

it, they will convince you that you did not need it in the first place.

Recently, "The Norwich Times" printed an article about Dan & Whit's that says it better than I can. I ask that the article be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

IF WE DON'T HAVE IT, YOU DON'T NEED IT

What has 22,600 square feet of space (but you'd never know it), and is filled with great stuff like aerators, Sorels, and the Sunday Times?

The legendary Dan & Whit's has stretched out along Main Street ever since the Merrill family opened their grain store in this location in 1891. At that time, the wandering building with the now-creaky wooden floors also housed Norwich's post office, town hall, and several small shops. Today, under the diligent management of owners George and Jack Fraser, this nerve center of Norwich is open seven days a week from seven o'clock in the morning until nine o'clock at night, three hundred and sixty four days a year.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

In 1955, Dan Fraser and his partner Whit Hicks bought it from Leon Merrill for whom they had worked since 1933. Dan and Whit plunged right in, expanding their merchandise to include newspapers, guns, beer, and wine. As the line of merchandise and inventory continually expanded, family members helped out. First it was Dan Fraser and his wife Bunny running it with Whit and Grace Hicks. Also at that time, grandfather John pitched in and cemented the basement of the store and stocked shelves, while the younger generation filled in after school. In 1973 when Dan bought out Whit and became sole proprietor, he was joined by his sons, George and Jack. Today, there are eight Frasers working at the store in various capacities.

GOOD PEOPLE

"What has kept me in the business is that I like the people. I would have retired before, but I know it's hard to find good people."—Bill Fitzgerald, Dan & Whit's employee off and on since 1934.

When two brothers work 60 and 70 hours each per week, one wonders how they can keep the peace. Jack and George say their partnership works very well. "We seldom fight," says Jack despite their grueling work schedules and the constant decisions that have to be made.

If you're looking for the people person, you'll find George up front managing staff, scheduling, hiring and training people and overseeing the Produce Department. Jack, on the other hand, is a product man. From his bench desk in the back of the store, he manages the Hardware and Housewares Departments.

No doubt the brothers are handy and resourceful people. However, working as many hours as they do, they gladly entrust some of the major responsibilities to guys like Larry Smith, one of their longest term employees, who runs the grocery department, and Al Langlois and Ron Swift who have the resourcefulness of a handy-man. Supervisor Linda Conrad oversees the check-out counters and trains many of the new hires. Then there's 82-year-old Bill Fitzgerald, with a white apron over his work attire, who cruises the aisles helping customers. Bill says that he first worked at the store in 1934, then after a number of years in the old drug stores in Hanover, came back in 1964. He's been at Dan & Whit's ever since.

THE STORE

"I use Dan & Whit's as part of my tour when showing property in Norwich. I always tell my customers to look around Dan &

Whit's and be sure to go to the back. It's awesome."—Brian Gardner, Realtor at The Gardner Agency, Main Street, Norwich

In the 22,600 square feet of space, 13,000 of that is devoted to selling. The basement is as large as the main store where vast amounts of goods are stored as is the huge supply of wood for the store's main source of heat—a large wood furnace. In former times, the store was heated by coal and then by oil. Now the Frasers use 16 to 20 cords of wood a year, most of it obtained by various arrangements Matt Fraser makes with loggers and wood lot owners. A back-up supply of split firewood is kept in the yard of Dan Fraser off Turnpike Road. In times of extreme cold, an old railroad stove in the basement is fired up.

THE CUSTOMER IS EVERYTHING

"We have a very serious responsibility to our customers, and if we can't serve them and the community, we are in trouble."—George Fraser

The very lifeblood of Dan & Whit's is the customer. "Helping our customers is most important for our business—more than any kind of media advertising," said George. "We train and orient our employees to be nice to them," adds Jack.

With so many products, helping the customer adjust to new products and changing technology is a good example of the Dan & Whit's customer-friendly philosophy. Jack tells about the lady who came in to complain that the batteries she bought from Dan & Whit's weren't working. She overlooked the fact that she had to buy a charger for the batteries. "Customers do get confused," he said.

NO CASH REQUIRED

"You know you have gone through an important rite of passage when you get to sign your name at Dan & Whit's—which seems to happen in the 3rd or 4th grade."—Norwich attorney, Garfield Miller

Local, down-home trust has been a hallmark of Dan & Whit's for years. How many places do you know (and it's practically the year 2000) that still offer customer charge accounts. About 30% of Dan & Whit's customers have charge privileges which used to involve prepayments or deposits of up to \$300, but that minor inconvenience has since been dropped.

"Personal trust helped the store develop customer loyalty," said George. ". . . and it was also very convenient. If a customer forgot their checkbook or wallet, the store would carry them until the next time they came in."•

TRIBUTE TO WOMEN'S SPORTS

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the students, journalist, coach and business that have been recently recognized for their achievements in women's sports by the University of Vermont Women's Center in collaboration with the YWCA of Vermont as well as the Women's Sports Foundation. The recipients were selected from a long list of nominations based upon their contributions and support for women's athletics.

Sports play an integral role in the development of our children and help to bring communities together. By participating in sports, student athletes are exposed to a variety of situations that help to develop the skills they will need to succeed. As such, community support for these programs is of the utmost importance.

I am particularly pleased to see that the criteria for these awards included consideration of the students' academic performance, community involvement and leadership qualities.

I am thrilled that these awards acknowledge the contributions made by coaches, journalists and local businesses as well. Each plays a critical role in promoting school athletics. Coaches provide students with mentorship while journalists supply the public recognition and businesses contribute financially. Without the assistance of each, Vermont's student athletes would not have the opportunity to excel that they enjoy today.

In addition to the awards ceremony, the Professional Programs Division of Continuing Education hosted a teleconference for a number of recognized experts to discuss Title IX funding. Through our efforts in this field, significant progress has been achieved in providing women athletes with improved opportunities and better recognition, as is evident in this year's Olympic games.

Once again, I would like to congratulate this year's recipients and wish them luck in their future endeavors. Those recognized include:

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Katy Perinea—Middlebury
Courtney Swanda—Bennington
Margery Bolton—Bennington
Anne Dean—Burlington
Elizabeth Smith—Burlington
Laura Jagielski—Grand Isle
Erin Mascolino—Jeffersonville
Sara Stanley—Westfield
Heather Moylan—Newport
Elizabeth Smith—Saint Albans
Krista Calano—Saint Albans
Amber Atherton—Williamstown
Elizabeth Burt—Hyderville
Sarah Bourne—Pittsford
Alyse Averill—Barre
Hilary Goddrich—Northfield
Erin Hazen—Richford

COLLEGE STUDENT

Aimee Becker—Southern Vermont College

COACH

Missy Foote—Middlebury

JOURNALIST

Andy Gardiner—Burlington Free Press

BUSINESS

Howard Bank. •

SALUTE TO FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA—PHI BETA LAMBDA WEEK

• Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the Future Business Leaders of America—Phi Beta Lambda (FBLA-PBL) for fifty-six years of service to America's students, teachers, businesses, and communities. During the week of February 8-14, educators, students, and business professionals across the country recognized National FBLA-PBL Week. I think this is a wonderful time for us to look back on the accomplishments of this organization, whose legacy leaves a strong foundation for education and the future of American enterprise.