Move over Mother Goose, Dr. Seuss is on the loose

By CRAIG PIECHURA

Tell people Theodor S. Geisel was in town to sign books and lead a pa-rade and nobody knows who you're

talking about.
But mention the name Dr. Seuss
and that's a star-bellied Sneetch of a
different color.
Geisel, 75, isn't really a doctor because he dropped out of school right
in the middle of a doctoral thesis on
the derivation of the long 'e' from
Gothic to German.

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Luckily, for more than four decades of readers, Geisel thought the transportation of the second of the second

He moved to Random House the following year and has since sold 80 million books in this country alone.

Geisel used his middle name,
Seuss, in the beginning, because he

still had hopes of writing the Great American Novel and wanted to save his real name for that lofty pursuit which never got off the ground. He says he got his doctorate "the hard way — honorarily." That honor came in 1956 from Dartmouth College.

But academic acclaim doesn't mean as much to Dr. Seuss as the continued readership of youngsters. Twenty-two years after the Gat in the Hat emerged to encourage kids to create havoc in the the house when mom stepped out, Dr. Seuss is still a drawing card. He kept about a thousand youngsters enthralled Monday night signing autographs at Hudson's Northland store in Southfield.

The following day he appeared at Birmingham Bockstore with almost no notice and "the kids came flocking in," said 501 Kurtzman, store owner.

son to hype Hudson's, Geisel says his Detroit area following is unusually

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er the invitation quite an

rom kids and adults.

He gets two kinds of mail from youngsters. Most kids re-draw the Dr. Seuss characters and send him illustrated letters. Geisel tacks those up on the wall of his studio for inspiration.

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Letters from Catholic school students, he says, contain fewer spelling and grammar errors than those sent by public school students.
If don't know, maybe the nuns make them re-write it three times until it's right," Geisel says.
In the other kind of letter, "instead of asking, kids demand (free) books."

Enterprising fans send him boxes of green eggs and ham (the title of one of his most popular books) and jars of gooey slime called "Oob-leck."

leck."
With the mail system as it is, those green eggs are often greener by the time they arrive in La Jolia, Calif. And the jar of slime breaks sometimes in transit and oozes out of the package.
Such items end up in the trash but Geisel says most correspondence is answered with "warm form letters."

ters."

The form letters can't be too conversational or he hears from the kid's parents the next year, explaning that they just happen to be visiting La Jolla this summer and were wondering if he'd put them up for the weekend.

THE MAIL from adults often brings demands as well. First, there's the letters from feminists who want Dr. Seuss to feareminists who want Dr. Seess to lea-ture more female characters and animals in his books. They especial-ly object to a line in his 1937 book "And to Think That I Saw It on Mul-berry Street."

At one point, the book says "Even Jane could think of that." That line rankles many wom-en.

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The protest must be an organized campaign. Gelsel says, because while the women's letters come from all over the country, they all misspell the same two words. He did change a few things in that early book, removing reference to the Chinese as "Chinamen" and redrawing the Chinese without pig-tails. But, he says, "Even Jane is going to continue to think like that. "It's not my editorial comment but a boy a boy in the book making a comment about Jane," says Geisel. He's also received pressure to include black characters in his stories. "I wonder about the publishers of

Mark Twain's books," Geisel asks rhetorically. "Do they get the same kind of requests over references to Ruck's friend 'Nigger Jim?" Dr. Seuss worries about drawing

Huck's friend 'Nigger Jim?'

Dr. Seuss worries about drawing
more blacks, he says, because his
cartoons are caricatures which exaggerate human features and that
might be misinterpreted as an ethnic slur.

Besides, he says, most of his characters aren't human anyway and aninals aren't racially identified.

The majority of letters from
adults, says Gelsel, ask him to write
stories to teach students a particular point.

Geisel avoids books where "education" is the prime motivation.
Kids, he says, would rather have
fun.

"About 90 percent of my (adult)
mail is people wanting me to write
stories where kids are just itching to
go the hospital to get their tonsils
out.

"I'VE HAD about 10 requests to tackle the problem of bed-wetting," Geisel confides.

While admitting most of his sto-ries have a moral — such as "A per-cance a person, no matter how ries have a moral — such as "A per-son's a person, no matter how small" — Geisel says "The Lorax' is the only thing I wrote where I purposely set out to prove a point." The idea of the Lorax, published in 1971, was that we need to protect our environment from short-sighted

plunderers, predators and profi-

plunderers, predators and profi-tieers.

Or, as Dr. Seuss put it, the Once-ler was chopping down all the Truf-falt trees to mass produce Thneeds, and in the process, driving out all the Swomee-Swans. Progress creat-ed starving among the Brown Bar-ba-losts and all this turnoil ulti-mately was "glumping the pond where the fumming-fish hummed."

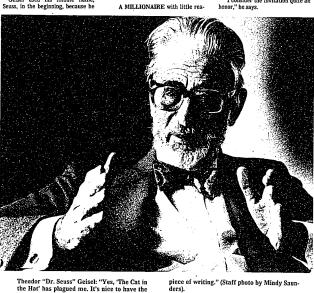
Thanks to the lowly Lorax, our Truffala tree seed survives and there's hope.

The Lorax sold millions less cop-ies than "The Cat in the Hat" but is one of Geisel's favorites, while The Cat is one of his least favorites.

The reason for that assessment: He was forced to write The Cat in the Hat using an approved list which limited him to 150 words, Geisel says. At first he balked, thinking it impossible to write to a list and ar-guing that children should be chal-lenged.

