. Sometimes Bruce extended his ministry and took over. Soon the fat twosome were riding up to pablum. Then to carrots. But along about then, they took to running up my arm, getting tangled in my hair. Harry via long distance was getting tangled in my hair, too, so to speak, in his concern that I might contract rabies. And the cats refused to speak to me.

Nash Castro came to the cause. Gilbert and Sullivan went to the Bear Mountain Zoo, where they stayed a few days indoors and then were loosed on the grounds. They cried all the way to Bear Mountain. So did I.



If you walk past One Ludiow Lane and are barked at by our dogs, that is only part of the picture. We live communally with 10 non-human beings, divided strategically between the house and the studio. We could not want for better housemates and companions because each brings her or his own special cherished characteristics.

Tiggy, the elder, is probably familiar to some of you since she had a supporting role in the "Mildred" tape and also has a coveted free run of Snedens Landing. None of the others share this privilege. A terrier-beagle mix, Tiggy has attended lots of Snedens parties and has had very close friends in the community over the years, such as Marcel (a dog), Michael Thomas (a human), and most recently, Boo Seidler. Every morning Tiggy agitates to visit Boo by rushing frantically about, vocalizing wildly and flinging herself at the door. Once the door is opened, she dashes out, checks for any early morning "callers" on the lawn, and trots up the hill, greeting Toby Breer on her way. At the Seidlers' she scratches on the door until Lynn lets Boo out.

Then there's Arinna. She is the hopeful progenitor of a long line of longhaired dachshunds. "Bubber," as she is lovingly called by her intimate friends, is a veritable Eleonora Duse of the dog world. Her expressions and mannerisms are countless. She prefers to arise late and has been known to feign sleep in lieu of an early morning romp in the back yard.

Max is our fence climber par excellence, and is also known as the "shrink" of the dog world. The wooden lattice work crudely tied to the top of our fence is not there for its aesthetics, but to deter Max's climbs. He has the ability to project himself over the six-foot fence. One afternoon we raced with Max to see who could reach the front yard first. After letting him out the back we'd race to the front door only to find that he beat us every time. He is able to propel himself over the fence faster than we can get to our driveway. Max has also been called on time and again to quell the fears of pound dogs when they first arrive at the house. He is therefore responsible for the rapid adjustment of some of his housemates.

Now we come to Meli-Maki whose full name is Melpomene, the muse of tragedy. Meli spent the first nine months, the formative period of her life, at the Elmsford Animal Shelter and came to us an autistic dog. The first few weeks in the house she stayed hidden behind the potted plants or huddled against the farthest, darkest corner of the backyard fence. In order to be moved from one room to another or to be brought inside, she had to be carried.

But now she has overcome her "pound mentality" except for a few quirks which surface now and then. The crowded pound conditions left their impression, and she will sometimes growl when one of her dog friends comes too near to where she is sleeping. She has also been known to growl at the air, which makes the other quadrupeds "quake in their paws" while we bipeds just laugh.

Rosa, Happy and Snafu are the attack cats of the studio. Happy, a black-and-white, also had a troubled childhood, coming from a home in which she was abused. This has made her extremely introspective, and she considers herself to be a mystic. Rosa, the calico, is an extremely loving cat who demands to be picked up all the time so that she can hug your neck and lick your face with her delicate rasping tongue. Snafu, a beautiful black long-haired, comes to us from Atlanta, and is the epitome of "Southern hospitality." He is the first to greet you at the door and never tires of affection. He and Rosa have a passionate relationship, with Rosa believing that Snafu is her long-lost son returned. The three of them are the world's best "mousers" and have no qualms about chomping on their prev in front of visitors.

Last but not least are the avians, Faulkland, Fred and Ginger (Heloise, aged 15, died last summer). Faulkland, the old bird, is a green parakeet with a wizened beak. Fred, another green, and Ginger, the blonde, are the young upstarts who keep Faulkland aloft. They converse, bicker and kiss each other endlessly, and their music makes our hearts take flight!

Living with these 10 beings is a continuously intense experience. We are easily moved by their simple depth, and they keep us laughing with their antics.

EXTRA COPIES

People wanting extra copies of our newsletter may call the Editor.

Pixle, our parakeet, so named because of the family affiliation with the video business (a TV screen is made up of tiny elements known as "pixles") has an almost carefree life. He is supplied daily with a variety of bird food and fresh water as well as the ever-present little seed bell and beak sharpener. His cage is a parakeet playland equipped with a swing and an enviable collection of bird toys.

