



Rabbit tracks

By John Haire
(And anyone else he can get to help)

The name is withheld to protect the guilty but there is an area farmer who shot his first buck in 31 years this season. The buck was spotted running through a corn field that the farmer was combining. He shot at the buck and failed to get it. The buck stayed in the corn and our hero zig-zagged through the corn on the combine to get another shot. He got the shot, got the buck and left the field looking like it was being harvested by someone who was half-shot, too.

Window shopping in Birmingham.
One store featured a suit on a turntable. It was cashmere with gold thread. I noticed the price, \$2,500. That suit costs \$2,500 I told my wife. You mean \$250, she corrected me (again). By that time the table had turned so the price appeared again. That's indecent, said Dorothy, and I agreed.

Mrs. Harold Koch is stepping down as correspondent from Gagetown this week. She will be missed. The Gagetown news will also be missing until another writer is secured from the area. Persons interested are invited to give us a call.

What makes small town living worthwhile for many is the neighborliness that exists. That spirit of concern for the guy down the street was exhibited again last Tuesday when kids were caught by the snowstorm. The school was deluged with calls from homeowners in town offering to house the kids. Many more homes were offered than were needed for the 200-odd children that stayed overnight.

Fox promoted

C. Edward Fox has been promoted from lieutenant colonel to colonel in the U.S. Air Force. He and his wife Greta have two children, Lisa and Julie.

Force almost 22 years and is assigned to the Tactical Air Command at Luke Air Force Base, outside Phoenix, Ariz.

The weather

| | High | Low | Precip. |
|-----------|------|-----|---------|
| Wednesday | 28 | 13 | .40 |
| Thursday | 32 | 18 | 0 |
| Friday | 34 | 28 | 0 |
| Saturday | 42 | 30 | 0 |
| Sunday | 55 | 42 | .10 |
| Monday | 56 | 25 | .42 |
| Tuesday | 36 | 23 | trace |

(Recorded at Cass City wastewater treatment plant.)
Snow recorded as melted water — 1" water - 10" snow.

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TOPS IN POPPS — The top salesmen in the Cass City Intermediate School popcorn and salt and pepper shaker sale were, from left, Barry Brown, \$157; Mark Gracey, \$119, and Deb McIntosh, \$115. A total of \$2,300-2,500 was raised, with proceeds being used by the student council for various projects, including a new gym scoreboard, already installed. Top salesmen received cash prizes.

O'Dell protesting tentative valuation

Novesta Township Supervisor Bill O'Dell is refusing to accept the proposed 1981 property valuation figures recommended by the Tuscola County Equalization Department. The recommended figures are an 8 percent increase in valuation of agricultural property over what it was a year ago and 6 percent increase for residential property.

It's time to call a halt to increases in assessments, he said, adding he is tired of taking the heat for such increases, which means increases in property taxes. According to county

Equalization Director Donald Graf, he will be presenting the countywide recommended equalization study for agricultural, residential and timber cutover property, based on study of sales, to the county Board of Commissioners Dec. 23.

The study of commercial and industrial property will be made after that.

Between now and when the board approves the county equalization report in April, on which December, 1981 tax bills will be based, any supervisor can conduct his own study and present the figures to the board. The commissioners must

then decide the valuation of each township.

O'Dell said based on the assessing he has done, the figures recommended by the equalization department "are uncalled for," based on the state of economy and what property is selling for.

He therefore will be arguing before the board in April that the valuations in Novesta should stay at the 1980 level.

Big expense

In September, 1979, farmers paid an average of \$57,000 for a new four-wheel-drive tractor in the 170- to 240-horsepower range.



The **Haire** Net

Sports buffs have been complaining for years about the unfair advantages parochial schools have in competition with public schools.

The advantage is that parochial schools are not restricted by school district boundaries and the student transfer laws that bind public schools. Any student can go from Cass City to Bay City All Saints and play from day one.

Unless the family moves into a district, a player wanting to move from Cass City to Caro, for example, would be required to sit out a semester. The advantage is not as apparent in football as it is in basketball, especially at the Class C and D levels.

In the opening night of high school basketball, a listing in a Detroit paper

showed nine parochial schools playing public schools and winning seven of the games.

Right now it's almost a certainty that Detroit East Catholic will repeat as state champions in Class D.

Year after year All Saints in Bay City has outstanding basketball teams and Kalamazoo and Muskegon Christian annually make a run for the State title in Class C, often winning.

