

Behind every great woman is a man adjusting

"You know Steve, you really ought to write a story about us guys married to people like my wife."

The request caught me off guard. There I was, in for a night of keeping an eye on the ballot box, talk of who voted for whom and why — the kind of stuff on which political news hounds thrive.

I looked at this guy, trying to decide whether he was serious. The smirk — one part smile, one part frustration — told me he meant it.

This husband, like thousands of others throughout the nation, is learning to cope with what initially is an ego-crunching experience. His wife is an elected public official — a politician.

Just 10 years ago this was a rarity. A woman being elected mayor was big news — sometimes big enough to hit the national wires. Now it's becoming

commonplace, especially in the suburbs of America.

The numbers vary, but more and more city councils and school boards — the grass-roots elective bodies — are taking on women. It's a healthy sign and long-overdue adjustment in the equity of our democratic republic.

And while all of us who have fought for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment mourn its demise, we take heart that a strong grass-roots movement has developed for women in local politics.

BUT BACK to the fellas who are having to make the adjustment.

These were the boys raised on the heroics of Napoleon on his white stallion, Robert E. Lee on his

gray, Lincoln making the grandest speech of them all, FDR cajoling us out of our Depression-era malaise and male astronauts conquering the unknown.

Suddenly, these guys see themselves tucked away in the corner, introduced at public functions as the mayor's and school board trustee's husband, out for an evening away from the kids.

Not even their own turf is safe from this new wave.

"I was at this seminar at my own hospital when this guy got up and said, 'Oh, yeah, you're so-and-so's husband. She's on the school board.'"

This all reminds me of an old movie, "Kisses for My President," starring Polly Bergen and Fred MacMurray. The plot revolves around the plight of

the guy married to the first woman president.

Nobody in official Washington or the foreign diplomatic corps knows what to do with the poor fellow, and he ends up getting into all sorts of trouble.

A funny movie, to be sure, and probably a thread of truth is woven throughout. Unfortunately, it ends up with a crushing blow to equality — Madame President gets pregnant and calls it quits for the sake of the family.

HOPEFULLY our attitudes have changed in the 20 years since that movie was produced.

We could help it along by reassuring "the husbands" that they play a valuable role in the whole scheme of things.

After all, behind every great woman . . .

'Paraplegic season' has begun

TWO University of Michigan physicians warn youths and their parents that a split second of unwise summer skylarking can result in a lifetime of permanent paralysis.

Drs. James R. Mackenzie, chief of emergency services at the University of Michigan Hospitals, and Frederick M. Maynard, director of the acute spinal cord injury program at the hospital, said that early June marks the beginning of what can be called the "paraplegic season."

"Within the past two weeks, seven young patients from throughout Michigan have entered our hospital in Ann Arbor for treatment of major paralysis resulting from spinal cord injuries," Mackenzie said.

"In early June, as soon as high school graduation festivities begin, spinal cord injuries begin to soar. The rate of injury in late June is more than double what it was in May."

DR. MAYNARD said most victims of spinal cord injury are aged 16-20. Many are under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of the injury.

A majority of the incidents result from auto accidents in which seat belts were not worn and from mishaps during water sports, he added.

"Advances in medical treatment have increased the number of survivors of spinal cord injuries," Maynard said. "But this, in turn, has forced them and society to incur considerable expenses."

"It's costly not just to insurance companies, but also to the victims and their families who must redesign their homes, add accessories to their cars and purchase very expensive mechanical and electrical wheelchairs."

THEY OFFERED these safety rules to prevent spinal cord injuries:

- Always wear a seat belt in an automobile.
- If you drink or are "high," don't drive or dive.
- Never dive in an unknown body of water or in one subject to changes in depth before checking out the depth all around the diving area.
- Don't dive deep in unknown waters. Make your first dive a belly flop.

Present at a U-M news conference with Mackenzie and Maynard was Dennis Lovely, a former Ann Arbor carpenter who suffered a quadriplegic injury in July 1981.

Lovely said that after drinking a few beers he dove off a platform into a lake. He missed the deep-water dropoff and landed head-first in shallow water, breaking his neck. Now he has no movement or feeling below his chest and wrists and is confined to an electric wheelchair.

Although he feels the best prevention is such common sense advice as "Be familiar with the area you will be swimming in, and wade in before you dive," Lovely thinks more publicity about the subject can help reduce spinal cord injuries.

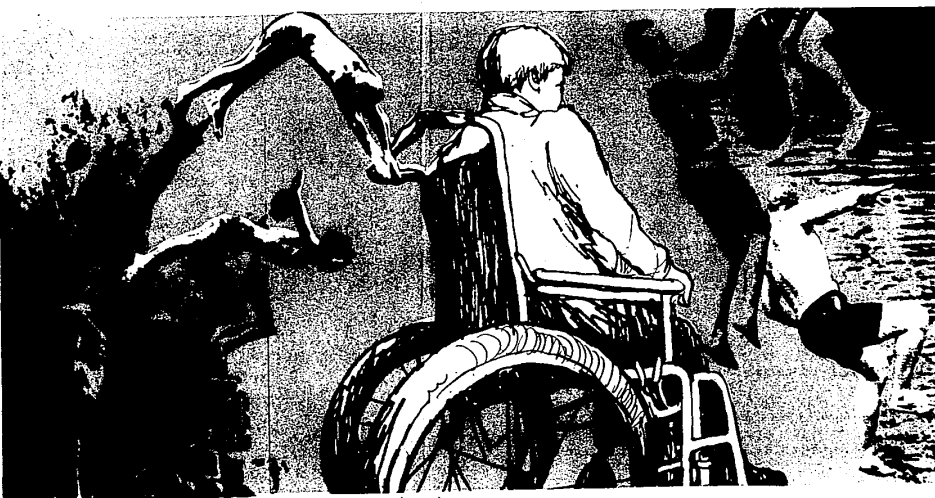
"I think '30-second shock' announcements ought to be put on television where high school kids will see them," he suggested.

