

The gang that rummaged a mile for a Hummel

This current bitter weather reminds me that a special anniversary date is almost at hand. Just one year ago in March, a house sale took place in Jackson. That's not the sale of a house, rather the disposal of stuff in the house — our house.

We had moved in December to a Farmington apartment, which could in no way hold some 25 years' accumulations.

Normally, it would have been a garage sale, except there was too much stuff to cart into the garage, and besides it was way too cold.

A FRIEND SUGGESTED the scheme.

As long as you eventually are going to have the house cleaned before selling it, just leave things where they are. So what if people track through? he said.

A sound idea, I agreed, except there was one major problem. It was Jackson's worst winter in history: three feet of snow surrounded the house and choked the driveway.

Would anyone venture out on a blustery Saturday?

As we quickly learned on that fateful day, a bargain fancier will brave flood, famine or raging winds to get to a sale that may offer some tantalizing trinket.

The only other person of this ilk, which immediately came to my mind, is the woman with the standing weekly hair appointment. She'll rise from her deathbed so as not to miss her regular session at the beauty shop.



Tom Riordan
Executive Editor

We had advertised in the Jackson Citizen Patriot's classified pages that our sale was to run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ON THE SALE DAY, by 7 a.m. cars started to pull into the driveway, which we had plowed out the day before for \$28. At first these early birds were content to remain in their vehicles.

We chose to ignore them as we attempted to bolster ourselves with some corn flakes. But when son Bernie slipped out the garage door with some keepsakes to put in the trunk of his car, an advance guard burst past him into the kitchen.

"Where are the antique dolls?" a woman demanded.

It was obvious who she was, although we had never met. She had to be the one who had been badgering our former neighbors since the ad first appeared, asking if they knew anything about the dolls.

Getting up from my meager breakfast, I showed her the dolls. She was deeply disappointed. She

thought they might be Dresdens. She immediately left.

But a half-dozen other folks arrived to take her place. They dived into various rooms, shouting questions as to where the mulcher mower was, the twin bed, the freezer.

OUR PLAN HAD BEEN to keep a careful record of each sale. That idea vanished quickly as people grabbed things, demanding prices while waving dollar bills in our faces.

Humorous happenings were coming as fast as the greenbacks, much as if all this were a television situation comedy.

The mulcher mower accidentally was sold three times. First there was a fellow who met my price, but didn't have his cash handy and said he'd be back.

A few minutes later our son Bernie appeared in the basement from his post in the garage and was asked by another person about the mower. He promptly sold it. I happened by and said, sorry, it's already promised.

But after 30 minutes passed and the first guy didn't return and a third person offered cash, the mower deal was closed. At the time it all seemed quite businesslike — for a garage house sale.

ANOTHER MEMORY of that event was of the middle-aged fellow accompanied by what I thought was his daughter. She was buying everything in sight, apparently setting up a new household.

The fellow made a solo trip to the basement and we fell into conversation.

"I'm 57 and have worked at Goodyear 27 years," he volunteered. "I got divorced eight years ago and

I haven't had anything but girl friends since then, and I've never been happier."

Apparently this was his latest. At that, she appeared, holding an ancient slab of plywood that was chipped and scarred.

"How much?" she asked.

"It's yours for nothing," I replied, "You've been such a good customer today."

One guy kept asking for prices on items. Each time we quoted him one, he'd counter with an offer half as large. At the offset, this game drew a laugh. But after a while, when he had purchased nothing, I found the line boring.

BUT THE PRIZE that day had to go to the woman, about 50, who stood no more than 5'2" and weighed about 105. She bought the giant upright freezer. She realized it was cash and carry. After paying, the woman said she'd get her neighbor, who had a truck, and her two sons to help with the moving.

A while later she showed up. The neighbor was smaller than my customer. The sons were about 10 and 12. I knew then she would never get that appliance out the basement door, up the incline to the drive and into the truck. Remember, there were drifts of snow almost to her waist in places.

She ordered the upright freezer placed on its side, and out the door the hardy band went, mightily pushing forward, an inch at a time.

I weakened and donned jacket to add a little beef on the pushing end. But I was still sure it couldn't happen. Her impassioned plea, "Come on, we can make it," apparently provided the real force. A miracle happened — we made it.

Larsen announces, promises big gains

Mel Larsen made it official. The former three-term state representative from Oxford will seek the chairmanship of the Michigan Republican Party at the Feb. 17 state convention in Detroit.

In a Birmingham press conference Wednesday, the 42-year-old former football coach said he would seek the post being vacated after 10 years by William McLaughlin of Northville.

He pledged "substantial gains" for the GOP in the 1980 legislative races.

In recent years, despite Gov. William G. Milliken's three victories, the party has seen its majorities in both houses turn into minorities and its congressional holdings in Michigan dwindle to six seats.

Larsen acknowledged he would have to win without the open endorsement of Milliken, who has taken a hands-off posture this year. But at the same time, Larsen took issue with any anti-Milliken conservative "who says he can bring the Republicans back to power by ig-

norizing Gov. Milliken."

So far, Larsen, who Nov. 7 was trounced in his effort to upset Secretary of State Richard Austin, is unopposed for the party chairmanship. It's

expected, however, that conservatives will field a candidate.

Outgoing chairman McLaughlin has been tapped by Milliken to be director of the Michigan Department of Commerce.



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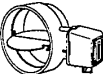
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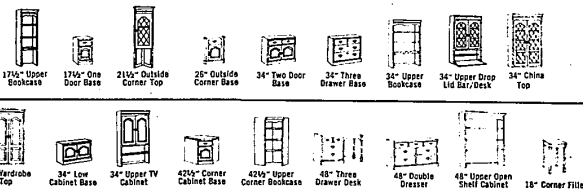
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