The only gray cloud in Pixle's otherwise euphoric existence is the legacy left behind by his predecessor, Birdinky. Birdinky was a very affectionate little bird. Best of all, he could speak. His only phrase was "Hello, Baby," which really endeared him to everyone, except during crucial moments in movies when he would suddenly get the urge to repeat "Hello, Baby" incessantly. In the midst of his chatter and the irate yelling for him to shut up, entire plot lines would be lost.

David took all the credit for Birdinky's charming personality, attributing his quality to his ability to pick a good bird as well as his own special training technique, which involved cornering the bird in the bathroom. Behind the closed door, one could hear the frantic fluttering of wings and shower curtains, sporadic bird chirps, and karate "kiais." Eventually things would quiet down, the door would swing open, and David would emerge victorious with Birdinky perched on his shoulder.

Well, anyway, to make a long Birdinky story short, one day David and I were on our way out the door when, you guessed it, Birdinky decided he'd like to go out too. And that was the end of him. Off he went, never to be seen again.

About four months later, I thought I would be clever and lift David's spirits by surprising him with a new bird which looked just like a Birdinky clone. But alas, as time told, Pixle had not the same charming disposition. David tried everything, right down to the special training technique. But after the customary flapping, chirping and karate "kiais," the door would swing open, Pixle would emerge victorious on wing, and David would follow crestfallen.

It so happened that we had a neighbor two doors down, an avid bird lover. She was on her second parakeet. Her first one had met its end with her end. That is, the bird was such a family fixture that it had taken to sitting on the sofa. One night she settled down to watch TV and . . . what a way to go! Try to listen to that story from an obviously anguished woman and keep a straight face. After that incident, you can be sure she always looks before she sits.

Mingrand

One day I mentioned that we were going away on vacation, and she kindly offered to birdsit (not literally, of course) for Pixle while we were away. The morning we were to leave, I carried Pixle, cage and all, over to her house. For the first time, I met her new parakeet Chipper, and as I expected, he was a delightful little fellow. At one point, while perched on her shoulder, he began chirping away at great length in a strange guttural sort of voice. "Do you hear that?" my neighbor exclaimed. "Chipper's singing 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' for you!" To be totally honest, it sounded more like a bad imitation of the Exorcist to me but, after all, the woman was going to a lot of trouble, so I went along with it. Judy Garland, eat your heart out!

Ten days later we returned to the incredible results of my neighbor's talent with birds. This woman definitely has a gift. Pixle was landing on her shoulder when she called him, and perching on her finger with no hesitation. While I was there, she taught him to sit on my finger and to give me a kiss, which is his only trick to this day.

He still steers clear of David, however. Sometimes, when David thinks I'm out of earshot, I can hear him say coaxingly, "Come on, Pixle, give me a kiss." Then there will be the predictable flapping of wings across the room, and David will mutter, "Oh well, you're sure no Birdinky, Pixle, you're sure no Birdinky."

THORPE INTERMEDIA GALLERY OPENS AGAIN

After a year's hiatus, Thorpe Intermedia Gallery, located on Route 340 in Sparkill, reopened its doors last month with a different focus and format. An artist-in-residence program will replace the gallery's exhibition schedule. Activities related to an artist's residency, such as exhibitions and open studio visits, will be scheduled periodically.

"It directly helps artists," states Sister Adele Myers, founder-director of the gallery, "by giving them the space to create on a larger scale. Also, visitors can share in the excitement of watching an artist create or of following a work of art from idea to completion."

The gallery's first artist-in-residence is Barbara Meise, a medievalist who specializes in such techniques as stained glass, gold illumination and icon painting. Currently, she is using the gallery space to create large fresco paintings.



When it comes to a pet shop I am like an alcoholic passing a saloon: I see it ahead of me, I plan exactly how I am going to walk by it and not pay it any mind; and then as I approach, my convictions weaken, my legs turn in the direction of the store as if they had brains of their own, and my heart and soul wage a ferocious tug of war with my better judgment. My heart and soul always win and I walk out with some new beast in tow.

We have had gerbils, goldfish, rabbits, retrievers, fox terriers, parakeets, and cats.

Our gerbils, Frank and Beans, were with us for over two years, a gerbil record of sorts, and had their fun regularly escaping from their cage and running in and around our feet. They played happily together in this way until one morning I awoke to find that Frank had eaten Beans's face clean off. I thought that was carrying sibling rivalry a bit too far. And Frank paid the price, for he died two days later of unknown causes.

Our lop-eared rabbit Fluff was incomparable intelligence and uncommon instincts toward domestication. It never did occur to us that Fluff should be encaged or in any way separated from the rest of us; he was free to roam around the house. Fluff was self litter-trained from the first day. He learned to come when I called him. When we ate in the kitchen (which was most of the time) Fluff would have his dinner of lettuce or carrots with us. We would look down and laugh at his noisy munching while we all tried to carry on a polite dinner conversation at the table.

