



## "If It Fitz..." Heroes forget

By Jim Fitzgerald

At one of those huge, semi-public cocktail parties the other evening, I suddenly found myself standing next to Mickey Lolich, the baseball pitcher, and I was instantly reminded of the day I severely stretched the duties of fatherhood in a magnificent attempt to become a hero to my son.

It happened in 1968, the year Lolich won three games and hit a home run for the Detroit Tigers in the World Series against St. Louis. One afternoon in the middle of that glorious summer, the famous Mickey Lolich was scheduled to visit my little hometown, Lapeer. All I could think of was Charlie Gehringer and how this was my chance to impress my son the same way my father had impressed me 32 years earlier.

Gehringer was a marvelous second baseman during the Tigers' greatest hours. In the 1930s, when they won two pennants and were always near the top, battling the lousy Yankees for pride and glory, not for money and the chance to make a TV commercial. Players didn't have agents in those days, owners weren't bribed with

tax money to move their teams to a new city overnight, and life was much sweeter for the fans.

Gehringer played badminton in the winter to keep in shape. In 1936, someone got him to play an exhibition for charity in the Elks Temple in my town. My dad was an Elk. He took me right up to Gehringer and said, "I'd like you to meet my son. He is your greatest fan."

I was 10 years old. Charlie Gehringer smiled and shook my hand and gave me his autograph. I haven't felt so good since. Besides being thrilled at actually touching an old hero, I had also gained a new hero — my dad.

Anyone who could walk up to Charlie Gehringer like that, and get him to speak to a little kid — that was some kind of dad. I was so grateful to him I swore off shoplifting for life, which lasted three weeks.

So 32 years later, when I heard Mickey Lolich was coming to town, I recognized my chance to impress my son with what an important man his dad was. Eddie was the same age I was when Charlie Gehringer and I were buddies. I knew he'd be eager to meet a real live Tiger. I discovered where Lolich would be — right outside my office! — and at what time. I told Eddie to show up and he'd get to shake hands with his favorite pitcher. The kid seemed really excited, and he promised to be there.

But Eddie didn't show up. I met Lolich and figured he probably wondered why I kept looking up and down the street. I even sent friends searching for Eddie, to no avail. I phoned home but he wasn't there. Was that rotten little kid going to spoil my chance to be his hero?

Yes. He strolled into my office two hours after Lolich left. He said he had gotten busy playing baseball and forgotten about meeting Lolich.

I'm sure there was a moral there. Something about it being better to participate than spectate, which is not spit. That way, some day a guy might give autographs, not collect them. But I was in no mood for morals.

"Get in the car," I told Eddie. "I know where Lolich is eating and you are going

to meet him. I am going to be your hero whether you like it or not."

Eddie finally got Lolich's autograph, along with some gracious conversation.

That was in 1968. When next I met Lolich, at that 1980 cocktail party, I was naturally eager to reminisce. I thought Mickey might be interested to learn that Eddie is now 21 and is known as Nerd. He just dropped out of college so he could spend the winter working in a liquor store in Minnesota, a move that explains the change in name. In July, he probably will move to Florida.

Lolich didn't remember ever meeting Eddie or me, which isn't surprising. A big leaguer meets a lot of hero worshippers who are easily forgotten. But Lolich swore he had never even been in Lapeer, which is only 40 miles from his home. He had forgotten our whole town, population 6,000.

I told Lolich I had taken his picture for the Lapeer newspaper and he had cupped his pitching hand so readers couldn't see he was holding a cigaret. I told him that photo was still hanging in my home. He still couldn't remember ever being in Lapeer. It's not easy being a hero.

If Charlie Gehringer can't remember ever playing badminton at the Elks Temple in Port Huron, Mich., population 40,000, I don't want to hear about it.



**GERRY RADER and daughter Beth, when she was age 2. A more recent photo of Beth, now 5, is shown at right.**



## Child helps blind parents with baby

Editor's note: The following article is reprinted from the Sarasota, Fla., Herald Tribune. Gerry (Geraldine) Rader is the daughter of Mable Brown of Cass City. She and her husband, James, were married in August, 1970, having met while attending school in Arkansas. They were living in Louisville, Ky., Rader's home town, until about a year ago, when he was transferred to Jacksonville, Fla., by his employer.

While most little girls her age are playing with dolls, 5-year-old Beth Rader, whose parents are blind, is getting ready to take care of

a real-live baby, her newborn brother, John Christopher.

To prepare the child for the weighty responsibility, Beth is being taught by nurses at St. Luke's Hospital how to take her mother bath, diaper and feed John, who was born Jan. 31.

When John was 4 days old, Beth held him, and when he was 5 days old she gave him a sponge bath. On Wednesday, she gave her 7-day-old brother two sponge baths and changed his diaper.

"Careful, hold his head," whispered obstetrics clinical coordinator Marian Burns.

### Chimney fire extinguished by firemen

Elkland township firemen extinguished a chimney fire Saturday morning at the home of Stanley Derengowski, 4428 Sherman Street.

Fire in the woodburning stove had ignited creosote built up in the chimney.

Firemen disconnected a section of the stovepipe that led to the chimney, which extended to the basement furnace, then used a carbon dioxide extinguisher aimed up the chimney to extinguish the flames.

They were there about a half hour, having received the call at 7 a.m. There was no damage to the home.

### Feb. 29 last day to buy tabs by mail

Michigan Secretary of State Richard Austin reminds all car and motorcycle owners that Feb. 29 is the last day to purchase 1980 license plate tabs by mail.

More than 860,000 tabs have been sold by mail already, 18 percent ahead of last year's pace; however, sales at Secretary of State branch offices is down, which likely means the last-minute rush will be worse than ever, Austin said.

