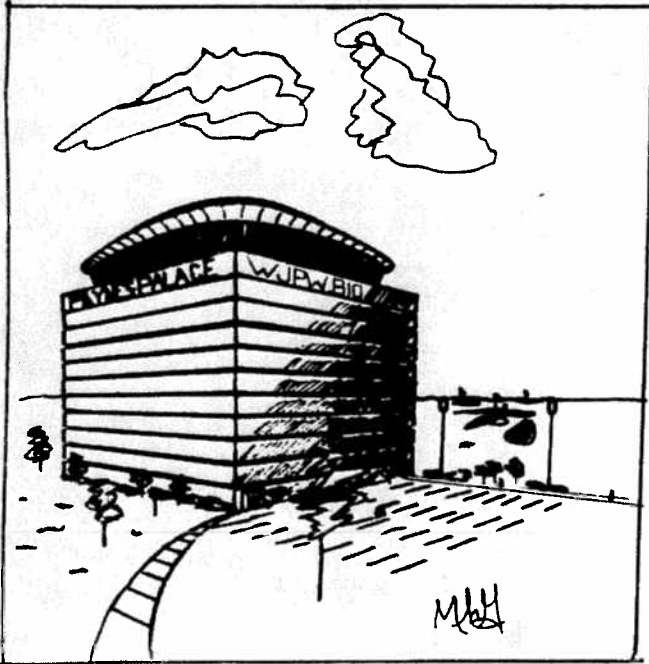


POLKAZETTE



A "FANTASTIC JOURNEY" - KAREN GEDRIS

My trip to beautiful Payne's Palace in the heart of the thriving metropolis of Rockford, was like a page out of Lewis B. Carroll's Alice in Wonderland. I am convinced there is no other place like it anywhere. Even the World Trade Center has nothing to offer when compared to Payne's Palace.

If you take the scenic drive to Payne's Palace, you are able to see the private beach and the olympic size pool which overlooks the yacht club and boat lagoon. To the right of this fantastic building is the 18-hole golf course (designed by Arnold Palmer) and wildlife preserve with bicycle trails to the back 80 acres where the ski slope and race track are located. The race track also doubles as a football/baseball stadium and is frequently used for Elvis Presley concerts. The overflow from the concerts usually take advantage of the Rockford Point Amusement Park and Camp-ground which is centrally located between the outdoor theater and Payne's Palace.

I did not get a close look at all this as I arrived by helicopter and landed at the elegant heliport nestled in the center courtyard at Payne's Palace, where I was ushered in by Bob "Jasiu" Whitcomb himself. "Jasiu" got me security clearance for the tours he sometimes conducts.

Our first stop was the Lobby. It was magnificent. There were hanging gardens, an 8 foot TV and a crystal chandelier perched high above the escalators. Knowing all women love to shop, Jasiu took me directly to the 6th floor

mall that boasts 35 stores including photography studio and Vidal Sassoon beauty salon. After a quick tour of the 7th floor health spa facilities, Jasiu invited me to dine with him in the fabulous 11th floor revolving rooftop restaurant where we were entertained by the talented Payne's Palace Rockettes featuring Mitzi Gavin and her Pontoons.

To top off the tour, Jasiu escorted me to the Payne's Grove Ballroom where I discovered what a great dancer Jasiu really is. Since it was getting close to lock-up time, we decided to use the express elevators to the Lobby. Unfortunately, we became trapped between floors for 15 minutes while Sven the maintenance man worked hard to set us free. I was then left by Jasiu who had to report for work at the Souvenir Shop, until I boarded the champagne flight to Grand Rapids to report to you of my "incredible journey".

Actually, Payne's Palace is a figment of Bob "Jasiu" Whitcomb's vivid imagination. Bob concocted his wild story to entertain his listeners on WJPW every Saturday afternoon. But who knows--maybe Bob really believes there is a Payne's Palace?