

# Woman's story of hope is lesson for all of us

Every once in a while we all need to be reminded that behind the headlines, those stories of hope and tragedy, are human beings.

Without this reminder, the words become hollow, the stories shallow and devoid of purpose.

Today, I'm going to tell you a story of hope. Or rather, Judith Matheny is going to tell us her story of triumph over tragedy.

Now, I've never met this fine lady. Never heard of her before this week when she penned a note in response to a recent column. Her story, written with the skill of a Menckel, will soften even the most stonehearted among us.

By honoring us with her story, she has made all of us a little wiser — and much humbler.

Forty years old, Mrs. Matheny is a diabetic who, in response to my recent column on the diabetes skate-a-thon, eloquently tells of her battle.

"There were many times when I felt it was useless to have dreams, or get married and try to have

children, or plan for the future when there was no future for the diabetic.

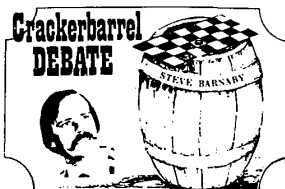
"But that little flicker of hope always came through and I struggled on until the next published statistics on my disease would scare the hell out of me all over again," she said.

While lauding the effort to raise funds to fight the disease by telling of its dreaded effects, she also tells the flip side — her story of struggle and hope.

AND HER STORY dovetails with the stories of millions of other diabetics in the world.

"Families and friends of the diabetic must understand that we have special needs, yes, but we aren't freaks and we wish to live as normally as possible with the same opportunities and considerations as anyone else.

"Employers and insurance companies read the statistics and the diabetic becomes 'a great risk.' It's happened to me several times and it just isn't fair," she says.



Despite the discrimination and "feeling of living on borrowed time," Mrs. Matheny has looked ahead, married, and now is the proud mother of one son.

"He knows his mother has special problems, but we don't dwell on them. Still, he has seen the facts

and statistics, too, and I know he secretly wonders if his mother can beat the odds and live past tomorrow."

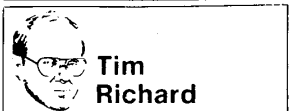
A diabetic since youth, Mrs. Matheny already has lived five years past her life expectancy, she says.

Her request — tell others to keep up the good fight and not give up hope.

"Because of research, many diabetics like myself are living longer. We are on healthy diets and medication to control the disease. We exercise and generally take better care of ourselves than most non-diabetics.

"MANY OF US are daring to continue out education, to get married and have children — and to dream of the future."

As I said, all of us either know someone who has diabetes or we have it ourselves. For those of you who had experienced neither, meet Judith Matheny — a courageous woman who, indeed, is a cut above the pack.



**Tim Richard**

## Young needs to meet with his neighbors

To his credit, Coleman Young has grown in breadth of vision in his eight years as mayor of Detroit.

Like many politicians, he started out looking after his own turf, then his own city. The tactic is to show your constituents you're at war with the rest of the world and looking out for No. 1.

Dan Murphy used to be like that as Oakland County executive. He saw the light in about 1977 and developed a regional view. He still looks out for Oakland County, by golly, but the antagonistic attitude toward Detroit is gone.

Ed McNamara used to be like that as mayor of Livonia. He shook it quite a while ago and rose to leadership of the regional transit authority and a host of other positions. One reason McNamara is a top contender for Wayne County executive in 1982 is that he can talk with Young.

IN HIS INAUGURAL for a third term, Mayor Young stuck it to "President Pruneface" harder than ever, but he was polite to his southeastern Michigan neighbors.

He promised to "stretch out our hand to our suburban neighbors (and) to the rest of the state" in new alliances.

He asked for "a relationship between equals, not a relationship between a man and a boy, or a master and a slave."

Except for the racial remark, that sentence could have come out of Dan Murphy's 1977 speech.

Young then told newsmen he would seek out meetings later this month with mayors from southern Oakland and western Wayne counties to discuss common problems — budgets, services, diminishing aid from Washington and Lansing.

HERE I MUST correct the man. There is no need to call a special meeting for such negotiations.

