

## An Illustrated Journal of Sporting and Sensational Events

The *National Police Gazette* is back. What is the *National Police Gazette*? It's just a little magazine that originally ran for over 130 years and invented half of what you know as today's American pop culture. *Playboy*, *Sports Illustrated*, the *National Enquirer*, Guinness World Records, *Life*, *Esquire*, *Maxim*, *Backstage*, crime sheets like *The Slammer*, *The Daily Show*, *Colbert Report*, Howard Stern.... The list goes on; the *Police Gazette* did it first.

Then why call it the "*National Police Gazette*?" Because it also invented *America's Most Wanted* with John Walsh. Starting out as a medium for exposing fugitives and wrong doers to the public, the *Police Gazette* later morphed to the degree we had to reply to a letter from Jesse James—one of the most famous fugitives in American history—that he "is evidently unaware of the many great changes which have taken place, not only in the New York Police Department, but in THE NATIONAL POLICE GAZETTE.... The GAZETTE is now the leading illustrated paper in America, known alike for its artistic taste, the beauty of its illustrations, and as being first in the field in depicting accurately everything of importance."

What does the *Police Gazette* consider things of "importance?" The list in the first paragraph should give an idea. But here are some regular features we've been publishing lately:

**Eccentric Tantrums.** Everyone's got an opinion. The difference is the *Police Gazette's* opinion is right.

**Limerick of the Month.** One of the innumerable ways in which the *Police Gazette* was "first" was that we published the first known use of the word "limerick" to refer to low-brow verse. Hence, we keep the limerick alive with a monthly feature.

**Making Your Community Better.** Joseph

Pulitzer—of Pulitzer-prize fame—learned half of what he knew about successful newspapering from the *Police Gazette*. The *Gazette's* most legendary owner, Richard K. Fox, said "It is the fear of public condemnation that keeps many in the straight and narrow path. The electric light of the press holds them in check. If they sin in the dark and their offense is known only to themselves, they continue to pose before society as models of virtue." Hypocrisy in high places is fuel for the *Police Gazette* fire.

**Girls on the *Police Gazette*.** Irving Berlin, one of the most famous American song writers, produced an ironic little ditty titled "The Girl on the *Police Gazette*." He was referring to the *Gazette's* tradition of featuring large illustrations and photos of attractive young women, often in provocative poses, wearing as little as the laws of the time would allow. Let your imagination fill in the rest.

**From the Morgue.** "Morgue" is a newspaper term for where previously published issues and articles are kept. And the *Police Gazette's* morgue is filled to bursting with 130 years worth of sensational stories and pictures of American culture at its best and worst.

**Dr. Caprio's Sex Clinic.** The *Police Gazette* was never shy about referring to the subject even when no other publication would touch it. It's no wonder the Museum of Sex relies on the *Police Gazette* to show patrons the 19th century was no different from today. Dr. Caprio is a real sex therapist whose articles ran in the *Police Gazette* during the 1970s.

**New World Records.** The *Police Gazette* was not only the Guinness World Records of its day, unlike Guinness we also awarded gold medals and cash prizes to the champions. A case can be made that the *Police Gazette* "discovered" Annie Oakley and she proudly wore her *Police Gazette* medal on

her chest for years.

**Event Listings.** The *Police Gazette* was the first to give regular, in-depth coverage to doings in the theatre and later Hollywood. Our event listings prove that if you dig deep enough you can find something interesting to do in our area.

**Horoscope.** Frankly, this is one subject the *Police Gazette* was not exactly known for. But our Current-Affairs Editor is so good at writing them that when we see an opportunity to be "first in the field" we take it.

**Art Classic.** The *Police Gazette* perfected the concept of the illustrated weekly magazine and by the late 19th century was publishing some of the finest woodcut illustrations ever created. The artistic tradition continued into the 20th century when the likes of Alexander Calder worked for us as a staff illustrator. Then, for good measure, abstract-art legend Willem de Kooning named one of his most famous works "Police Gazette."

