

THE DONUT MAN

Bert Kelly's One-Man War To Feed Rochester's Hungry

By Terrance J. Brennan
His pattern never changes.

Six mornings each week Bert Kelly collects day-old donuts from a few of the local emporiums on the north side, then delivers them to various soup kitchens and shelters

across town.

Kelly, 66, retired in 1979 after 34 years of service in the paper sensitizing division at Kodak Park. In four years since then, he has devoted a huge amount of time to making sure Rochester's needy have something to

eat, "even if it's only a donut," he says.

Kelly delivers an average of 35-40 dozen donuts each day to St. Peter's Kitchen, St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, the Volunteers of America, and the Melita and Bethany Houses, to name a few.

"Some days are better than others," says Kelly. "On Mondays I usually collect the most." Last Monday, he obtained nearly 70 dozen, a number attributed to the 95-degree temperatures the day before — "not many people like to eat donuts in the hot weather," Kelly adds.

Bob Malley, owner of Donuts Delite on Empire Boulevard, says of Kelly, "Bert is a very dedicated man, and it's hard to say no to someone who works that hard. When he asks you for something — Boom! — you want to give it."

Kelly also picks up day-olds from Tom Marcello at Ridge Donuts and from Pete Siragusa at Tony and Pete's Donut Shop on Hudson Avenue.

"I'm glad that they are going to good use," Siragusa said. "I used to just throw them out."

There is no charge for the donuts. The only fee Kelly incurs is the cost of his gasoline, but, as he



As the shirt proclaims, Bert Kelly is indeed "Rochester's Donut Man."

says, "the day I can't afford to pay for my gas is probably the day I won't be able to drive any more."

Kelly picks up the donuts around 8 a.m., Mondays through Saturdays. Following his pickups, Kelly returns home to sort out the donuts with the assistance of his wife, Anna. The two of them break down the vast collection into small boxes ready for distribution. And once Kelly loads them into the back of his station wagon, the road trip begins once again.

He doesn't work on Sundays, however. "I have been approached about delivering on Sundays, but I don't — I need some time off for myself."

"We really appreciate

the big effort Bert puts out every day," said Sister Margaret Brennan of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, "and the men here love him."

Kelly admits that not many know his name, but when he's seen on the street, he hears, "Hey! There's the Donut Man!" For Fathers Day this year, his two daughters gave him a bright green T-shirt that reads, "Rochester's Donut Man."

Even at his age, Kelly moves around like a man 30 years his junior. "I envy his energy," said Loretta Darling, of the Volunteers of America (VOA) local office.

"His efforts make the difference of whether these people get dessert or not," she added. "We put out a good meal here, but if I had to go out and buy

20 dozen donuts, I couldn't do it."

Kelly is a member of the board of directors of the VOA, and is also on the board of Action for a Better Community. He has been a member of St. Stanislaus Parish since he was born and lives nearby, contributing regularly to parish projects.

Even though Kelly decides not to deliver on Sundays, it is incomprehensible to him that so few kitchens stay open that day to serve the many hungry.

"It really upsets me," he said. "I don't think I could go all day Sunday with nothing to eat."

"And my friends don't believe me when I tell them how bad the situation is out there. I say, 'Come with me and see.' It's really something."



Kelly and his wife, Anna, organize the donuts in their kitchen prior to delivery.

Sarah Child



All in the Family

Blue Jeans, Purple Prose Incompatible

When the postcard from the library arrived saying that the copy of "You Can Write a Romance and Get It Published" was in, I rushed right down to pick it up.

Edited by Kathryn Falk, the how-to manual includes the contributions of scores of romance writers (including

Alcoholism Seminar

Elmira — The monthly alcoholism seminar will take place at 12:15 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 18, in the doctors' meeting room at St. Joseph's Hospital. Robert Bialousz, alcoholism counselor/STARS, will speak on "Recovering vs. Recovered." Further information is available from the STARS office, 733-5519.

"Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man" — Francis Bacon.

Webster's Audrey Johnson, author of seven teenage novels) who tell how they do what they do.

I was not disappointed with the contents. Many of the women (most romance writers are females with a few men using feminine pseudonyms) had down-to-earth tips on how they turn the stuff out.

One, for example, tells how she envisions a filmstrip in her head with the action progressing across her mental screen. Another describes how to take an overworked plot and give it a new twist and still another recommends basing your hero on a favorite movie star, noting that by the time you finish your characterization your hero will bear little resemblance to the flesh and blood prototype.

Some writers were more fanciful in their advice. They declared it necessary to be in the proper mood to turn out purple prose and suggested that would-be romance authors don their filmiest nighties, slip between perfume-drenched satin sheets with their writing

pads. In the background the sound of haunting music casts its spell while nearby a bottle of wine and a vase of white roses add extra inspiration.

That is not quite how I write. Our typewriter is on the enclosed porch where in the summer temperatures rise to 100 plus. I work best in cut-off jeans, tee shirt and bare feet.

In the dead of winter, the portable heater can only do so much. I don a layer of powder blue thermal underwear and top it with a pair of blue jeans, a long-sleeved turtleneck or flannel shirt and a bulky sweatshirt. On my feet are knee-high socks with either sneakers or fur-lined boots, depending on whether the thermometer says 20 or 30 below outside.

At first reading, I pooh-poohed the suggestion about having the proper mood and atmosphere in order to create. But then I began to have second thoughts. Love's leading ladies make fortunes writing heart-throbbers while I keep churning out recipes for eggplant and laments about trying to stay sane bringing up three kids and a dog.

Perhaps a slight change in working habits is in order. I can't figure out how to operate a Selectric II in bed but a few drops of Chanel No. 5 applied judiciously around the cuffs of my snuggies can't do any harm.

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