

of more than a half-million pages.

U.S. District Judge John T. Curtin has already ruled that the liability provisions of the 1980 Superfund law apply to Occidental, even though Hooker sold the dump in 1953. Occidental has countered that the local, state, and federal governments should absorb Love Canal's costs, arguing that the dump would not have leaked if it hadn't been disturbed by construction of streets, sewers, and the 99th Street School. And it challenges the wisdom of government actions, beginning with the 1978 evacuation. "The whole second emergency declaration was unnecessary," says Steven K. Yablonski, an attorney for Occidental.

Whatever the court outcome, it's unlikely to do much for folks like Nunzio LoVerdi, who recently

moved out of the public housing complex after a long campaign to save it from demolition crews. The Niagara Falls Housing Authority plans to raze the \$7 million complex this fall because it deteriorated during the years federal and state officials spent studying the neighborhood's safety.

Shortly before giving up the fight, LoVerdi visited the edge of the Love Canal field, near the brick leachate treatment building that filters waste oozing from the dump. It was the spot where then-candidate Al Gore was scheduled to speak, before his advance people spotted all those photogenic drums a little farther up the fence.

LoVerdi was unimpressed. "This is all we've had for 10 years," he said, "political promises and people coming here to use Love Canal." □

## THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY Journalism Award

for May 1988 is presented to

*Chicago Tribune*

Chicago public schools administrator Manfred Byrd Jr. earns \$110,000 a year and calls himself "probably the most gifted urban administrator in this country." But his school system has some of the nation's lowest test scores and Byrd says he has no idea why. He should check the *Tribune's* two-week series for some answers: a bloated, leaderless bureaucracy, a selfish teachers union, and an indifferent legislature. Classrooms went without books and supplies while the school board built a private bathroom for a "field superintendent." The *Tribune's* series captures both the drama of inner-city schools, which serve as holding pens for the city's poor, and the bureaucratic forces responsible.

for June 1988 is presented to

*William Safetan  
American Politics*

Who got the most votes in the Iowa caucuses? Astonishingly, no one knows. The caucuses involve a Byzantine system of minimum thresholds, multiple ballots, and weighted districts. To shortcut this impure exercise in democracy, the networks attempted to learn who got the most votes on the first ballot, a truer indication of a candidate's popularity as the campaign conducts its first real vote. They employed the National Election Service to monitor this "real" vote in each of the state's 2,500 precincts. But the NES sent high school kids with no training to count heads in crowded rooms. Safetan reports that some didn't even show up and others "freaked out and left." The networks reported their unreliable tally and declared Richard Gephardt the winner, though Paul Simon may in fact have out-polled him. Gephardt then leapt 10 points in the New Hampshire polls, passing Simon for good. Network officials, who cling to their numbers like Vietnam generals to body counts, still discount the possibility of error.

The Monthly Journalism Award is presented each month to the best newspaper, magazine, television, or radio story (or series of stories) on our political system. Nominations for any newspaper, magazine, or radio or television station in the country are welcome. The subject can be government in its federal, state, or municipal manifestation.

The award for stories published or aired in July will be announced in the October issue. Nominations for stories published or aired in August will close September 15. The winner will be announced in the November issue. Two copies of the article or broadcast text should accompany the nomination.



# TIDBITS AND OUTRAGES

**THE CASE FOR POLYESTER**  
 According to the *Chicago Tribune*, boasts that wearing nylon is like eating Godiva chocolate, drinking Cristal champagne, smoking Davidoff cigars, driving a Ferrari GTO, or eating pasta at the California Pizza Kitchen.

**WHY WOMEN WANT TO GO UNCONVENTIONAL**  
 After the 1990s, a magazine assessed 50 million women to keep the message from slipping. A new survey of 10,000 women found that 70 percent of women want to go unconventional. The survey also found that 70 percent of women want to go unconventional.

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**WHY NOT CLIMB THE PLAYGROUND?**

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