

## Editorials

# Good news developing

Critics of the news media, and, goodness knows, there have been more than a handful in recent years, like to assert that reports are too negative and adversely critical for the most part.

So, being in the business that we're in, we rather enjoy proving them wrong—at least in the case of the Advance. For more than a year and a half we've been publishing a daily "good news" story on the first page of this newspaper, and it's turned out to be a very popular feature. But the "good news" aspect of this publication reaches far beyond a single story.

Readers don't need to be reminded about our successful campaigns on a score of fronts to correct injustices, provide better services or obtain a better return on their tax money. The results of these is generally in the "good news" category, although we admit we—and our readers—don't score a victory every time.

Then there's a running story which can include its measure of good news. The situation at Willowbrook State School is perhaps a most striking case in point. When we moved in on that point, with news stories and photos, a great many people were left aghast. Many admitted to not knowing how bad the situation was, in staffing, funding and the treatment of patients. (Months later, television, radio and other newspapers joined in.)

The Advance, strangely enough, came into some criticism at the time. It was felt that the staff, professional and non-professional, was being made "to look bad." That wasn't the point of course. We were acting in behalf of the patients who couldn't speak out for themselves.

The "good news" has been evolving slowly. After our news reports appeared, there was a fairly quick restoration of some funds. Legislators became alerted to their responsibilities. Some new professional approaches began to emerge. And, finally, there have been a number of actions which portend even greater changes in the future.

From out of the welter of the bad news about Willowbrook, and we're quick to admit that many of the news reports were not pleasant reading despite the excellence of the writing, we're getting some good news.

That's what life, and newspapering, is all about . . . achieving some gains every day.