Fluff would hop on my lap when I was in the den watching TV or reading and I would stroke him to sleep. It always amazed me that this rabbit, this creature from another kingdom, could feel secure enough to fall asleep, to snore yet! And when I would prepare to leave the house, say to do errands, and I would gather up my keys, my purse, my gloves, Fluff would run round and round my feet preventing me from walking. He would make these strange whirring sounds much like a little motor. Round and round my feet he'd race until I would speak firmly to him. Then he would stop, looking

dolefully up at me, and I'd pat my knees and Fluff would stand on his hind legs and ready himself to be lifted into my arms. There we would snuggle for a moment before I would finally take my leave. On really short trips Fluff would accompany me in the car. On my lap. Fluff was a wondrous floppy-eared rabbit.

I used to exercise Fluff in our fenced-in back yard. We would run together around the perimeter of the property and he would stay right with me. He would not run away or try to hide or look to escape.

And then when our Labs Phoebe and Cleo came into our lives at only two weeks old and were so tiny that Dennis and I could hold them in our hands, it was Fluff, much larger than the puppies, who became their first role model. We have home movies of the pups taking their first steps: They hopped!

NEWS FROM THE PALISADES FREE LIBRARY

New Titles on Order

Fiction

Achebe Anthills of the Savannah

Amado Showdown Collins Rock Star

Fraser Your Royal Hostage Murdoch Family Business Salinger Mortal Games

Thomas Summit
Wolwode Born Brothers

Nonfiction

Cooper Controlling Cholesterol Hansen Stranger in the Forest

Madsen Gloria & Joe Makeba Makeba: My Story

Ngor Haing Ngor

Winter Hours

Monday thru Thurs. 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday 10 a.m. to noon Friday 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The library will be closed Monday, February 15, in observance of Washington's Birthday.

As the Hudson River Defense League begins a new year, its Board of Trustees reports that it was necessary for it to meet six times in the past year in order to implement the group's charter for "the protection of the natural beauty and health of the Hudson River, and to support and improve the laws that preserve the river, its natural shoreline and environs." More and more individuals and developers, it seems, are determined to disrupt our river communities and their fragile environment.

Major issues on which the League has concentrated during the past year are:

Piermont Pier

The league has been a "party of interest" in the ongoing discussions between the Carlyle Piermont Corporation and Piermont Village Board of Trustees. We have attended the "public hearing" meetings and voiced our concerns regarding the proposed construction of 250 condominium units and thousands of square feet of commercial/retail space adjacent to the parkland on the Piermont Pier. After reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) submitted by Carlyle for the approval of the Piermont Village Board, the League questions many of their determinations. The DEIS claims that there will be limited, or no, adverse impact in such areas as geology, water resources, air resources, and terrestrial and aquatic ecology as a result of the development.

Perhaps the most serious concern is the increase in traffic which would be generated by the proposed commercial/retail space. Noise and air pollution would increase. The few access roads would not withstand the impact of the DEIS' estimated additional 1800 vehicle trips per day to and from the Piermont business district. And certainly the proposed 700-boat marina would add to the problems. The League has joined others in voicing strong opposition to such a large complex.

The Bridge

With the increase in traffic going to and from Westchester County across the Tappan Zee Bridge, state and federal highway officials, without regard for the river villages, have proposed a second span adjacent to the present one, with a network of access roads feeding into it. The League is strongly opposed to such a plan, as it would surely destroy river communities, as well as adversely affect the river itself. The League believes there are any number of alternatives to the handling of traffic congestion which have not been sufficiently explored, even by our own county officials. In the recent elections, it supported those who are unalterably opposed to a second bridge. During the summer, the League hosted an informal meeting

with County Legislator Ed Clark, and as a result, he has made this issue a top priority in representing us in the Legislature. Also, the League has requested and received some support of our position from our state representatives. In addition the League has enthusiastically supported, and will continue to do so, the newly formed Tappan Zee Preservation Coalition, whose first and major objective is to have the Tappan Zee and its uplands from the New Jersey state line to Hook Mountain designated as a Scenic District under the Department of Environmental Conservation. This designation will be a basic step in combating despoilment of the county by the bridge and highway builders.

The League would like to hear about any matters related to our environment that concern Palisades residents. With an expanded board, and wider representation, it hopes to be able to implement better than ever before the demands of its charter. It will continue to work closely with other environmental groups in order to ensure the protection and preservation of the area's beautiful and historic heritage.

The League welcomes new members. The yearly dues are a modest \$5.

HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES and ROCKLAND'S FUTURE A talk by S. Hazard Gillespie

Tuesday, February 23, 1988, 7:30 p.m. Nyack Public Library

Plans to widen the Thruway and to build a new bridge pose a countywide threat. Find out how plans for an intercontinental highway will affect Rockland, and learn what members of your community are doing to save Rockland County and its villages.

NEWS FROM THE PALISADES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

At the annual corporate meeting held on January 31, the following officers were elected for a term of three years: Elders David Cole, Carol McGann, William Menke; Deacons Josephine Cole, Nancy Kimball, Johanna Lo.

Ash Wednesday services will be observed at 8 p.m. February 17.

Thanks to all of those in the community who contributed so generously during the Christmas season.

WINTER IN AN AUSTRALIAN SUMMER by J. T. Farley

J. T. Farley is 15 years old and a sophomore at Tappan Zee High School.

Between December 31, 1987, and January 10, 1988, the World Scouting organization held its 16th World Jamboree in Cataract Scout Park, 40 kilometers west of Sydney. On January 1 Sydney launched a year-long celebration of the day 200 years ago when Captain James Cook sailed into what is now Sydney Harbor. It is equivalent to our celebrating all in one year our Constitution, our Bicentennial and the Statue of Liberty. Australia is a busy place these days.

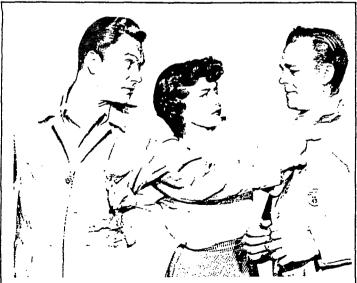
I left for Australia on December 18 as part of a contingent of 36 scouts, most between 15 and 17 years old and coming from throughout our region, from the Upper East Side to Newark and western Pennsylvania. Shepherded by four adult leaders we arrived in Sydney after enduring 21 hours of plane travel, a 16-hour time difference and severe thunderstorms during our stopover in Oahu. We toured much of New South Wales, including Canberra (the national capital), Sydney and Melbourne, where we each spent a very memorable Christmas with a local family. For the most part the Australians made us feel quite welcome and made being in a foreign country an incredible experience. Happily, the stereotype of the laid-back, perpetually grinning Australian with limitless amounts of generosity and hospitality holds more than a grain of truth.

After touring we proceeded to Cataract Scout Park, where we spent New Year's with scouts, both male and female (the United States had one of the few contingents that was not co-ed) from all over the world. Staying next to our troop were Tongans on one side, a South African contingent on the other, and scouts from Luxembourg across the road. Communication was not difficult, since most people spoke either English or French (the two official languages of the Scouting movement) and most of the activities were designed to promote interaction among scouts from all over.

The activities covered a wide range of interests, from surf instruction to caving and rappelling to flying instruction in light planes near Sydney. We had an opportunity to take an overnight hike in the local equivalent of the outback in a small group comprised of several different nationalities.

In between the numerous activities there was always time to meet people from an amazing variety of backgrounds and learn about, and sometimes even experience firsthand, their lifestyles. The enjoyment and the excitement of it all by far outweighed the occasional difficulties (it was over 42 degrees Celsius on many an occasion, and a tropical storm decimated the entire jamboree one night), and it was an experience I'll not soon forget.

ABOUT JAMES MILLICAN



James Millican, right, with Richard Denning and Trudy Marshall in Disaster.

Last week the Academy Award-winning movie, "High Noon," was shown on one of the major networks. It featured James Millican, an actor whom we have all seen many times in the movies, who was born in Palisades. Seeing him on TV reminded me that Dot and Tom Carroll of Horne Tooke Road sent me this item about Millican, who died in 1955. For those movie buffs and old friends of James Millican, I reprint it here, and thank the Carrolls for sending it to 10964. ED.

JAMES MILLICAN (1910-Nov. 24, 1955)

James Millican was born in Palisades, New York, attended the University of Southern California and later MGM's dramatic school. His first start in pictures came in 1933 when he appeared in Mills of the Gods. With over 100 screen credits Millican played more western roles than any other type. He also staged several rodeos in association with Wild Bill Elliott. Among his many film credits are Command Decision, Born to Kill, Rogues Regiment, High Noon, Gunfighters, 14 Hours, I Was a Communist for the FBI, and Warpath.

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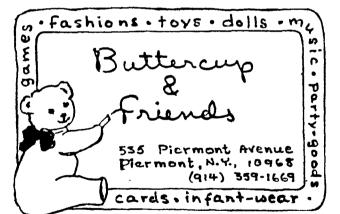
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10964 DEADLINE

The deadline for copy for the March issue is February 15. Please send copy to 10964, Box 201, Palisades, N. Y. 10964. The March issue will appear in your mail as close to the first of the month as possible.