New license plate tabs have to be on commercial vehicles, pickup trucks and trailers by March 1; on cars and motorcycles by April 1.

Greenleaf Township

# MEETING

**FRIDAY, FEB. 22**

At Town Hall  
8 O'Clock

Revenue Sharing Discussion

**Clare Brown**  
Clerk

## Russell funeral Thursday

George Franklin Russell, 87, of Gagelton died Monday at Provincial House after a long illness.

He was born July 9, 1892, in Elmwood township, the son of Albert and Minnie (Prestage) Russell.

He married Bessie Burton in 1925 in Gagelton. Mrs. Russell died in August, 1945.

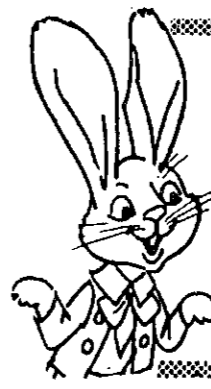
Russell was a life member of Tyler Lodge F&AM No. 317 of Cass City, a member of the Gagelton United Methodist church, and a past member of the Grange.

He is survived by one son, Lee A. Russell of Gagelton; one brother, Harry Russell of Owendale; one sister, Mrs. Clara Sharrock of Washington, Mich.; four nieces and one nephew. One brother, Earl, preceded him in death.

A Masonic memorial service was to have been conducted Wednesday evening at 8 under the auspices of Tyler Lodge F&AM.

Funeral services will be conducted Thursday at 1 p.m. from Little's Funeral Home, Cass City, with Rev. Gilson M. Miller of the Deford United Methodist church officiating.

Burial was in Elmwood cemetery.



## Rabbit Tracks

By John Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help)

Intellectually I know that the best interest of everyone would be served if D.B. Cooper were caught or found dead in the woods. Cooper is the first airplane hijacker. He's never been found and most of the money is still missing.

I feel that way intellectually. Sentimentally I keep hoping that he got away with it. You know what I mean? Of course you do. What I'm saying is in this grey, dismal world you can't help but feel happy for someone who beat the system. All of us know too many losers already.

Ah! Progress. The Chronicle was going to run its commercial printing press around the clock over the week end to catch up on orders.

With that production the plan was to be slightly ahead of pressing deadlines. What happened was that the night shift never got started because a part broke on the press and less work than usual was completed Saturday and Sunday.

Ah! Progress. The idea Wednesday was that I was to teach students how to prepare a news release for publication. Fifteen minutes after I started dropping pearls of wisdom two of the students in the front row were fast asleep. I couldn't be too critical... I can remember how it was when I was a student in a boring class.

Ah! Progress. Dan Osen of Shabbona agreed to cut the tree in the Haire yard. He spent an hour or so in the tree with ropes and saw and then left with the tree standing. I suspect he'll be back. The ropes are still on the tree and have been for about a week.

John and Jeff Maharg attended the Olympics at Lake Placid. According to the grapevine John says that the transportation crunch was greatly exaggerated. We had little trouble getting where we wanted to go and the big transportation jams didn't affect more than 10 percent of the people, he says.

Although the businessmen are reported to be disappointed with results so far, Maharg said that he couldn't figure why. Prices are sky high, he claims.

## Long distance service jammed

Difficulty in making long-distance telephone calls from Cass City Friday and Saturday was due to problems with facilities in Saginaw, according to Clyde Weir, local switching office supervisor for General Telephone.

The problem was with what is called the "call identifier system," in Saginaw, he explained, which identifies from where long-

The weather			
	High	Low	Precip.
Wednesday.....	33	11	0
Thursday.....	40	11	.01
Friday.....	32	7	.03
Saturday.....	30	-6	.10
Sunday.....	34	-6	0
Monday.....	36	6	0
Tuesday.....	45	28	0

(Recorded at Cass City wastewater treatment plant.)  
\*(Snow recorded as melted water - 10 in. snow + 1 in. water.)

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<p><b>James Ballard, M. D.</b> Office at 4530 Weaver Street Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Daily except Thursday afternoon</p>	<p><b>Dr. J. Geissinger</b> CHIROPRACTOR Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. 9:12 a.m. and 2-6 p.m. Sat., 9-12 a.m. 21 N. Almer, Caro, Mi. Across from IGA Store Phone Caro 673-4464</p>
<p><b>DO YOU HAVE A DRINKING PROBLEM? ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS and AL-ANON</b> Every Friday Evening - 8:00 p.m. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Cass City</p>	<p><b>Hoon K. Jeung, M.D.</b> General Surgery 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Daily Saturday - 9 to 12 noon Office Hours by Appointment Phone 872-4611 4672 Hill St. Cass City, Mich. 48726 Home 872-3138</p>
<p><b>Edward Scollon, D.V.M.</b> Veterinarian Call for Appointment for Small Animals Phone 872-2935 4849 N. Seeger St., Cass City</p>	<p><b>Harry Crandell, Jr.</b> D.V.M. Office 4438 South Seeger St. Phone 872-2255</p>
<p><b>Richard A. Hall, D.O.</b> Osteopathic Physician 4672 Hill Street Cass City, Michigan Office 872-4725 Home 872-4762</p>	<p>board voted to cancel this event and then bowed to pressure and reinstated it. The time for study is before, not after a decision is reached.</p> <p>Voting on policy decisions. When it adopted a policy saying that new policy decisions would wait a month before coming to a vote, it shouldn't ignore the rule as it did, just because a policy was suggested that everyone approved of.</p> <p>Although we don't agree with Trustee Thresa Bur-</p>

**Clinton C. House**  
Attorney

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