The mechanism is already in place. It is the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments, now chaired by Dan Murphy.

Detroit has been a member of SEMCOG since it was formed a dozen years ago. Young has been an official delegate to SEMCOG since he was elected mayor eight years ago.

Young has been an official delegate, but not an actual one. To my knowledge, he has never attended a SEMCOG General Assembly or Executive Committee meeting. He has always sent one of his appointees.

SEMCOG, interestingly, held a forum late in 1981 on how to manage local government in times of tax loss. It's a problem of interest to Young. I covered part of the forum myself. I sent a reporter to cover another part of it. Neither of us saw Young.

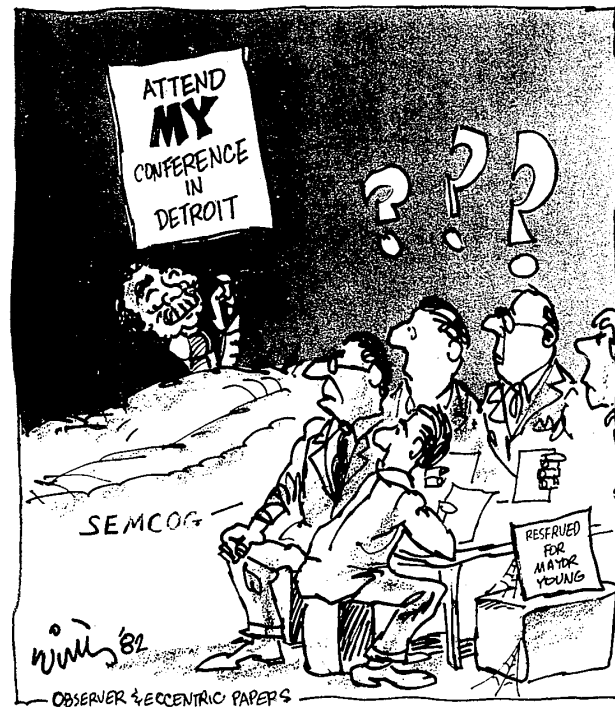
THERE IS no need for Young to try to reinvent the wheel while the rest of us are aboard the SEMCOG van, miles down the road, looking at Young's empty seat.

There are two excellent reasons Young should attend SEMCOG meetings in person.

One is that SEMCOG is subject to Michigan's Open Meetings Act. No smoke-filled room stuff.

The other is that the tone of SEMCOG meetings is always civil. Delegates have their differences and argue their home-town interests, but they respect the other town's point of view and look for the good of the whole.

To his credit, Young has abandoned the attitude that Detroit is the center of the empire and that suburbs are political and economic colonies. He is broadening his point of view. Let's hear a little applause.



## Sportswriter ethics

### Reporter or cheerleader?

Jimmy Campbell, general manager of the Detroit Tigers, reopened an old question recently when he denied a Grand Rapids sportswriter the privilege of riding on the team's chartered planes during the coming season and the favor of reserving his hotel rooms on road trips. The reason was that the writer printed what was supposed to be classified team information. The question:

When a writer is given these privileges, is he obligated to write only favorable comment on the team's activities?

It is common knowledge that the professional teams — Tigers, Lions, Pistons and others — consider the writers members of the traveling squad and make all arrangements for travel.

These privileges are not a gratuity. Their newspapers are billed for them — and most papers demand to be billed — as a means of preventing the writer from becoming "a homer."

CAMPBELL BECAME irked when this supposedly classified information on ratings of the players was printed in the Grand Rapids Press. He immediately demanded to know where the writer obtained the "secret papers."

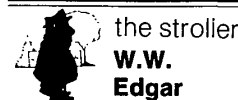
When this was refused, Campbell took the action that has caused all sorts of comment on the sports horizon.

It is well known that the pro teams have been doing this for years, but this is one of the few times the argument ever has come out in the open.

As he read of Campbell's action, The Stroller recalled two occasions in his sportswriting career when he was subjected to criticism because he wrote stories that didn't suit the management of the teams.

