

Coffee Break

By Adeline Daley

I just completed another round of school conferences last week and by now it seems as if I've conferred with just about everybody at the school.

Of course, I now approach parent-teacher confrontations more realistically than I did the first time I was to meet the first grade teacher of our oldest child, Kathy. My husband and I had assumed that the school wanted to skip a grade. Thus you can imagine my chagrin when the teacher said:

"I wouldn't worry about Kathy, Mrs. Daley. She'll catch up."

In all fairness to Kathy, she has "caught up" to the extent of being a senior at San Jose State College and is doing well enough scholastically to erase her other dubious claim to fame—the time a relative asked if she had made the honor roll and she asked, "What's the honor roll?" The story of our life, unfortunately.

Still, I wish our kids wouldn't refer to the time set aside for conferences as "National Fink Week." Even though I'm still waiting for the day when I'm told, "Is there some way you could encourage your child—or 'Little Einstein' as his classmates call him—to lay off the books and live a little?"

"I'll try," I will be more than happy to reply. Maybe I could insist on more TV. Other than "Owl Theater," however, which one of my children once turned in as her favorite TV program. A fact which was duly reported to me by the third grade teacher.

It's at times like this when I wish my husband was with me to offer moral support. In fact, I'm going to petition the school board that fathers be forced to attend conferences, because he's smart. Father stays home, only to grill me later, "Well, what's the bad news?" As if it were all my fault. Thus I get on the defensive and attest, "Winston Churchill stayed in the lower grades three times longer than the rest!"

To which he will reply, "Look, all I want is for the kids to get through elementary school and not run for Prime Minister."

Moreover, why should I bear the brunt of having to skirt around the issue when the teacher asks if our kids have a "quiet place to study." It's like asking if the Boiler Factory has a Meditation Corner.

Then, too, I feel that any mistakes I may make in my grammar or speech will be emphasized and attributed to my children's shortcomings. Thus I try to enunciate as if I were a Shakespearean scholar:

"It is I, Mrs. Daley. Here to discuss my children's curricula." (Or is it curriculum? I ask myself, practically singing an aria from an Italian opera—"Curricula, Curriculum.")

Torrance Volunteers Honored by Crusade

Mrs. Wayne Simpson of Entradero Avenue, Torrance, was named the outstanding United Crusade Volunteer of Torrance's Residential Division at the Harbor Area United Crusade Residential Division Report Luncheon at the Los Verdes Country Club.

Actor Jack Bailey, who is starring in "Hello Dolly" at Melodyland through Nov. 26, presented Mrs. Simpson with a Revere silver bowl on behalf of the Torrance Kiwanis for her outstanding community service as a United Crusade volunteer.

She and her workers raised 157 per cent of goal in her section of Torrance. Mrs. Simpson is affiliated with the Biggs Neighborhood of the Harbor District, Angelus Girl Scout Council.

Other Torrance residents won honors for their community service. Roses provided in recognition of civic involvement by the Southern California Florists Association were presented to Mrs. William F. Kazelskis, Mrs. John McDonald, Mrs. James A. Holt, North Torrance group chairman; Mrs. Walter Hodgson, Central Torrance group chairman; and Mrs. Glenn Gooder, South Torrance group chairman.

In addition to her fund-raising services, Mrs. McDonald prepared flower centerpieces for the luncheon. Mrs. Hodgson's daughter, Marie, was one of two Camp Fire Girls who helped distribute the roses. The other Camp Fire Girl was Susie Holland, also of Torrance.

Other groups helping present the roses were the Junior Girl Scouts and Senior Girl Scouts.

Interior Communications Electrician Fireman Patrick L. Thomas, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Thomas of 1019 Boundary Place, Manhattan Beach, and husband of the former Miss Sharon L. Bollaert of 2909 Perkins Lane, Redondo Beach, has reported aboard the nuclear-powered attack aircraft carrier USS Enterprise in Alameda, Calif.

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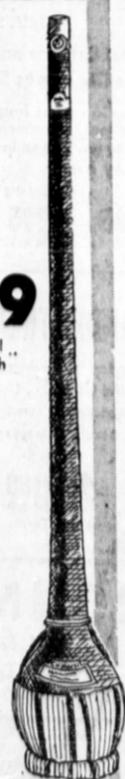
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