"And it would be a good idea, too, to describe some of these summer accidents at the high school graduation ceremonies."



discover
Michigan
**Bill
Stockwell**

Did you know that Michigan college students of several generations ago started their day at a very early hour? A campus bell was rung daily at 5:30 a.m. over in East Lansing to arouse slumbering students. Some collegiate sleepheads gained their revenge on the bell ringer by tipping the bell upside down and filling it with water.



Trooper staffing: an immodest proposal

MICHIGAN VOTERS are being hit by an avalanche of petition drives. Most are aimed at putting entirely unworthy constitutional amendments on the state ballot.

One group is aimed at either decreasing one's own taxes or increasing the other fellow's, or both. Another group is aimed at matters which are largely legislative in nature and have no business being in a state constitution.

Li. Gov. James Brickley is pushing one of the few truly worthy ones — an attempt to shorten the ballot by allowing the governor to appoint the highest-ranking judges in the state. Even if you disagree with it, the Brickley proposal is worthy because it aims at a structural change in government. It is the kind of question that should be addressed by a constitution.

NEAR THE BOTTOM of the list is one being sponsored by the Michigan State Police Troopers Association. The troopers union wants guaranteed minimal staffing, and it wants that guarantee in the constitution.

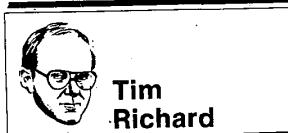
My own first reaction was to be appalled at the utter arrogance of the notion. Just what makes one group so important that it alone is guaranteed minimum staffing?

Why not minimum staffing for the attorney general's staff? It is being swamped by \$11 billion in lawsuits against the state, to the point where it can hardly prosecute.

Why not guaranteed minimum staffing for the folks who search out toxic waste dumps? We all may be poisoned if they don't do their jobs fully.

Why not guaranteed minimum staffing for the people who check out water pollution, air pollution, the safety of bridges, or the health of dairy herds? How about minimum staffing for the auditor general, so that local treasuries aren't robbed blind?

Those 73 Wayne County Road Commission managers are taking a lot of flak for trying to lock in their jobs for six years with a sweetheart union contract. The troopers union has topped them for gall by trying to lock their jobs into the constitution. That was my first reaction.



**Tim
Richard**

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Joe left boxing 40 years too soon

ONE AFTERNOON in what the present generation would call the long ago, The Stroller was sitting in the office of Mike Jacobs, then the nation's top fight promoter.

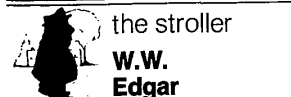
The cubicle was in the Plymouth Theater building on 49th Street in New York City, and the crowds were gathering outside to attend the showing of "Tobacco Road," then the top play on the Big Apple's theatrical front.

But the real drama was taking place in the little office hidden away from the crowd. Playing the leading role was Joe Louis, who was announcing his retirement from the ring, after successfully defending his heavyweight boxing title 14 times.

It was a dramatic moment, for Louis had run out of suitable opponents. When there was no one left to challenge him, he had no choice but to retire.

"JOE," SAID promoter Mike Jacobs, "we both have come along about 40 years too soon. The time is coming when you could fight in a telephone booth and get paid a million dollars."

Joe and his manager, John Roxborough, just smiled at the thought of that much money for a



the stroller
**W.W.
Edgar**

single fight. After all, Joe had earned a trifle less than \$5 million for his 14 defenses. Talk of millions for a single fight seemed like a dream. There was a bit of silence after Joe made his farewell remarks (though he was later called out of retirement and suffered a knockout defeat against Rocky Marciano).

Then Jacobs, with his gnashing dentures, rubbed his chin a bit and shocked everyone present by saying he, too, would retire.

"Joe and I came up together in this heavyweight business," he said, "and I guess it is only proper that we leave together. So this morning I am retiring, too."

THIS SCENE comes back to The Stroller almost every morning when he picks up his paper and

reads that fighters are getting as much as \$10 million for a single bout.

That is the purse that both Larry Holmes, the present heavyweight champion, and Gerry Cooney, his challenger, each received for a fight held in the parking lot of a hotel in Las Vegas.

It wasn't quite as small as the telephone booth that Jacobs had mentioned at Louis' retirement session, but it was the next smallest thing.

Just imagine: Each fighter receiving twice as much for one fight as Louis earned in his entire career.

One can get some idea as to the demands that will be made in the future when he reads that Tommy Hearn, the Detroit welterweight who suffered a knockout in his fight with Sugar Ray Leonard, called off his proposed fight with "Marvelous Marv" Hagler because he was to get only \$2 million for a bout in the Windsor Arena. Hearn wanted \$3.5 million and staged in the Silverdome.

Imagine that, for a fellow just coming off a knockout defeat. In the old days, a fighter would fight for almost nothing to get a chance to meet a champion.

So Mike Jacobs spoke a whole truth that dramatic moment in the long ago when he told Joe Louis that both of them had come along 40 years too soon.