

# Carter coattails bad news for local candidates

For as long as politicians have been throwing their hats into the ring, one fact has remained true — what really counts is how the grass roots voters feel.

National and local election politics bounce off one another like a basketball off of a backboard. For many local Democratic office-seekers, the ball is hitting with a resounding thud.

Just ask someone like Barbara Goldman. Ms. Goldman, a political activist of many years standing, is making her first run for an elected office.

The Birmingham resident has bitten off a big chunk by challenging Republican incumbent Oakland County Commissioner Lillian Moffitt in the 15th District.

That district includes parts of Farmington Hills and Southfield.

Although Ms. Goldman is a Democrat in a traditionally Republican district, she is optimistic about her chances. Her own political experience, along with the aid of other 15th District Democrats who would like to capture the area, are points in her favor, she says.

But Ms. Goldman has one very big problem. Like all Democrats around the country this year, she has a running mate — President Jimmy Carter.

Much of her campaign revolves around going door-to-door, standing on porches in the hot summer sun and listening to 15th District voters.

**THE ONE CONSTANT**, the one question that remains in many voters' minds is Jimmy Carter.

Traditionally, local candidates hope to get a ride

on the coattails of the national candidate. Those coattails are particularly important in an uphill race like the one involving Ms. Goldman.

But for thousands of local candidates around the country, those coattails could very well drag them down to defeat.

Political parties, and their accompanying philosophies, are built from the ground up. Real party strength comes from the legions of locally elected officials sitting on city councils, county commissions and in state legislatures.

Before this week's Democratic National Convention, much ado was made by a group of U.S. Congressmen about keeping open the convention. In truth they were fighting for their political lives.

Many fear losing their seats in the national legis-

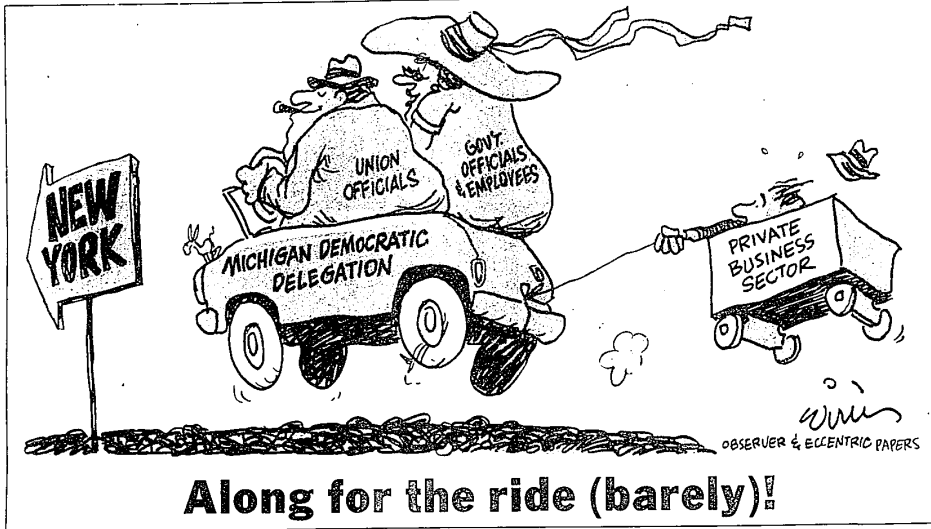
lature because Jimmy Carter is at the head of the ticket. But for the Democratic Party such potential losses are only the tip of the iceberg.

The real threat is for candidates like Ms. Goldman who must hope and pray that voters remember how to split their tickets.

This year, more than ever, Democrats and independents must examine their local choices closely. Jimmy Carter isn't the only Democrat running for office.

**CANDIDATES** like Barbara Goldman are asking to be rated on their qualifications alone. It's only fair and wise that such candidates win or lose on their own merits, not on those of Jimmy Carter.

STEVE BARNABY



Along for the ride (barely)!

