

# The summer of 1991 in retrospect: things you didn't know

by Joe McKenna

The summer months have been co-operative enough to give us plenty of subject material to dwell on for at least several lifetimes. So let's consider a few highlights or more appropriately lowlights of last summer.

1. The recession is over and America is steadily/rapidly (depending on which economist you choose to follow) reaching full/partial (pick your economist again) recovery. The sad fact is that many Americans never knew that a recession was occurring. White collar recession is what the experts conveniently labeled it. Perhaps it really was; indeed the hardest hit areas were those yuppie (are they still called that?) filled urban centers.

Carefully neglected is the permanent recession existing in America. That's the true tragedy; there are too many people entrapped in the low-end of the job market spectrum. Dead-end jobs. No upward mobility. No hope. No future. A nation of burger-floppers and store clerks in our service oriented economy,

oblivious to the booms and busts of the global economy. One whopper, hold the mayo, please.

2. The Persian Gulf War is over, but it still continues to offer us some sickening, though sometimes humorous, scenarios. "We have destroyed all of Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons capability." -- General Norman Scharzkopf. I extracted that from a Detroit newspaper at the conclusion of the 100 hour ground offensive in the Persian Gulf debacle. I guess this is further proof that U.S. military intelligence remains a huge oxymoron. Four months later Saddam's toting the stuff across the sand. Oops!!!

On the humorous side . . . Over the course of our military intervention, 36 women on a single ship mysteriously became impregnated. Yet the military quickly issued a statement claiming that no improper male/female fraternization occurred. Hmm...?! Must have been the water.

3. The Senate clandestinely

raised their salaries late one summer night. Accident, or a long filibuster to delay the vote? No, I don't think so. The more likely scenario is that the Senate delayed their vote until 11:45 pm in order to keep the newspapers from breaking the stories.

Do you think it worked? You bet. By the time the public discovered the raise, it was stale news. That compounded with the general public's consensus that politicians are supposed to lie, cheat, steal, make a non-story.

The logic behind the raise is as infallible as anything else out of Washington. The Senators claim that this wasn't a pay raise (really guys!) it was a pay equalization to keep up with representative's salaries. I wish I could vote myself a \$20,000 pay equalization.

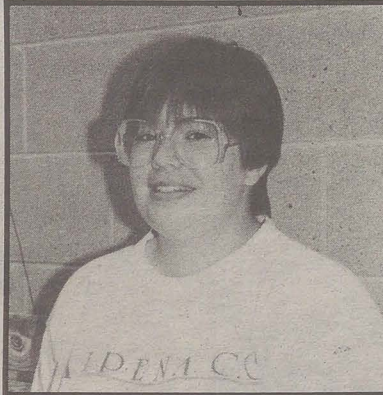
4. Communism is dead! The Evil Empire has collapsed into a loose confederation of independent republics. It would be pretty easy to kick Communism around right now, but we must make a few things clear. First, the Soviet Union is not a communist state, and any Soviet citizen would tell you the same. The Soviets are socialist, meaning the workers are paid for the amount of work done for the state. Communism, beyond state ownership of capital, resources, and production facilities, is the distribution of goods and services according to need. Communism is the final step in Marx's ideology.

What we are witnessing in the Soviet Union is not the rising force of democracy but a growing, disturbing trend of nationalism. Nationalism is permanently linked to democratization; some consider it a prerequisite. But nationalism is a destructive force -- look at Yugoslavia, the Kurds in Iraq, Northern Ireland, etc. Even inside the Soviet Union eighty percent of their internal borders are disputed. The whole situation is a mess. This is not to belittle the enormous moral strides that the Soviet Union has accomplished or to condemn the desires of independence within the republics, but only to somberly remind us that a decaying empire ripped apart by nationalistic forces has triumphed over communism.

If communism is dead, why outlaw the communist party in the Soviet Union? Is communism dead? Ask one billion Chinese! Ask millions of disgruntled, jobless East Europeans. Reeling from a serious setback, yes -- dead, no.

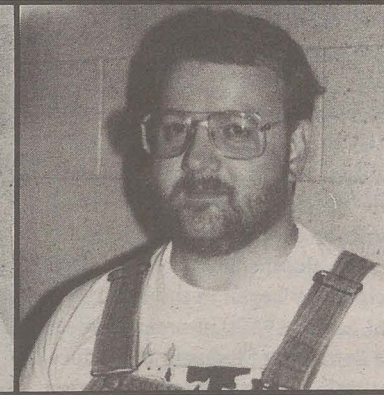
## STUDENTSENK

Would you like to have a Student Senate organized and run book exchange on the ACC campus?



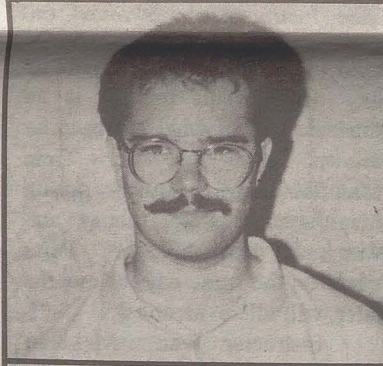
**Karen Mason**

"Yes! I think it's an excellent idea. It'll save students money. Many of us do it already, but something organized would be even better."



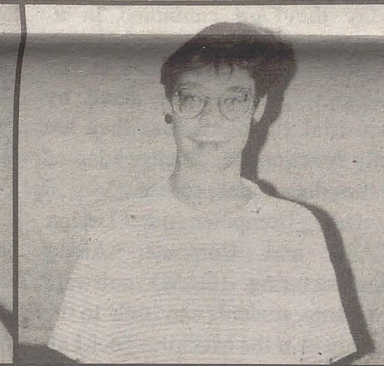
**Steve Smith**

"I think it would be a good idea. It would give the students a way to save money."



**Jay Bushey**

"Sounds like a good idea, yet I would like to know more about it."



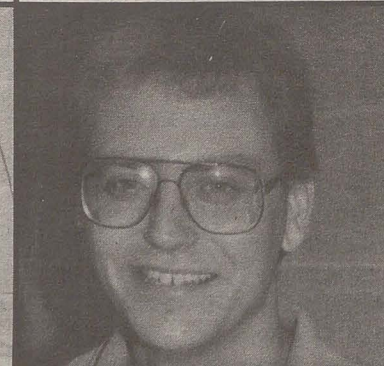
**Amy Yantomasi**

"It would be really good, sure would help with costs of books."



**Sandra Parent**

"I think it would be a great idea. It would save students a great deal of money and it would help those students who have low grants or have to pay for all classes and books."



**Tom Mason**

"Yes, I feel it would be a great way of saving students money. I feel, however, the student should be allowed the choice of using this type book exchange in addition to what the book store would offer."

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