



No room for cars to linger under Marriott portico

A *NewsLanc* reader, viewing the Marriott Hotel canopy being constructed in front of the Watt & Shand facade, inquired "When one drives up to check in, what happens with the traffic?"

We asked Tom Smithgall of High Associates: "How many lanes are there for the traffic under the portico." He replied "About 2 lanes."

We asked "Is there room for cars to park for a few minutes while the driver registers without obstructing curb side registration?"

Smithgall replied: "*This will be an operational issue for the staff at Interstate Hotels & Resorts to manage, but the idea is for people to arrive, remove their luggage and to choose to valet or not.*"

He continued "As you can see, and is the case in some urban hotels, the area is not for lingering as there may be many others coming at the same time. The valet service and the staff are to make this as seamless and inviting as possible for the guests."

What really happened at TMI 25 years ago is not generally known

Special to *NewsLanc* from H. Michael Gray, author of "[The Warning: Accident at TMI](#)".

The "unplanned event" at Three Mile Island 30 years ago this month was set in motion by the failure of a \$20 check valve in a half-inch copper pipe. That minor incident led to a series of cascading failures that presented the men in the control room with a situation they had never seen before and had never been trained to handle. With key instruments gone haywire, flying blind, they made a couple of bad choices that wiped out the plant and released a still unknown amount of radioactivity into the air.

For several years, the wreckage of the reactor itself was too hot to approach so we didn't know how close we had come. But when the inspectors were finally able to lower a camera into the pressure vessel, the image was a heart-stopper.

There was nothing left of the 150-ton uranium core but rubble. Parts of it had turned to liquid.

Which means that at some moment on that fateful Wednesday, the reactor at TMI was within 30 minutes of the "China Syndrome" -- a melt-down comparable to the disaster at Chernobyl.

Had it not been for a lucky operator who flipped a switch to see what would happen, the Pennsylvania state capitol might now be a ghost town.

The current world-wide scramble for dwindling oil reserves is forcing us to take another look at good neighbor nuke. But before we hit the on-switch, we need to carefully consider the lessons of Chernobyl and TMI: nuclear power is a completely unforgiving technology. The worst-case scenario must always be front and center --- because Murphy's Law turns out to be as immutable as the law of gravity. "*If something can go wrong, it will.*"

(Editor's note: Gray and Publisher Robert Field are co-chairs of Common Sense for Drug Policy.)

LETTER: “Bulb-outs” not a good idea for downtown street corners

“City administrators are planning curb extensions (called bulb-outs) at East King and North Queen Streets as well as other downtown locations. Bulb-outs were recently completed at the intersection of S. Queen and Vine Sts.

“However, there are numerous reasons why bulb-outs, especially at intersections, may not be a good idea.

“When bulb-outs (curb extensions) are placed at intersections on narrow streets, they tend to make left or right turns from one street to the other more difficult and dangerous. If at mid-

block locations, they will eliminate some parking spaces...

“Bulb-outs can cause accidents. Cities are liable for personal injuries and damage to vehicles caused by bulb-outs...

“Bulb-outs make snow removal and street cleaning more difficult and also more expensive in terms of time and labor....”

“Bulb-outs constructed in mid-block locations for the purpose of traffic calming result in only a small reduction in speed...”

EDITORIAL: *Intell* / *New Era* merger a good thing

“That was to be expected” was the response of most astute Lancastrians in seeing the *Intell* headline Wednesday morning *“Intelligencer Journal, New Era will combine.”* The marvel is that it took so long in coming about.

But that was representative of how Lancaster old money has been squandered by a generation of inept managers and custodians of the wealth generated by their predecessors. This has led to dreadful misdirection of community efforts and the enrichment of opportunistic business interests.

The article explains: *“The day-to-day publishing process of the expanded morning combined edition will be under the direction of [Ray] Shaw, as is currently done for the Saturday and holiday editions. [Ernie] Schreiber will oversee the New Era’s editorial page and a new investigative reporting team.”*

Ironically, if indeed Schreiber is to investigate, he should start with the *Lancaster Newspapers, Inc.* and explore whether they

participated in a criminal conspiracy concerning the Convention Center Project, and whether Ray Shaw is fit to be the editor given his complicity with the actions taken by *Intell* reporters to illegally access a confidential State web site. (To his credit, Schreiber editorially blasted the *Intell* and indirectly Shaw for its involvement at the time.)

Both Chair Jack Buckwalter and President Chip Miller should retire and bring in younger and smarter professionals from outside Lancaster.

Moreover, before leaving they should apologize, through a front page editorial, for their violations of journalism ethics concerning the Conestoga View witch hunt of the former commissioners, and their self serving propaganda and misrepresentations on behalf of Penn Square Partners.

That done, the public will once again have newspapers in the *Intell* / *New Era* and *Sunday News* in which it can place its confidence.

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