## George Fomin: A hero to remember

Every so often in this journalism craft, you meet an unforgettable character — one about whom you're more than glad to tell the world.

They are the kind of person you wish the rest of the world would emulate and to whom more attention should be paid and credit given.

George Fomin is that kind of guy.

You'll never read about him in the history books and he'll probably never be listed in Who's Who in America.

But he's a very special person who had a deep effect on the usually hard-shelled journalists in this office.

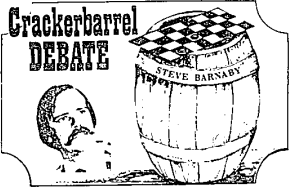
You might have read Fomin's story in the Observer & Eccentric last week. He was the vacationing Farmington Hills resident, a Ford white collar worker, who saved a child from bleeding to death.

While other vacationers at the Montana resort helplessly looked on in shocked disbelief, Fomin saved a life.

Walking down the street, or through the long, dreary corridors of his corporate giant employer, Fomin only would be another Joe Average.

But on July 8, this quiet, unassuming middle class suburbanite stood above the crowd.

He got involved. At first it was just another story, a good one to be



sure, but nevertheless just another story for the Aug. 7 edition.

"LET'S GET A picture of this guy," I shouted over my shoulder after reading the fine story done by reporter Louise Okrutsky.

It's an accepted fact in journalism that a story is always better if it has a photograph to go along with it.

"He'll be in about 5:30," I was told a few minutes later. Annoyed, I looked up at the clock. That was

pushing the deadline, but the picture was important.

Exactly at 5:30 p.m., Fomin walked in to the office. The next hour was a touching experience for all of us. Graphically, he shared with us this unbelievable experience.

He told of his fears, his uncertainties, the tears and finally the joy he felt when he found out the boy would live.

For an hour, the staff stood mesmerized by this man's tale of heroism. We realized he was telling his story as a therapeutic release, not because he thought he was a hero.

Persons like George Fomin don't look upon themselves as heroes. Initially, Fomin was reluctant to tell us his story. It was only through the prodding of his justifiably proud wife that he relented.

Oh yes, there was another reason. Several times during his visit to our office, he mentioned his children, how he had read articles about such injuries and how he wanted to be prepared if something like that happened to one of them.

**WHEN HE LEFT**, there were a few moments of silence. Then, we looked at one another and smiled. Nothing had to be said.

We all just had met a hero. It doesn't happen often.

## Do-gooder protests draw a smile

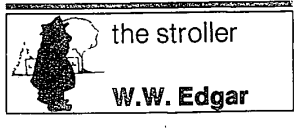
Although they are not assembled in conventions like our political parties, the Do-Gooders across the land seem to have joined forces to protest what they call the brutality in the world of sports.

The campaign was given new impetus several weeks ago when Al Coven, the Tigers right-fielder, raced out to the mound to attack Ed Farmer of the Chicago White Sox for what he claimed was a deliberate attempt to hit him on the head.

Then followed the Tommy Hearn's fight in the Joe Louis Arena when the Do-Gooders bemoaned the fact that two human beings should be paid huge sums of money for trying to do bodily harm to each other.

From one who has followed the sports trail for more than half a century these protests draw a smile. It is not that The Stroller condones what baseball followers call the "bean ball," such as the one Tiger hurler Milt Wilcox threw at George Brett of Kansas City the other evening. The "bean ball" has no place in baseball.

But every pitcher worth his salt — even in the minor leagues — has what is called a "duster" in his repertoire of pitches. It is used to get a batter to step back from crowding the plate and is looked



upon as a perfectly good pitch. There are times, though, when the pitcher lacks control and the pitch goes astray. Then there is cause for trouble.

In fact, the use of the "duster" became so popular that the baseball moguls approved the use of helmets with extra protection over the ear on the side of the head facing the pitcher. So, there is little cause to claim brutality. No pitcher would deliberately try to maim a rival batter. At least that's The Stroller's opinion.

