



"If It Fitz. . ." 25 years later . . .

By Jim Fitzgerald

Twenty-five years ago today, on April 21, 1955, I proved I was a wild and crazy kind of guy. I eloped. Eloping is not something that can be done alone, so I took a bookkeeper named Pat with me. She kept the books at the newspaper where I sold advertising and wrote columns. I eloped because I thought the experience would furnish good material for a column. Pat went along because I owed our boss money for a company car I had wrecked and he had ordered her not to let me out of her sight.

We went to Angola, Ind., which in those days was something of an elopement capital. You could buy a marriage license, a blood test and a brief ceremony all in one day if you didn't mind standing in lines and sitting around waiting rooms. In case she needed evidence later, my bride took several snapshots of our wedding day. One of these photos shows me reading a newspaper outside the justice of the peace's office.

Many years later, when our daughters saw these pictures, they asked their mother why she married a clod, so insensitive he read a newspaper at his own wedding. Pat said it was part of her job as company book-

keeper.

The romantic aura continued after the wedding. We ate our marriage supper in a bowling alley in Muncie, Ind. Our first night was spent in a travel court containing five tiny units so close together they all used the same screen door. During the remaining three days of the honeymoon, I led an intensive search for a lost barracks in Ft. Knox, Ky.

I had lived in that barracks while learning to be a soldier in 1944. I knew Pat would tingle at the sight of the actual building from where her husband launched the military career that ultimately meant victory for the United States in World War II. She wasn't surprised that I would use our honeymoon to revisit scenes of my Army glory. The reason she wasn't surprised was that she had just recently learned I was so military that, nine years after my honorable discharge, I still wore khaki underwear.

Unfortunately, all barracks look alike and I never did find the right building. Pat suggested it had been moved to Arlington Cemetery as a shrine to the Unawakened Soldier. On the drive home she took a picture of me changing a flat tire in the rain. I said I

should have married a mechanic instead of a bookkeeper. The honeymoon ended as we moved into a one-room apartment which featured a combination sink-stove-refrigerator and a five-year-old daughter named Karen.

Karen is the answer to those finger-counting readers who recall that I have a 10-year-old granddaughter. A guy can do it in 25 years of marriage if he adopts a five-year-old girl soon after the wedding. She came equipped with a bookkeeper. Given the circumstances of the first one, it is obvious that my wife deserves a second honeymoon on our silver anniversary. So there will be no columns here from me for the next two weeks. Try to bear up.

Originally, it was my intention to dig out my khaki underwear and take Pat along the route to Ft. Knox, perhaps skipping the bowling alley in Muncie.

Instead we will go to Toronto for a few days, for the good times and to other towns to see the children who went away too fast, along with the 25 years, and to squeeze the grandchildren who remind us how sweet our life has been.

We'll also stay home alone a lot, and it will be like so many other nights. I'll watch TV while she sews, and she'll ask me what she missed on TV while she was out of the room, and I won't admit I fell asleep and don't know. Instead, I'll tell her Lou Grant hired Mary Richards to take Billie Newman's place on the Los Angeles Tribune.

And once in a while I'll look at her, and touch her, and feel very lucky.

She has been the best bookkeeper a husband could ever want, and if I had known in 1955 what I know today, I would have eloped with her even if I hadn't been a wild and crazy guy who needed some column material.

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RETIREES -- The three retirees from General Cable in 1979 were guests of honor Saturday night at the United Steel Workers Local 6222 annual banquet at Sherwood on the Hill in Gagetown. They were, from left, Leona Heilig, Cass City, 16 years, 9 months with the company; Leo Miller, Cass City, 12 years, and Irene Fisher, Minden City, 11 years, 1 month.

Ubly seniors start graduation activities

Ubly Community High School will be graduating 112 seniors Sunday afternoon, May 25, at 2 p.m. in the high school gymnasium.

Combined baccalaureate and commencement services will be held the same afternoon.

Representatives of the class of 1981 will lead the class of 1980 in the processional. "Pomp and Circumstance," which will be played by the high school band.