SOME YEARS ago, on a southern training trip with the Tigers, he drew manager Mickey Cochrane's wrath with a story about releasing some of the players at squad-cutting time.

Mickey didn't deny him any privileges but



wouldn't speak to him for several weeks. That was supposed to be punishment.

On another occasion, he was traveling with the University of Detroit football team and was in Pittsburgh for a Friday night game with Duquesne University. The game was played on a dimly-lit field, and the Detroit team met defeat.

Because it was a night game, The Stroller had to write his story in the press box to meet a late deadline. When he returned to the team's hotel, there was all sorts of discussion of the treatment the team got, and these came close to being alibis.

The lads on the afternoon papers the next day wrote of the team's feelings. They drew the praise of players and coaches.

WHEN THE Stroller walked into the coach's office on the following Monday, the late Gus Dorais looked at him with a jaundiced eye and asked, "What was wrong with you Friday night, that you would write like you did?"

The Stroller listened, then answered, "Gus, I am not an alumnus of the school. Neither do I work for you. I was sent to the game by the newspaper to report what I saw, and that's what I did."

Gus rose from his chair, stuck out his hand, and we became the best of friends for the rest of his life.

Jimmy Campbell would have done just as well if he had taken the writer's work as a "scoop" and went looking for the person who had "leaked" the information.



**Nick Sharkey**

## Giving blood: necessary but scary

I'm afraid to give blood.

I know there's no good reason for someone to be afraid of donating blood, but I still have the feeling that there's only so much of this good red stuff flowing inside of me. If I let some of it out, there will be that much less for me.

During blood drives at work, I always manage to be "out of the office." I find numerous creative excuses to avoid blood drives at the local school.

I know my feelings are not well-reasoned. But I still have them. My conscience was bothered when I read last week that the American Red Cross Bloodmobile was taking donations at the Farmington Hills Holiday Inn. The article said that some brave souls gave blood every eight weeks.

I HAD TO put in a call to Noreen Petersen of the American Red Cross. I wanted her to soothe my conscience.

She laughed when I told her about my problem. "I know what you are talking about," she said. "I have three sons who pride themselves on being macho. Yet two of them won't give blood."

Ms. Petersen addressed my fear. She said the body has between 11 and 12 pints of blood. While donating blood, less than a pint is given up.

The plasma (fluid) part of that pint is returned in a day, and the red cells are replaced in six weeks according to Ms. Petersen.

In addition, everyone who donates blood is given a physical examination to make sure they will not endanger their health.

I ALSO LEARNED much more about giving blood. This is National Blood Donor's Month. Bloodmobiles are now traveling throughout this area accepting donations.

For instance, on Monday in addition to the Bloodmobile in Farmington Hills, others could be found at an insurance company in Southfield and at Rochester High School.

The best way to find a convenient time to give blood is to call a regional Red Cross office. Nearby offices are in Livonia, Bloomfield Hills and Oak Park.

Blood giving has changed in the past few years. A few years ago, an individual gave so many pints of blood and they were put into a "bank." If that person or someone in his family needed the blood, then the pints could be taken out of that "bank."

But blood is available today to anyone who needs it. No fees are paid for replacement blood (although a small administrative fee is required).

The blood supply is adequate in this area this week. However, projections are that by the middle of next week, the supply may be low. Because of the temporary shutdown of many auto plants, industrial blood drives were cancelled.

The greatest need is for O-positive blood. This is the most common type of blood, so it is required by the most persons.

SO MUCH FOR some of the facts about local blood donations. As I put it bluntly to Noreen Petersen of the American Red Cross, what's in it for me?

"Mostly people tell me they feel better about themselves after giving," she said. "You know that you will be helping someone to live who may have had a serious accident and may need it during an operation."

She compared blood donating to pioneer days when people could only survive by helping each other. "Everyone pitched in if that meant saving a life or building a well."

For me, that's a strong argument.

For those less idealistic, there are free orange juice and cookies. Also, as already mentioned, donors receive a free physical exam.

Now I am convinced I will give up a pint of the good red stuff next time I have a chance. I tell Ms. Petersen she's a good salesperson.