



"If It Fitz. . ." Down the road a piece

By Jim Fitzgerald

The radio woke them up Monday morning with the mournful voice of Detroit Lions Coach Monte Clark explaining why his quarterback, Gary Danielson, sat down unassisted at a crucial moment and the Lions lost by one point.

"Down the road a piece," the husband mumbled into his pillow.

"I want a loofah for Christmas," the wife mumbled into her pillow.

The husband explained his mumbled first: "The coach said that while Danielson was fading back to pass, he tripped over where second base used to be when the game was baseball instead of football. There is a great boogie-woogie song that warns against such accidents. It is called 'Down the Road a Piece.'"

"If second base was gone, how could he fall over it?" "Danielson was a victim of modern technology. He

was playing on an artificial surface. When the baseball bases and their dirt sliding areas are removed for football, the resulting holes must be covered with patches of carpet which are zipped into place. The quarterback probably tripped on a zipper seam. Life was much simpler when I was a boy and second base was a garbage can lid."

"What does that have to do with a boogie-woogie song?"

"Sometime around 1940, Will Bradley and Ray McKinley recorded 'Down the Road a Piece.' I still have the record. The lyrics tell about two fellows walking down a rural road. At one point, McKinley warns, 'Watch where you're stepping, Man, that ain't second base.'"

"Are you trying to tell me there were zipper seams in rural roads in 1940?" she asked.

"No, I'm telling you a quarterback should be smart enough to know why elephants are always assigned to the end of the parade, otherwise he might fade back on a piece of road where cows have deposited."

"Gary Danielson is handsome," the wife said. "I saw his picture in the newspaper, in a fur store advertisement. He was modeling a raccoon jacket."

"I saw that picture. The jacket had a zipper, and Danielson was sitting down. He wasn't sitting on a garbage can lid, which is the moral of my story. What is a loofah?"

"I read about three suburban women who recently spent a week at LaCosta, the famous California health spa," she explained. "It costs \$200 a day to stay

there, and the loofah is \$12 extra. A loofah is when an attendant covers your entire body with salt and then washes it off with thick sponges. That's where the name comes from. Loofah is a sponge plant."

"Why would anyone want to be covered with salt?"

"It must be nutritional. One of the women said she went to La Costa to learn about nutrition for her children's sake."

"Do you suppose salt ingested through the pores makes it easier for a person to stand in line for two hours at a K mart bargain counter?"

"Maybe not. Another reason the women went to La Costa was to lose weight so they'd look better at holiday parties."

"If loofahs take off weight, people should be careful not to overdo," the husband said. "If that woman salts her children too much, they might melt away to nothing, which would cause embarrassing gaps the next time the family has its portrait taken at the bus station."

"Does that mean you won't give me a loofah for Christmas?"

"No, it simply means that before I spend all that time salting you, I want to be sure you'll like your loofah when you get it. Once salt is sponged off a body, it's darn hard to get it back in the shaker."

"Oh Lord, I feel another moral coming."

"Right. The moral is that mothers who salt their children should beware of bad luck. A cautious mother, after loofahing her child, should throw the kid back over her left shoulder without tripping over second base."



WOMAN OF THE YEAR -- Andrea Hofmeister (right) of Gagetown is congratulated by Michigan Farm Bureau Young Farmer Chairman L.C. Scramlin for being selected as "Outstanding Young Farm Woman" for 1981 at the Michigan Farm Bureau convention. Runner-up Dana Kirk is in the center. (Farm Bureau photo)

Selected by Farm Bureau

Hofmeister young farm woman of '81

Andrea Hofmeister of Hobart Road, Gagetown, was named the 1981 Outstanding Young Farm Woman by the Michigan Farm Bureau last Wednesday at its annual meeting in Kalamazoo.

She was selected from a field of 18 candidates, all of whom had been named their respective county Farm Bureau organizations' outstanding county young farm woman.

Selection of the state winner was based on the application and three short essays submitted as part of the county and then state competition and at Kalamazoo, a 5-10 minute speech and interview before two agricultural experts and a 5-10 minute speech with no notes as one of six finalists before an audience.

Before the agricultural experts, Mrs. Hofmeister spoke about improving relations between farmers and consumers. She had a choice of that and one other topic. Before the audience, the six finalists all had to speak about how Farm Bureau could benefit from women in leadership positions.

Mrs. Hofmeister, 31, and her husband, Ken, farm 350 acres of wheat, navy beans and corn.

They have been farming full-time only four years. Before then, Hofmeister, who has a master's degree in agricultural engineering, was an engineer for Ford Tractor in Troy.

Mrs. Hofmeister has a bachelor's degree in music education and a master's degree in voice performance, and taught music in the Bloomfield Hills elementary grades for three years.

"Our jobs were challenging and lucrative," Mrs. Hofmeister said of their pre-farm life. "But in both cases an essential ingredient was missing. The opportunity to begin a task and see it through to conclusion is a rare thing."

"As family farmers, we plant the seeds, cultivate and harvest the results of our labor. We bear our children and guide them to maturity by allowing them to work and learn at our side. Farming is the last great refuge for those who seek occupational satisfaction and family unity."

The Hofmeisters share equally in the farming operation, she said. "Whether we are charging through the sunny weather or sloshing through the mud, we pull together."

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"I am trying to learn what I need to know to carry the load by myself in times of emergency," she added. "This requires patience and time because I don't have a farming background."

As Outstanding Young Farm Woman, she will be attending several Farm Bureau and women's leadership conferences, at which she may speak.

An opportunity she is especially looking forward to is writing of a column each month in the Michigan Farm Bureau monthly newspaper. The topics will be of her own choosing.

Mrs. Hofmeister doesn't

know yet whether she will be asked to speak to any non-farm groups.

She and her husband will be attending the Farm Bureau legislative seminar in April in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Hofmeister is vice-president of the Tuscola County Farm Bureau Women, secretary of the North Elmwood Farm Bureau community group, chairman of the county FB community group committee and a member of the county FB new membership committee.

She and her husband have two children, Nicholas, 2½, and Mary Jo, 1.

The Haire Net



Way back, when I was a student at Michigan State, an economics professor asked his class how many would be satisfied with an income of \$5,000 a year for life.

About half raised their hands and I was one of them. Don't infer that the students that didn't raise their hands were smarter than all of us that did. They may have been. But none kept their hands by their side because they could see into the future.

They were the confident ones. The would-be world beaters who today would say, hey, I wouldn't take \$50,000 a year for the rest of my life. In their own minds the sky is the limit. At 18, the world was their oyster.

You never heard much about inflation. Smart money men would tell you that it was cheaper to rent a house than to buy. Houses depreciated. Can you imagine? For years a Coke was a nickel. So was any other soft drink.

Today I couldn't tell you what a Coke sells for. . . I haven't bought one for a couple of months.

It's hard to imagine what a Coke will cost 10 years from today or what a better-than-average income will be.

You know something? I believe that any worker with 40 years ahead of him in the job market would be foolish if he settled today on \$50,000 a year.

Ten years down the road \$50,000 might just look modest to good. Fifteen years later it could be average.

Let's assume you make \$15,000 a year now. At the end of 10 years if inflation is 10 percent yearly and your salary follows, that \$15,000 becomes \$33,590. Your \$50,000 still looks good. But five years later that 10 percent inflation brings that original \$15,000 to \$51,367 yearly and for the next 25 years it's all down hill.

The trouble with this is that it is hard to visualize

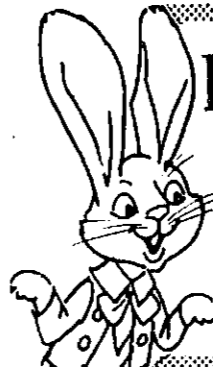
having trouble making ends meet with \$50,000 to work with.

That money is related to today's economy, today's prices, not the inflated prices down the road.

There are plenty of you out there who won't buy this and I can hear you saying, 50 thou a year? I sure would like to try it.

But there are fewer of you than there were in the 1950's. Regardless of the rhetoric that comes out of Washington, I'm convinced that there will be fewer and fewer still in the years ahead.

It's easier to imagine Coke at a buck a bottle now than it was for me, when I was 18, to figure that some day it would sell for a dime.



Rabbit tracks

By John Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help)

He walked into the office. If he carried a senior citizen's card you wouldn't have been surprised. Nothing special about him. A farmer? A factory worker? Retired? He could have been any of these.

What made him special was his mission at the Chronicle. He wanted to make a donation to the Cass City Jaycees and he came to us to find out where to go.

After talking about it, the Chronicle took his money to pass on and he left. He left a little Christmas glow behind.

The holiday publishing schedule is upon us again. For the next two weeks the paper will be printed on Tuesdays instead of Wednesdays. Accordingly deadlines are moved up one day. Your usual good cooperation is always appreciated.

It was great to see Shirley Geiger at the basketball game at Caro Friday. It was only last July that the doctors were fearful that she would never be able to walk again.

Incidentally, the Caro gym was comfortably full for the Cass City-Caro clash. Full of interested adults, not students. A guessimate is that there were fewer than 100 pupils from Cass City there.

It was a fair exchange as far as Lynn Pavlichek was concerned.

The Owendale area resident was the winner Saturday of \$150 in Lucky Bucks in the drawing sponsored by the Cass City Retail Committee.

A year ago, she made a 15-piece nativity scene which the Owendale 75th Anniversary Committee raffled off to raise funds for its celebration last summer.

The winner of the nativity scene was from Cass City.

Tuscola sends 26 to Farm Bureau meeting

Twenty-six Tuscola County Farm Bureau members, 19 of them voting delegates, attended the 1980 Michigan Farm Bureau Convention at the Kalamazoo Convention Center Tuesday through Friday of last week. Tuscola county earned three gold stars for membership, community groups and political action, two silver stars for development and a certificate of merit for commodity.

Tuscola County Farm Bureau was also recognized as top agri-political fund contributor in the state.

Jack Laurie of Dodge Road, Cass City, who is Farm Bureau vice-president, served as chairman of the policy development committee.

In opening the convention, Laurie said that delegates will approach their job of adopting policies with the realization that a new political environment was created in the 1980 elections.

"Major philosophies of this environment are a renewed belief in the market system, sound fiscal policies, decreased dependency on government and a reduction of government regulation," he said. "It is in this political climate that much new legislation will be developed. Of foremost importance to agriculture is a new farm program, marketing and bargaining legislation,

and taxation.

"Our organization has an obligation and opportunity to be influential in shaping these legislative programs. For this reason, we approach our policy development process solemnly, knowing of our responsibility to agriculture and the rural community."

Adopted resolutions dealing with state issues become the policies of the Michigan Farm Bureau and will guide the organization in its activities during the coming year. Those dealing with national and international issues will be forwarded to the American Farm Bureau Federation for consideration at the national annual meeting in New Orleans in January.

It was noted at this convention that farmer productivity continues to rise and farmers now produce enough food to feed himself and 64 other people, an all-time high and all this on less land today than ever before.

Michigan leads the nation in the production of five crops and ranks fifth or higher in 24 products. Over 20 percent of Michigan agricultural production is exported, the nation's only hope to reverse the unfavorable balance of trade.

The fellow who loses his money but keeps his friends is a wonder.

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