Rev. Robert R. von Oeyen of the United Presbyterian church of Ubly will give the invocation and benediction.

Father Julius Spleet of St. John Catholic church of Ubly will deliver the scripture reading.

The Ubly elementary school choir will sing a hymn entitled "Brother James Air" and a traditional graduation song, "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You." The high school band will play a selection, "Highlands from Exodus."

The choir will be under the direction of Kathleen Hass and the band under the direction of Stanley Bauman, acting band director.

The valedictory speech will be delivered by Jean Terbrack, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Terbrack of Minden City. The salutatory speech will be given by Laurey Hanselman, daughter

of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Hanselman of Minden City.

Lisa Kutter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Kutter of Ubly, the class president, will give appreciation remarks.

Hilary Cook, director of guidance, will present scholarship awards. High school Principal Fred Ruthko will award the salutatory and valedictory trophies.

The graduating class will be presented by David L. Landeryou, superintendent of schools, to Bernard Puvawski, president of the Board of Education, who will award diplomas. Clarence Heleski, member of the board, will assist in the awarding of diplomas.

The joint baccalaureate services and commencement exercises program will adjourn with the band playing the recessional, "Emblem of Unity."

The class flower is a white rose and the class colors are mahogany and golden bronze. The class motto is, "We Have Followed, Now We Lead; Either We Will Find a Way or We Will Make One."

"Midnight blue" will be the theme for this year's junior-senior prom, which will be Friday from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. in the school cafeteria.

to the music of the Champagne Band.

The junior-senior banquet will be Thursday, May 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria with some 300 people attending, including senior parents, administration and other staff members.

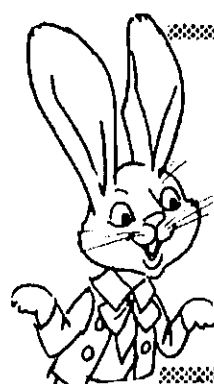
Sunday morning, May 18, the graduating seniors will attend mass at 8:30 a.m. in St. John Catholic church in Ubly. Following the mass, the Confraternity of Christian Mothers will host a breakfast in honor of the seniors, to be served in the parish hall.

Forty-four seniors toured various amusement centers around Orlando and Daytona Beach, Fla., during the period April 4-14. They were accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Russell Messing of Ruth.

The 1979-80 school year will end for all other pupils Wednesday, June 4.

Oldest city

Sault Ste. Marie, at the northeastern corner of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is the oldest city in the midwest. It was established in 1668 by Jesuit missionaries Father Jacques Marquette and Father Claude Dablon.



Rabbit Tracks

By John Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help)

There are 13 yard sales slated for the town-wide garage sale event scheduled May 15-17 under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce. Arrangements have been made to furnish a spot in a downtown parking lot for persons wanting it. It may be that participation has been held down for a reason that most folks wouldn't think about.

At Monday night's village council meeting, Trustee Lynda McIntosh commented that an aunt who holds a sale each spring may not have one on that date. The reason? She wants to shop all the others slated during the 3-day event.

Saturday is the last day to sign up.

And this is the final comment that you'll read here about this Chamber promotional event.

How mild a winter was it? Well, according to Village Superintendent Lou LaPonsie, there were 25 water line freeze ups in 1978-79 and this winter there was one.

Signs of the times? Monday the annual Cass City Lions car raffle-banquet will be held. As of Tuesday noon there were over 20 tickets remaining to be sold. In past years the club sold the 110 tickets without strain. Due to inflation the price is now \$70 a copy and evidently customers are taking a second look. The Lions do give a host of prizes in addition to the car and if the budget can stand it the price is not out of line.

A complaint of all GI's from the midwest that were stationed in Texas during my service years, was that in the Lone Star state there was never any spring. The weather went from cold to hot almost overnight. The last couple of years that's what we've been getting here and it looks like this will be another just like it.

Or am I mistaken and it just seems that way?

