

PUTTIN' OUT THE BONE

BY JENE GALVIN

At Year's End, I'm Not Fired Yet

Am I crazy, but didn't we have fun this year? I mean, we had conflict. We had defeat. We had drama. We even had the passing of liberal talk radio in Cincinnati.

C'mon, Jene. You're talking about your own damn self. All right, maybe I am. Yeah, it was me who took myself off the air at WDBZ, The Buzz (1230 AM) this year, but don't you wish there were some progressive chatter to balance Limbaugh, Barry, Thomas, Cunningham and Savage?

I raised hell for about a year on The Buzz, my favorite station. But I ran short on time for the necessary preparation, given my other jobs. But there is a place, even in this stodgy town, for liberal talk. More stations should consider taking a chance with someone who could draw listeners they don't have and keep ones who would love getting pissed off every day. So mark down the closing of "Straight Talk Live on the Night Side, with Jene Galvin" as one of the earth-moving events of 2002.

And what about the peace protest at Union Terminal this fall? Who doubts that George W. Bush got wet pants when thousands of local peace freaks, young and old, pushed against the barricades on Ezzard Charles Drive the night he told America he needed a war to get our minds off his inability to find Osama Bin Laden?

Speaking of media earlier, this will be the year generations will say an old, white-haired man, who once was one of the more parodied targets of *Saturday Night Live*, got another television show. Maybe it's because of Phil Hartman's caricature that I laugh every time Phil Donahue shouts at a guest on his new cable news show, which draws about as many viewers as a Bengals game draws fans. So much for my theory on liberal talk shows.

And how about the public battle between my former boss, Vice Mayor Alicia Reece, and my newer boss, John Fox? He says the vice mayor threatened him with firefighters doing bodily harm if he didn't get Kathy Y. Wilson's writing under control.

Alicia remains a longtime friend of mine, so it was painful, and still is, to address this controversy. At the same time, Fox

strikes me as a man of integrity. So I was relieved when Alicia provided an apology, though she was unwilling to totally corroborate his version of a conversation between the two in the *CityBeat* conference room.

Needless to say, from the perspective of us in the *CityBeat* family, it was one hell of a news event that played out beyond our own ink and walls.

Speaking of the beat, it went on during 2002 with that pesky boycott coalition. Just when the mayor would proclaim them pulse-less, they'd rise up and smite another big name into publicly pulling out of a contract in Cincinnati. I remain a supporter of this legal muscle to make social change. It might be the strongest and only peaceful strategy to redress our desperate issues.

So it outrages me when a few of the boycott leaders spout anti-Semitic venom, especially in the context of the boycott, which they did recently on Fountain Square. It disgraces the history of Jews and African

Americans who stood together in the civil rights war. It belittles the ultimate construct that all men and women are equal. And it puts a small face on what is otherwise a large movement.

And what the hell happened in the November 2002 election? I mean, how can a person like Dr. Jean Siebenaler, so full of integrity, brains, passion and vision, get so trounced in an election for Hamilton County Commissioner? The short answer is that Jene Galvin played a central

role in her campaign strategy.

OK, maybe I did ask her to stand on street corners every afternoon waving to drivers. But, hey, Steve Chabot did it. And remember the mountain-climbing city councilman Walter Beckjord? I learned it from him.

The fact is the county's total vote comes almost two-thirds from suburbanites, people hardly in love with us Democrats. If Siebenaler ran for Cincinnati City Council, she'd win easily. But she doesn't live there, so we'll have to watch her make her mark on this world through other important endeavors. Good luck, Dr. Jean.

THE YEAR



IN REVIEW

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pline just as the city's highest-ranking African-American officer gets into a hazy fender bender in his city-issued car. The city says Twitty was driven to a plea bargain because he lied, not because he dented a fender. No one ever proved to me that he lied. Even so, lots of people at City Hall have lied. Some even got promotions or elected. Go figure.

But what do I know? Nothing, except that I'll still be whining here in 2003. I know because I got invited to the company holiday party.

Wait a minute. This is that paper with a sense of humor. They wouldn't fire my ass there, right by the cheese dip, would they?

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Al Lubel became a lawyer to please his mother and a comedian to please his sadistic need to torture her. After graduating law school, Al moved to Los Angeles, passed the bar exam on his first try, and immediately began the practice of stand-up comedy. Al won the \$100,000 Grand Prize on *Star Search*. When Al heard Johnny Carson was retiring, he auditioned and became one of the last comics to appear with Johnny. Jay Leno was watching that night and has since booked Al for numerous Tonight Show appearances, including the recurring character of NBC Legal Analyst.

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