There has been talk about making the parochial schools play their own tournament. That's curing the illness and killing the patient.

True sports fans want to see all the schools competing. But if there are to be divisions by classes based on numbers, perhaps in private schools we look at the wrong numbers.

If East Catholic can draw from a population with a couple of thousand kids, shouldn't they be treated the same way as any school with a couple of thousand in the high school?

If All Saints can pick and choose from all over Bay county, why shouldn't it be classified with Bay City Central?

If a kid can't transfer to Cass City and play right away, the same rule should apply to private schools.

That would eliminate situations such as occurred in Buena Vista a few years ago when sports were abandoned because of money problems and the best players transferred to Saginaw SS Peter & Paul. They played for a year and then transferred back the next season if they still had eligibility remaining.

That made St. Pete's a state powerhouse but it didn't do much for the kids who were forced to the bench when they were in line to be starters.

It didn't do much either for the teams that faced the Saginaw squad using only players that were part of the school district.

Don't hold your breath waiting for a change. The situation has been cursed and discussed for at least 25 years without action.

The next 25 years you can look for more of the same.



"If It Fitz..."

Predicting endings easy

By Jim Fitzgerald

The Reagan-Carter contest provided further confirmation of what everyone already knew: Most people don't watch election returns on TV after 7 on election night because TV forecasters have already revealed who will win. There's no suspense to capture an audience.

"Election night is the only night where we work all out to kill our audience," a TV executive moaned.

Phooey. If it's a fact that people won't watch a TV program if they know how it's going to end, TV works all out to kill its audience every night.

After watching the first few minutes of any TV show supposedly containing suspense, any sap can accurately predict the ending. I quit making those predictions many years ago, because there was no challenge. To correctly forecast the final scene of a police show, for instance, is nothing to brag about, and I don't believe in doing something correctly if I can't brag about it.

To increase the challenge, I now predict how TV mysteries will end before they start. I have made such predictions with complete accuracy as long as a week before a show is aired. This gives me the opportunity to judge the validity of the theory that West Coast residents won't bother voting if, before they go to the polls, they have already been told who won the election.

It is not hard to predict endings before seeing beginnings. I do it by learning the names of the members of the cast. If I know who is playing the leading roles in a mystery, I know who will finally be unmasked as the chief crook. Barring romantic entanglements, the chief crook will be the "special guest star."

A good example of this phenomenon was provided recently when CBS brought back William Conrad, the

rotund private eye, to star in "The Return of Frank Cannon." I read in TV Guide that Ed Nelson and Arthur Hill would be guest stars on this show, but it didn't say which of them would be special guest star. This was sloppy reporting and made my predicting more difficult.

I decided to bet on Hill. He used to be a lawyer on his own TV show, while Nelson has played nothing more distinguished than a supporting role on "Peyton Place," although this part did include a meaningful relationship with the mother of the girl who subsequently married and divorced Frank Sinatra, the noted Chrysler salesman.

It seemed reasonable to assume that an actor of Hill's stature wouldn't appear on the Cannon show unless he could be special guest star. The resident star, William Conrad, was obviously the hero, because of his past experience, so the special guest star had to play either the chief villain or Conrad's love interest. Conrad is too rotund to make love on TV without rolling off camera; therefore Hill had to be the top crook in "The Return of Frank Cannon."

I announced this to my family, and I was correct, of course. For the lucky residents of my living room there was no more suspense in the Cannon show than there was in the TV reports of the Reagan-Carter race

election night. But we watched Cannon, and we didn't watch the election reports.

All of which indicates TV moguls are wrong to blame only the lack of suspense for the poor ratings of election-return programs. If suspense determined the size of the TV audience, everyone would still be listening to the radio, where William Conrad once starred in a cowboy show and the suspense revolved around the question of whether the audience would ever discover that Matt Dillon was rotund.

TV shows can get along without suspense if they have trash — sex, excitement, screeching brakes and so on. An election-return program that opens by announcing the winners should get trashy quickly or viewers will switch to a titillating movie.

Hiring special guest stars would be a good way for election shows to add trash. If Walter Cronkite hires Raquel Welch before the polls close, I predict the West Coast will go out and vote, barring romantic entanglements.

Rose Society

The Thumb Rose Society will meet Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m. at the Uby Community Bank.

It will be a potluck dinner so those attending should bring a dish to pass and table setting.

Non-members are invited.

John Wayne Chapelo

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