



Dr. Newport returns from abroad

By **DR. NEWPORT**
GUEST COLUMNIST

Twenty-nine days after arriving in England, five visiting Michiganders boarded a British Airways flight on October 22 to begin the return process to the United States. Appropriately, the weather was overcast and a bit of a drizzle was coming down. This change of weather came after the warmest and clearest fall in recent English history, and was most fitting because each member of the team was leaving many new friends, and the send-off had been so very special. Tears and hugs were abundant, and Mother Nature's rain fit the mood.

But, enough. . . Let's talk about a few of the highlights that made this trip so special to a 54-year-old college president. First and foremost were the people. Each member of

the team lived with various English families for the entire month, and we moved every 3-4 days to a new family. This means that we each lived with seven families. . . all very different, but very representative of a cross-section of English society. One noteworthy aspect of family life—people talk with each other, and we were no couch potatoes in front of a television. In fact, while most homes have a "telly," only rarely was it turned on, and the choice of channels was typically limited to four options. Yes, resurrecting the act of conversation was a bit of a challenge, but in the end, so much more rewarding.

Then again, there's the setting where much of this conversation occurred. . . it's called a pub. In the States, what we call a bar, is a place where the objective is often to consume the maximum

amount of booze in the shortest period of time or to pick up someone. Not so in England. The pub is a gathering place where all ages come and just relax. Yes, it's like a living room—often a fireplace is in the corner, seating is casual, beer is always on tap, but not pushed, and rarely do you see abuse of any nature. The names are unique and usually have a history. My favorite was "The Pig and the Whistle." You can imagine that the name itself made for some good conversation.

Moving right along, each member of the team had the opportunity to visit with equals in their chosen career area. As a college president, this meant that I visited with representatives of all levels of the educational process in England. I came away with several generalizations. First, decision making for kids re-

mains very much in the hands of national policy makers and how well a student does on various national examinations. Second, this reliance on test taking influences virtually all curriculum matters, the qualifications of instructors, and ultimately the various choices which a child has available for further education. And, many of these decisions are made at age 14. For a community college educator and a late bloomer myself—this seems like a very young age to make such significant and long-lasting decisions

But, the English still want to believe that once a skill has been developed, the student will stick with it for the rest of his/her life. Of course, this flies in the face of what we see ACC students doing with their lives and the multiple career changes which occur



Above left, members of the 1995 Rotary International Group Study Exchange Team explore a historic site in the English countryside. Above, the group tries on a little English finery. Members of the group (from left) Lori Klimczak, Rick Ohle (standing), Dr. Newport, Jenifer LaPolla, and George Owen Widiger

regularly as a result of our more democratic approach.

It is also being challenged by the decline of several major industries in the U.K., an unemployment rate of 16 percent, and advances in technology. But, like most places, change is difficult, and you sense a growing gap be-

tween the young and old on this issue.

Well, much more could be said, but I'll reserve those comments for an open forum being planned for our college community in early December, OR just stop by the office. The door is always open and opinions come cheap. Cheers!

NOVEMBER

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|--|------------------|---|--------|
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 Family Day at Thunderbowl Lanes 12-1:30 p Free to ACC students, staff & family | 19 |
| Early Registration 20 | 21 | 22 | Office closed 23 THANKSGIVING | Office closed 24 | 25 | 26 |
| Classes resume 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Meet Me in St. Louis TBT Advance Ceramics Salt Kiln and Raku at KCC Men's BB at Sault College Ontario Canada 7 p | | | |

DECEMBER

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|--|--|--|----------|---|---|---|
| | | | | Meet Me in St. Louis TBT Salt Raku 9a-7p EC MESC BTC 100 9-12 p.m. Women's BB 2 p & Men's BB 4 p at Gogebic. 1 | Meet Me in St. Louis TBT 2 | Meet Me in St. Louis TBT 3 |
| CALENDAR INFO DUE 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 Meet Me in St. Louis TBT MESC BTC 100 9-12 p Women's BB KVCC 7 p EC | 9 Meet Me in St. Louis TBT Men's BB at KUCC 3 p Art for Humanity 7-9:30 p | 10 Meet Me in St. Louis TBT Men's BB Kellogg 1 p Women's BB MI Christian 2 p at EC |
| Share Christmas with a less fortunate contact Volunteer Center. 11 | Satellite Seminar 1-3 p INFOTREK VLH 2:30-3:30 12 | TECH Night 5-9 p Advising Night HSC 5-8:30 13 | 14 | 15 Last Day Fall Regular Classes MESC BTC 100 9-12 p.m. Meet Me in St. Louis TBT Student Art Exhibit EC Gym 7-9 p art & food | 16 Meet Me in St. Louis TBT Registration fees due Christmas Dance Men's BB at Sault 7 p | 17 Meet Me in St. Louis TBT |
| EXAMS Book Buy Back 18 | EXAMS Book Buy Back 19 | EXAMS Book Buy Back 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |