

These personals could be yours, Bunkie

You say you're feeling bad because your husband, wife or partner doesn't believe in Christmas, New Year's, birthdays, anniversaries, Valentine's Day, Sweetest Day, Mother's Day or Father's Day.

You say you're in the pits because your spouse or lover thinks every holiday is a commercial rip-off and your best friend got a mink coat just because it was a Tuesday and you never even got a Christmas or New Year's card or a birthday cake.

Well, Bunkie, keep your chin up. Hold your head up high. Look on the bright side. Maybe your husband, wife or lover but a personal ad in a newspaper and surprised you with best wishes on a special day. Here are just a few gleaned during the year which could apply to you:

• "After two years of wedded bliss, I still love you. So put down the newspaper and hug me."

• "To the girl who is my wife, to the girl who is my life, you're one in a million. I love you, signed 'Guess who?'"

• "Beefie Baby, meow, meow, meow. Luvya, luvya, luvya. You're the Kat's meow. Kimba."

• "Bozo, I know there's no place for me on your bulletin board. But I still have a place in your puzzle. Boo Boo Face."

• "Breaker 1-9 Caveman. Un-gah-wah. That means I love you. That's a big 10-4. Belly Dancer."
• "Bunkie. From now on through senior citizen apartments. Love ya, Little Boo."

• "Roses are red, violets are blue. This isn't a Vette, but it's the best I could do. Happy birthday. Your lady."

• "Cher, To the sweetest honey that the bees never made. Merry Christmas. I wub ya, Chuckie."

• "Because I love you so much, I will never touch my checkbook again. I promise. But it's Valentine's Day and where in the devil are my roses? Your little Indian, forever."
• "Cookie Monster — Can't wait to go to a cornfield and get kissed behind the ears. Happy New Year, Cookie."

• "I love you so much and to show you I care, look down by the washer and a surprise will be there. You'll have clean socks for Christmas. I'll get detergent burn. Still slaving."



Jackie Klein

tergent burn. Still slaving."

• "Instead of flowers, I will get you another roll of attic insulation. Happy Sweetest Day, Love practical cheapskate."

• "Happy New Year. You score a goal in my heart. But let's have one on the ice. I love you, Jerk."

• "Happy anniversary to the guy I became engaged to 23 years ago today, wherever you are. Still waiting."

• "Happy birthday to the guy who swept me off my feet and handed me the broom."

• "To Big Chief — I'll put my stock in whatever bonds us together. You've got great assets and your liabilities ain't bad either. Merry Christmas, Hiawatha."

• "After one dog, three cats, two birds, and three brats, you're still a wonderful mom. Happy Mother's Day."

• "John my beloved, this is my way of telling the world I love you now and throughout eternity. Your Bruce."

• "To my Jelly Bean, May we have as much fun the rest of our lives as we did on our honeymoon. Will you marry me? Love, Nerd."

• "Happy Father's Day, goof-off. You still haven't used the lawn mower I bought you last Christmas or the tool kit I blew my money on the year before. Don't expect another glamorous gift, Your loving wife."

Are you feeling better now, Bunkie? Even though you didn't get a card or a gift, do you recognize yourself in any of these goodies? If you did, you've probably read your last personal ad. But happy holidays, anyway.



For elderly, con game is no 'Mission Impossible'

How it's portrayed:

A rich businessman, who grew wealthy peddling drugs, goes one step too far. He throws an old woman out of her home of 50 years, a home where she openly helped young street toughs grow up decently.

The elderly lady goes to one of her former boys for help. Enter the hero. A handsome young man who makes his money through scams, conning insurance companies or someone who can afford it out of money they really don't need. The old lady wants her home back; the con artist vows to get it for her.

The plot is set. Through a series of misadventures, schemes, pitfalls and pratfalls, the crooked businessman ends up confessing to every crime of the past half-century, including the Lindbergh kidnapping.

The old lady's home is saved, and the hero goes back to his everyday occupation of ripping off insurance companies.

How it happens:

Two of the characters remain basically the same. There's the old woman, struggling to survive on a fixed social security income. Her home and meager savings are about all she has.

And there's the con artist. The details of the scheme vary, but they usually have something to do



C.J. Risak

with phony investments.

That's where the similarity ends. There is no crooked businessman trying to throw the old lady out of her home.

That "honor" belongs to the con artist. Because it's the con artist who steals what little savings the old woman has and leaves her with nothing.

THE CONCEPTION the public has of con artists: Robert Redford and Paul Newman in "The Sting," or Robert Wagner and Tony Curtis in similar television roles.

Remember "Mission: Impossible"? Each story was a con game played by government agents. At the end, the IM (Impossible Mission) team would stand there smirking at the foiled villain.

That's just not the way it is. The thought that con artists are fun-loving trick-

sters who just rip off insurance companies is wrong. It's TV hype, intended to make the con man "folk hero" look good. Stealing from a huge, lifeless corporation can't really hurt anyone.