He reconsidered when he discovered he could rhyme "cat" with "hat," two words on the Dewey Word List.

"That's how genius gets its start," quips Geisel. "But, yes ("The Cat in the Hat") has plagued me. It's nice to have the income from it but I still consider it a forced piece of writ-ing."



Theodor "Dr. Seuss" Geisel: "Yes, "The Cat in the Hat' has plagued me. It's nice to have the income from it, but I still consider it a forced

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

A PENNY SAVED is a penny earned (even A PENNY SAVED is a penny carmed (even if most of it eventually winds up going toward thristmas presents). Outgoing Farmington Mayor Richard Tupper must be wracking up those pennies for the city. He made his exit from the mayor's chair last week by taking his mayor's anneplate and replacing it with an old "Councilinan" ammeplate he brought from home. "This should save the city a little money." Tupper was reported to have said as he gave up the mayor's chair for a seat as a councilman. William (Wild Bill) Hartsock takes over the top seat on the all-male council.

THE SAME PEOPLE who brought you the Traindeer for Thanskgiving, now give you even more traindeer for the holiday season. Before you can say on Dodge, on Chevy, on GM, there's your SEMTA Traindeer ready to wheel you away to a downtown Detroit shopping spree. Beginning Dec. 8 and continuing each Saturday until Christmas, there will be two trains to Detroit every day, traveling to the city in the morning and returning in the mid-alternoon. Commuters will be able to travel from the Renaissance Center train station to business district locations absent a Detroit Department of Transportation mini-bus. Train tickets are \$5.50 round for pior adults. Children under 6 who don't occupy a seat ride free. Tickets can be purchased on the 12th floor of Train train of the Seaton of the Communication of the Children under 6 who don't occupy a seat ride free. Tickets can be purchased on the 12th floor of the Children under 6 who don't occupy a seat ride free. Tickets and Galland Malls, at the Royal Oaks of Forghound Station, 202 Sherman and by phone and mail. Checks should be made payable to SEMTA and sent to \$60 Woodward, Detroit \$226. Master Charge and VSA customers order by calling 256-8700. Charge card orders must reach a minimum of \$10. Customers have their choice of train but riders must return on the same train they used to come into the city. (Gee, In never really believed in \$10. Customers have their choice or train but r must return on the same train they used to cor into the city. (Gee, IA never really believed in SEMTAClaus before.)

FEELING LUCK Y? See if luck will be a lady for you on Nov. 30 when the Parmington Area Jaycees in cooperation with the Parmington Hills Department of Parks and Rec sponsor a Millionaire's Party at 7 m., in Mercy Center on 11 Mile and Middlebelt. The Las Vegas style casino operation will raise funds for the Senior Adult Home Chore Program. The Jaycees will purchase tools for the program to use in maintaining senjors' homes and yards. Tickets are \$6 at the door.

CONGRATULATIONS to Duane H.
Temple son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Temple of
Famrington Hills who is a recruiter aide to the
recruiting station in Farmington. Pvt. Temple, a

1979 graduate of Harrison High School, joined the Army this June. After a month in sunny Farmington, he will be transferred to his permanent station in Fort Ord, Calif.

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY to start talking about an auction, according to the folks at Channel 56. They're looking for volunteers for the auction scheduled to begin March 21. Volunteer auction scheduled to begin March 21. Volunteer will visit in their communities and ask for donations of auctionable items. Channel 56 would like the merchanidse to be brand-new and worth \$30 or more. Volunteers are able to attend a special go-getter kick off event and will receive a kit of helpful materials to make them official auction go-getters. Volunteers can participate in the auction by helpful out with behind-the scenes activities. Early volunteers get the pick of the best positions. To get your 1980 calendar off to a fast start call 873-7200.

IT MAY not be too early to talk about next year's auction (maybe) but evidently Farmington thinks its far too early to think about Christmas before Thanksyim, It isn't getting to look a lot like an early Christmas along Grand River. IA figures that's one of the more refreshing things about the place. Angles is already tinseled-out from stolling to the shopping malls bedecked with everso-early holiday colors.

A NUMBER OF AREA residents will be honored by the Southeastern Chapter, American Red Cross for their services. Gloria Bird, Paul Schultz, Bruce Carr, Rebecca Reeve, Edgar Jordon, Sally Callahan, John Washburn, William Boger and Roger Riley are the special persons from Farmington who were awarded. Michael Barrett of Farmington Hills was recognized too. The group gave pheresis donations. These take two or more hours. The procedures are used to collect plasma, platelets or white cells. The remaining blood components, including the red cells are returned to the donor. Patients undergoing therapy for cancer, leukemia or aplastic anemia are benefitted. For you generous souls, Angles gives a salute.

TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS

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RON CHERESKIN IS AN EXPERT ON NATURAL PHENOMENA-Just look how experity he's util-ized natural fabrics in the phenomenally hand-some group of sportswear separates. Four very versatile parts team or solo with equal aplomb, give a whole new meaning to the concept of going au naturel. Shown, double breasted, shawl collared blazer

with shoulder detailing. Of melton wool, \$148. Fully lined, showl collared vest, of cotton vel-our, \$45. Wool flannel slacks with double front

pleats, new straight leg, \$65. And narrow collared, flap pocketed silk shirt, \$72. Woodward Shops for Men. Northland.

<u>hudson's</u>