**Feature Stories.** We cover the local sports other papers don't: pro wrestling, roller derby, women's tackle football...; interesting local business people: the proprietor of a bellydancing school, the head of a horror-movie production company...; we just finished a nine-part series on the mysterious death and disappearance of a famed local playwright; we feature Binghamton-area history; review movies (especially when the *Police Gazette* is featured in them); and cover the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, the official band of the *National Police Gazette*.

We will continue to depict accurately everything of importance; the *Police Gazette* maintains a revolutionary commitment to accuracy. So, in that connection—while we await the return of our regular features—please enjoy the stylings of *Police Gazette* columnist Paul Juser....

### Paul Juser and The City from Another Universe



Welcome to Regentrification 2012! Binghamton is the only city that would take such measures at the end of the world, because we're the type of people that can breed such horrors as Rod Serling and IBM. Don't call me a pessimist. I maintain hopes and dreams in fairy tales, but I'm not ready to believe again we can be saved by out-of-town absentee landlords who want to keep our abandoned buildings for tax write-offs.

Court Street is shut off again, this time at the same intersection with Chenango Street that was shut down for nearly a year after a fire allegedly cleared the former Mid-Town Mall of alleged South American laborers that were allegedly being kept under slave conditions inside... allegedly. Court Street was shut down the entire summer of 2008 when two buildings collapsed from water damage at the intersection with State Street. All of this took place less than two blocks from City Hall, Uncle Tony's, Tom & Marty's, Dillinger's, and the brand-spanking-new glass student housing at 20 Hawley.

Ari Meisel is nowhere to be found after holding Binghamton hostage with his Depot Street loft project that was sure to draw rich NYC artists into a neighborhood rife with drugs and drive-by shootings. The Party Mayor was elected in 2005 and he planned for the arts to save Binghamton. More galleries opened than our old record-setting number of bars on Clinton Street, and artists that never touched brush to canvas before could find themselves with a show in a week. First Friday was a drunken party, with arts enthusiasts receiving a shot of Franzia and a plate of salsa at each stop and dancing the night away at Jungle Science when the kids went home with the babysitter.

It didn't take long for out-of-town money to flow in. Downtown flophouses were bought up and tenants priced out to make expensive lofts. The plumbing still worked in only a few and others saw no more renovation than a new coat of paint before they were resold. The landowners quickly found that artists flourished in Binghamton because housing was cheap. However, those artists needed to get outside the area to sell anything they created. There was no money in Binghamton to buy that art, and it wasn't coming until someone outshined the Marla Olmstead scandal. By the time those young artists were that famous, they could afford to live in New York, California, or even Ithaca like Rod Serling taught them.

Only a few of those galleries remain today, and only a handful still serve wine. Even the Party Mayor doesn't come out most months. Jungle Science remains the place to be, and

often the only place where there is any life. The Art Mission focused on bringing artists from across the country and around the globe, but is now on its fourth executive director since 2010. Could be time for the board in charge of hiring to reassess its own competency. The Art Mission is one of Binghamton's oldest galleries, and the current board of directors has left the organization teetering on collapse. The Brunelli Gallery remains, along with 213, and Orazio Salati is somewhere on State Street. Beyond that, First Friday has consulting firms and factories allowing employees to hang artwork. Jack Fossil remains my favorite First Friday artist with his battle-ax-hewn wooden furniture.

Bringing student housing downtown may be Binghamton's last chance before it dries up and blows away. That new money needs to stay here though, and we need to provide reasons why. Handing our money to anyone who promises we'll be rich next week has left us with our scenic, turn-of-the-century facade, but with empty buildings rotting behind. The only prudent action is for Binghamton to revoke every property title in city limits and give owners 30 days to reclaim in person at no charge before the property is sold at auction. Purchasers must be under contract to develop within five years or the property defaults to the city once more. Better yet, revert all property to Atomic Tom, who spends all his days on a crane, hand-restoring properties to their turn-of-the-century condition. If you ask me, that guy should be our next mayor.