



Rabbit Tracks

By John Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help)

Cass City does very well in the support of its high school athletic teams, but it doesn't have a corner on school support.

Basketball buffs know that Reed City won the Class C state championship this year, a goal that the Hawks narrowly missed.

One of the players on that team was a foreign exchange student from Sweden. Some folks believe that the school would not have won without him.

In any case he was one of the top players on the squad and he town evidently realized it.

After Reed City made it to the finals the town took up a collection and flew the boy's parents to the United States so that they could see their son perform.

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Usually Channel 19 presents programs that are interesting, educational and fun to watch. But there's room for improvement in one area.

It's the opinion here that a little censorship wouldn't be out of place. At about 8:30 in the evening in a light opera presentation an oath connecting God and the parentage of a dog was used without a single bleep.

Hardly seems necessary at any time and especially not in prime time TV watching hours.

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Arlan Hartwick was interested in the information about "Count Kef," Cass City's most famous race horse, submitted in a letter by Gerald Kercher and wrote Kercher to find out how old a horse can race and be effective. This is part of the information he received from Kercher: "Count Kef is 8 years old, I think. Race horses all have a birthday New Year's Day regardless of when they were foaled. Harness horses often race well into their teens.

"There was a 12 or 13-year-old mare named Sandra Lil who used to give Count Kef fits a couple of years ago in New York. I don't believe he ever beat her. Now she only runs every 2 or 3 weeks. The Count runs almost every week.

"Thoroughbreds generally don't race as long as standardbreds (harness horses). Jumpers or steeple chase horses just hit their prime in their teens."

Hills and Dales General Hospital

PATIENTS LISTED MONDAY, MARCH 24, WERE:

Mrs. Annie Donahue, Mrs. Mary Schacher of Sebewaing;

Loretta Morawski, Andrea Brown and Mrs. Wendell Harmon of Decker;

Jason Ruth of Kinde; Dale McAlpine of Imlay City;

Nicholas Tumblin of Marlette; Celine Ferguson of Bad Axe;

Paul Crumm of Unionville; Mrs. Lee Kilbourn of De-

ford.

The Trade Winds

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CHIMNEY FIRE -- A large part of the wall, plus the brick, had to be removed Sunday at the Larry Hartwick home to enable firemen to get water on the fire smoldering in the wall. The wood burning heater had been connected to the pipe emerging from the wall.

Elkland firemen have varied week

It was a varied week for Elkland township firemen, with runs made to a grass fire, downed power lines (see story elsewhere on Friday's snow storm) and two chimney fires.

The worst fire occurred Sunday morning at the home of Larry J. Hartwick, 7169 Bay City-Forestville Road.

Damage because of the chimney fire was estimated at \$2,000, mostly because the plaster and brick behind the wood burning heater in the living room had to be cut away so firemen could get water on the fire, which had remained within the wall.

The heater was removed by firemen before the cutting started. The unit was connected to a pipe which went through the wall to the chimney which ran up the outside of the wall. The new chimney had only been in use since last fall.

Apparently, creosote inside the chimney started burning and the fire then got inside the wall. Firemen believe it smoldered all night.

Mrs. Hartwick said she was awakened by the smell of smoke, which had gone up the wall to the upstairs bedroom over the living room. The fire was reported to the fire department at 7:39 a.m.

In addition to the wall, there was some smoke damage.

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It was fireman Bob Wischmeyer's chimney which started burning Monday. The fire siren sounded at 6:30 p.m.

The Wischmeyer home is at 4890 Schwegler Road.

Firemen said creosote or other material inside the fireplace chimney ignited, but burned itself out by the time they arrived. Slight smoke damage was reported.

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The first grass fire of the season occurred appropriately enough on the first day of spring.

The Haire Net



1980 marked the 30th year in a row for me at the Michigan High School basketball finals and the thrill is still there.

It's hard to explain. It's much more than good basketball. If that was all there would be no need to leave the easy chair and the college or pro players coming in over the boob tube.

There's an excitement at high school basketball games that you won't find at any other level.

And you have to be there to experience it. You can't savor it over the television screen. It's what draws capacity crowds year after year to the tournament.

There's little resemblance to the game today and the ones played the first years I attended.

The players are more talented. They are bigger and quicker. But that's not what keeps fans coming year after year.