It is the same in the boxing world, or what was originally called the manly art of self defense. True, boxers try to render each other defenseless. But there has been no attempt to maim the other permanently. Some fighters have died in the ring following absorption of a punch. But no fighter tried to kill the other.

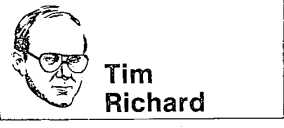
If a fellow — or Do-Gooder — looks for it, he can always find what he calls brutality. On the football gridirons it is common to see one player clip another by throwing his body across the rivals' legs from the rear. It is one of the most dangerous of all plays. But it happens regularly and the penalty is only the loss of 15 yards.

In hockey it is common to see the players drop their sticks and engage in a bit of fistfists, much to the delight of the spectators. If you recall the Red Wings once boasted the best one-punch man in hockey. He was Ebbie Goodfellow who played on defense and still is rated one of the all-time greats of the ice game.

The Stroller often recalls the evening he met Tom Jenkins, an old time wrestler, on the Army campus at West Point. Old Tom was coaching the soldier wrestlers and it was noticed that he had only one eye.

"How did you lose your eye?" The Stroller asked and he never will forget the answer he received.

Frank Gotch, the champion gouged it out of me. And when one gent gouges the eye out of another gent, the first gent ain't no gent."



## A modest proposal to the Democrats

Memo to Libby Maynard, chairwoman, Michigan Democratic Party.

Dear Libby: Your party is making a big thing of balancing the kinds of people in the national delegation.

The information packet the party sent us shows that of 141 delegates, there are 71 male and 70 female. You're proud of that balance.

The packet also noted there are 28 blacks, three Hispanics and one "native American." You're proud of the ethnic cross-section the Michigan Democratic Party is sending to New York City.

You have reason to be proud. At your pre-convention caucus in Farmington Hills, you told the crew that whenever they have to replace a delegate, it should be with someone of the same sex and ethnic characteristics.

**BUT THERE IS** some serious imbalance in the Michigan Democratic delegation.

Look at it this way: Three-quarters of us work out here work for outfits that try to make a profit. Free enterprise.

Some of us are in one-worker firms like family farms or bait shops. Some work for the auto giants in everything from top management to factory sweeping. Others labor for small companies such as tool and die shops, restaurants, builders, plumbing contractors.

My suburban neighborhood is loaded with manufacturers' reps and salesmen.

I don't see that three-quarters represented well in the Michigan delegation.

As near as I can figure, only 22 of the 141 delegates (one in six) work for a sole proprietorship, partnership or corporation — five secretaries, five production workers, four executives, two real estate persons, two lobbyists, a consultant, a bank employee, a dairy farmer and an accountant.

**THE BIGGEST CHUNK** of delegates make their full-time livings from government — 35 percent. There are 16 teachers, five legislative staffers, six local government employees, 21 elected officials and one tax collector. That adds up to 49.

There are lots of union leaders, who live off members' dues — 33 of them, 20 per cent, mostly from the UAW.

There are 14 lawyers, 10 percent. They're hard to figure. Some are independent professionals. But there's at least one union attorney. I notice young assistant city attorneys from Birmingham and Westland, which are governments. A few may be business attorneys.

Eleven percent hold no job — housewives, students, unemployed, retirees, a welfare recipient — 16 persons.

I have nothing against any of them. Despite Tisch's fulminations about bureaucrats, some of Michigan's finest are government employees. I admire teachers and even learned a few things from them. I was once a student. I'm married to a housewife. My parents are retirees and healthy, thank you.

**NEVERTHELESS**, I have a modest proposal to make.

Whenever you elect a person who works for a tax-supported agency, a union, a non-profit agency or who doesn't have a job, how about balancing the ticket with someone who works for a firm that is trying to hack a profit in today's economy?

It wouldn't matter to me if they were salaried or hourly-rated — just as long as some veterans of the market economy were included.

Thank you for your kind consideration.