It may be that Chuck Klein was right. Chuck who? He's my son-in-law and was a professional pitcher with two turns on the mound in the majors.

He said two years ago that Mark Fidrych was all through pitching because of arm trouble. Since his career ended that way I should have listened but I refused to believe.

I'll still bet a cookie that Fidrych will pitch again in the majors. The Detroit baseball club is not about to pass up the bucks that he'll bring in his first start in another "test."

A raccoon was literally out on a limb Friday in a tree on Pine Street by the Robert Fischer residence.

The animal, which attracted lots of attention, was first spotted early that morning and spent the day on a limb far above the ground.

By the time Fischer left for work at 6 a.m. Saturday, according to his wife, the raccoon was gone.

Teachers ready for bargaining

The Tri-County Bargaining Association (TCBA) has notified 10 Tuscola, Huron and Sanilac county school districts of the appointment of bargaining teams to negotiate teacher contracts for the 1980-81 school year.

Negotiations are scheduled with the Cass City, Owendale-Gagetown, Akron-Fairgrove, Decker-ville, Harbor Beach, Huron Intermediate, Tuscola Intermediate, Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port, North Huron and Unionville-Sebewaing school districts.

The expiration of 10 contracts this summer is the largest number which have occurred in one year since TCBA's origin in 1977.

The TCBA, an affiliate of the Michigan and National Education Associations, is the collective bargaining agent for a majority of the

upper Thumb's teachers and holds bargaining rights in 13 school districts.

TCBA President Leo R. (Bob) Gengler, a teacher at Cass City High School, is optimistic about this year's bargaining. "TCBA is eager to secure fair successor agreements at the earliest possible date," he said. "We are confident that good faith on both sides of the table will result in reasonable contracts which will be good for citizens, teachers and students alike."

The main bargaining issues, he said, will be economic gains "during this period of rapid inflation" and "the need to secure protections in contracts which will properly protect both the educational process and the employment security of educators."

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The Haire Net

The ratings for programs during the current television season were recently announced and your choices and mine differ sharply.

They do if you watch what the majority watch.

Of the top 10, I tune in two, 60 Minutes and M-A-S-H.

And it's not the competition that makes this so. Most times when the other eight shows are aired, the competition is so weak that I turn off the boob tube and curl up with a good, or even not-so-good, book.

This year the top rated mini-series was "Guyana Tragedy," a story about the mass suicides caused by religious fanaticism. The promo for the show kept telling how this show would explore the reason for the tragedy. My reaction is, who cares?

Man, I can get to feeling low enough with the everyday demands of this job without looking for more of the same when I get some time off.

My kind of show is "The Sting," which ranked a dismal seventh during the week it was shown. The program that makes you feel good after it ends. What's wrong with a little escapism?

With this philosophy, why don't I eat up Three's Company, Dallas, Alice, Flo and the remainder of the lightweight comedies that flood the tube?

That's easy. To be enjoyable a show has to be believable. You're living the role with the characters in any good production.

A plastic situation de-

signed for one liners with sex innuendos is not funny and not entertaining.

Ever so often I catch a rerun of "Gunsmoke," that long-running western, and it's easy to see why it lived as long as it did.

Oh, there's action and gun fighting in most episodes and that's okay, too. But there's also a story, a believable story that's really the guts of the show. No wonder it lasted and lasted.

Many times when all of these sit-coms are showing, you can flip the dial and find an old movie. Some of them are really fun and if they get a little tiring you can while away a few enjoyable moments trying to identify a current star with the way he looked 30 years or so ago.

It's sure that more of these TV diversions will be needed next season than were necessary this year. The name of the game is the Nielsen ratings.

When seven of the top 10 shows are sit-coms, you can be sure that all three networks will jump on the band wagon.

We'll be seeing more girls in bikinis and plunging necklines and more almost off-color or off-color one liners than ever before.

It won't be long before viewers get so much of a "good" thing that they tire of it. When they do, another entertainment cycle will start.

Until it does I'm stocking up a pile of good books I've always wanted to read.

I know I'll have plenty of time next season.

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