The allure of the games is the same today as it always has been.

The strong loyalties of the fans for their team and the intense excitement generated by them in a close game is what makes it great.

And make no mistake about it, the electricity generated by the fans is as real as the electricity that turns on the house lights.

It's not the large schools that generate the largest, most loyal fan following. It's the smaller communities.

In the finals the biggest and most vocal fan sections were provided by Reed City and Grand Rapids South Christian, two teams in the same class as Cass City and with fan support about the same as that provided here.

You couldn't help being turned on by the ecstatic Reed City players and fans celebrating their one-point victory in the final half second of the game . . . or commiserate with the dejected Ecorse players who lost it.

The years when you watch the teams play and the local team compares favorably make it even more fun. It's not hard to see how Cass City could have been a part of it all this year.

But that's just frosting on the cake. It's a once in a lifetime thrill for most of the kids that play there every year. You see it and sense it and a little rubs off. You return home feeling a little better for having shared it.

That's what it's all about and that's what kept me returning for 30 years and makes me plan now for next year with the same enthusiasm that was with me in the beginning.

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"If It Fitz. . ." Speaking of the ERA. . .

By Jim Fitzgerald

Feedback and other strange stuff . . .

The suggestion that Elaine Donnelly hides behind her maiden name sounded too much like a bumper sticker. I couldn't believe it. Mrs. Donnelly, of Livonia, is national media chairwoman of the committee dedicated to killing the Equal Rights Amendment for women. It wouldn't be unusual for a woman who supports the ERA to continue using her maiden name after marriage, but I would never expect a STOP ERA official to do it, especially on the sneak.

But the accusation was made by several people after they read a letter I reprinted in a recent column. It was signed by S. Chenevert of Lincoln Park. The letter rapped me for writing nasty things about Elaine Donnelly's efforts to stop the ERA and suggested perhaps my problem was that my sister Terrible Jean dropped me on my head when I was a little boy. "Pity it wasn't from higher up," Chenevert wrote.

I had no clue as to the exact identity of Chenevert, and didn't much care. I assumed he or she was simply another ERA opponent who believes I shouldn't ridicule Elaine Donnelly's anti-ERA arguments, which are sometimes pretty silly. But then I received an unsigned postcard saying: "Long ago we were classmates with Elaine Donnelly in a Lincoln Park School. At that time her name was Chenevert."

My interest was piqued, especially after I heard from several other readers who also suggested Donnelly and Chenevert were the same person. Every pique should

be soothed, so I phoned Mrs. Donnelly and asked her if she writes nice letters-to-the-editor about herself and signs her maiden name to them. She said she would never do such a thing.

Mrs. Donnelly said S. Chenevert is her mother. That's nice. I like mothers who defend their children. My dear mother is dead but Terrible Jean is plenty old enough to take her place.

It would be nice if Terrible Jean would write flattering letters-to-the-editor by using her maiden name. As previously reported, she married a Fitzgerald so she wouldn't have to change the name welded to all her sweat socks.

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Speaking of the ERA, I just received a note from fellow columnist Art Buchwald whose name may be familiar to you. He pleaded guilty to sharing my favorite fantasy.

In August of 1979 I wrote a column about Phyllis Schlafly, godmother of the anti-ERA movement, in which I described this fantasy. In it, Mrs. Schlafly is drafted into a homosexual army and assigned to permanent duty in a sexually integrated latrine. She is the sole supporter of 15 children because her husband left her for Joan Baez. Her sergeant is Bella Abzug.

Seven months later, Buchwald wrote a column in which he had an almost identical fantasy. When this blatant plagiarism was called to Buchwald's attention, he sent me the note, which says:

"I acknowledge that you thought you printed the article first about Phyllis

Schlafly, but I had the fantasy before you did. I just didn't get it into type soon enough. Please stay out of my fantasies."

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I was relieved to learn Gerald Ford will not run for president, especially after hearing his speech blasting Jimmy Carter's handling of the hostage crisis in Iran. Ford made it clear that, if he were president today, he would take a much more hard-headed approach to freeing the American captives.

Who can forget how President Ford rescued the crew of the Mayaguez when they were hung up on an island off Cambodia in 1975? If he were running our nation in 1980, Ford would probably get 40 Marines killed by attacking New Jersey two days after the hostages left Iran.

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