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The Last Word

by Steven Krulick, *Editor*

My, but it's hard to believe it's been over 18 years since I reluctantly closed the late *Ellenville News*, primarily due to the high cost of trying to put out a first-class, small-town newspaper **and** make it pay for itself, too.

In its final weeks in 1984, only one way to keep it alive came to mind: increase the ad revenue significantly by increasing circulation dramatically; and the only way to do that was to *give away a real news publication for free.*

This was unheard-of in 1984! Hence, it never happened. And the paper closed. Alas.

Which is why I was interested to hear about the Chamber's on-again-off-again plans to follow the *Wurtsboro Board of Trade's* example of publishing a FREE monthly "good news" paper. Not a shopper, not a soapbox tabloid, but a *real news publication* published by the community itself, to show what businesses, clubs, organizations, and individuals were doing *positively* to make that community a better place to live and work in.

So, when Mary Sheeley and James Dolaway invited me to sit in on a meeting of the Chamber committee charged with getting the project off the ground, I suggested a magazine format instead of a tabloid, and a parallel online version, also free, that could be easily updated between printings.

And, with volunteer labor, and Chamber members willing to support the venture with *their* ads... yes, costs could be kept in line to make it work, based on a **free** 5,000–10,000 circulation to nearly everywhere in town.

What was essential, however, was **one** person who could design, coordinate, edit, supervise, package, and deliver to print and website the final product... on-time and under-budget. However, there just aren't too many persons around here with *that* background!

Hmmm. Would *I* be willing to do it? "Been there, done that!" But, unlike last time, with the Chamber now footing the bills and the responsibilities, it wasn't going to *cost* me either! And I really liked the idea of doing a magazine **and** a website. This *might* work!

So, I put forward a proposal, fleshed it out over several months... and the Chamber said OK! And here we are! Issue Number One!

I want to thank the Chamber and President Osterhoudt for having enough faith in me to give me an almost-completely free hand to do this; thanks to the whole W.Net Committee who've met with me nearly every week; and special thanks to Barbara Hoff who beat the bushes to get most of our first round of ads!

So, after this one personal "Hi!" I will mostly go on as before, working quietly in the background, just trying to make everyone else look good and to let the work speak for itself.

Finally, I firmly pledge there will be **no** rantings or bashings coming from **me** in *this* magazine! It isn't *my* publication, after all, but *your* publication! Which means that it's really **ALL OF YOU** who get *The Last Word!* ❄️

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