

**THOSE DELIVERING THE GOODS DESERVE A WORD OF
PRAISE
May 13, 2003**

Walt Mason was the author of a poem I used at the end of my March 12, 1996 column. It was a tribute to Bud VanSlyke, a friend and late resident of our area and Dolgeville.

*There's a man in the world
Who is never turned down.
Wherever he chances to stray;
He gets the glad hand in populous towns,
Or out where the farmers make hay;
He's greeted with pleasure on deserts of sand,
And deep in the aisles of the woods;
Wherever he goes there's a welcoming hand -
He's the man who delivers the goods.*

Although it epitomizes Bud in my mind's eye, the verse describes many others as well. I am sure everyone will have someone in mind as they read it.

In days of yore people were not as mobile as they are today. Many of the daily needs were delivered to the door. Moms were homemakers and there to receive the goods. Some goods still are delivered, whether anyone is there to receive them or not.

One that comes to mind is the newspaper and the people who deliver it; they deserve a salute. Their rounds are made long before many of us are awake and their dedication goes too often unnoticed and unappreciated. Think about it as you enjoy the luxury and pleasure of your morning paper with your coffee.

The guy who delivers our fuel is often unsung as well. He's out there pulling that heavy hose through deep snow and pouring rain. Many times he's dealing with tire chains in winter and certainly black flies this time of year.

At one time food vendors had a long entourage of home delivery people and businesses.

In my hometown, the Hathaway Bakery man came our way every two days. He was followed by the produce truck with its hanging scales to weigh out the onions and potatoes. Jewel Tea made its rounds, not as often, but just as faithfully. I still rate their fruitcakes as the best. Here in our area the Pickle Boat was a legend delivering right up to the dock of camps and hotels on the Fulton Chain of Lakes. The mail came and went as well.

In most areas the mail is still picked up and delivered right to the door. All are familiar with the post office motto of the mail must go through. Fed Ex, UPS, and Airborne deliver and pick up the goods and their service should not be any less appreciated because they are private enterprises.

The people who pick up are just as important as those who deliver are. The trash is the best example I can think of off-hand. Remember those trips to the dump? It was the place we now refer to as a landfill. Many came home with more goodies than they took there. Dumps provided a certain ambiance for many that have fond memories of their existence.

Mark Hudon, our public works superintendent, comes to mind. As a youth he worked for me, and delivering trash daily to the dump was one of his duties. Daughter Lisa on many occasions rode with him to her job at the town swimming facility. Mark delighted in lingering and prolonging his duties as long as possible as "Miss Prim" writhed in the cab. The unbearable stench and hordes of flies became much more tolerable for him as he relished her discomfort.

Mark's sister Rena also worked for me at the time and he had double the enjoyment on the occasions when she accompanied him, too. A highlight was the day when she was grossed out by the sight of a crow flying proudly off with a snake in its beak. The snake appeared to show signs that its demise had occurred some days earlier, which prompted Rena to exclaim, "Ooh probably rotten too".

I will close on a more somber note by apologizing to anyone I may have slighted. We will catch up to you later. We as homeowners and from the standpoint of common courtesy should do what we can to show our appreciation to all that serve us. Simple things such as protecting trash in heavy dependable bags to prevent animals from strewing it around the neighborhood helps. The same goes for providing paths through deep snow to outside fuel delivery points.

I closing I would like to give a special thanks for one of our most outstanding service organizations - the new York State Police - and also for our other police and protective agencies. The assistance and concern shown for Gregory P. Huxley, Jr., and his family went far beyond the call of duty. Gregory was the young area serviceman killed in action in Iraq on April 6. The above named organizations escorted his body from the Syracuse airport to Boonville. Thanks for an outstanding job.