Con artists prey on the helpless, those who can hurt them the least. They aren't really clever; they lie a lot and talk fast to confuse the victim, but the scheme they use shows only slight variety. They do share one common trait — greed. Without hesitation, a con artist will unmercifully steal anything of value.

Ask 78-year-old Myrtle McQueen. Mrs. McQueen, a Westland resident, tried to withdraw all the money from her savings account — \$2,800. Alert bank management prevented her from doing so, and it was later discovered she had been the victim of a "pigeon drop."

THE PIGEON DROP is a get-rich-quick scheme involving an investment of money by the victim. It happens like this:

A stranger approaches the victim and says a large sum of money has been discovered in a bag. After a lengthy conversation, the victim is talked into investing money, supposedly to pay for attorney fees. Once the lawyer "clears" the found money, the victim will get a bigger cut.

The con is convincing. The victim is driven from one bank to another, emptying account after ac-

count to meet the con artist's price.

Any number of contingencies can be handled. Does the victim want to talk to the lawyer? Simple. An associate is telephoned and he poses as the attorney handling the transaction.

Money isn't the only commodity the thieves handle. Mrs. McQueen was saved from surrendering her savings, but she did give the con artists a 50-year-old wedding ring valued at \$600.

There have been five cases in the Westland area in the past five months and others throughout the area. The victims are all elderly women, the play is generally the same. Westland Center has twice been the scene of the crime.

The victims are usually too embarrassed to promptly report the crime. They don't want anyone to know.

Westland Police Sgt. Gerald Triltsch expects an increase of such scams this month. There usually is around the holidays. Prevention advice is simple. It's the same as that given to us from the time we're children: Don't trust strangers.

There's nothing romantic, funny or cute about con artists. They'd steal a tip left on a table for a waitress, a blind man's cup of money or candy from a baby.

Or even a 50-year-old wedding ring from an old, trusting woman.

Put pistols down, please

Effective gun control doesn't hamper hobbyist

Thinking about gun control takes me back to my first personal brush with the gun lobby.

It was 10 years ago and I was part of a grass roots effort to elect an anti-war candidate to a U.S. Congressional district in Oakland County.

It was my premier close political involvement and I was learning new things every day, things you don't learn in journalism classes.

Personally, my mission was to get good press for my candidate, and by and large, we did.

Therefore I wasn't too well prepared when the phone rang one day and the National Rifle Association asked for my candidate's position on gun control.

I didn't have to answer the questions, she did. And we never got an endorsement from the gun people.

Perhaps the most violent thing about our campaign was a statement that the candidate, a registered nurse, made about wanting to "take a scalpel to Congress" and trim the fat in the defense budget.

That got a lot of media attention. But gun control? Of course we were for gun control.

EFFECTIVE gun control doesn't restrict the legitimate hunter or the gun hobbyist. It restricts criminals and unstable people who couldn't be violent without that cold metal weapon.

Gun control reminds me of my childhood. My mother had her own campaign against guns. She wouldn't buy them.

We had all kinds of toys, but my brother, Gene, never received a gun. And by extension, she never bought them or encouraged them for her grandchildren or any youngsters for whom she bought gifts.

"I lost too much from guns and war," she'd say. And no matter how prominent the display of warlike toys, my mother always bought a book, a puzzle, art supplies or building equipment.

It's difficult for me to imagine anyone having a love affair with guns.

But for those who like to target shoot or hunt, well, that's fine.

One friend puts it this way: "There ought to be a rule that you have to eat anything you shoot."

Think about that one awhile. Hunters and target shooters don't usually abuse their possession of guns. But many criminals don't dare walk into a bank or store or break into someone's home without a loaded, lethal gun for reassurance.

AND COULD Jean Harris, respected school administrator have killed her wandering doctor-lover if she had to plunge a knife into his flesh or bludgeon him to death?

And what about the others? So many of them in just a couple of decades — Lee Harvey Oswald, Sirhan Sirhan, James Earl Ray, David Chapman — the assassins of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King and John Lennon.

There's a dimension removed when you use a gun to kill. It can truly be a very unfeeling, calculated act, or an impulsive deed that is too late to take back in a second.

It's too bad first lady-to-be Nancy Reagan hinges her safety on keeping a gun nearby when Ronnie



Shirlee Iden

isn't. I'd say she ought to put that pistol down and banish it.

Other societies, notably the English, have more stringent gun control than we do, and it works.

Oh, I know the Second Amendment to the Constitution gives us the right to bear arms. But the wilderness is tamed, the Indians don't shoot at the settlers anymore, and guns were really for survival when the Bill of Rights was written.

We have to prove we know how to drive safely before getting a driver's license. We ought to have to prove a lot more to own a gun.

Sometimes they call guns equalizers, I call them destroyers that put unwarranted power in the hands of persons who regularly abuse it.