

At Last — A Mythical Hero For Suburbia!!

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Suburbia has been short-changed by the movies and television. It has no folk-hero.

The big central cities have been generously favored by Superman, Captain Marvel and Batman. The rural, agricultural sector has the Lone Ranger and Fess Parker. But suburbia has been ignored.

Until now.
We herewith solemnly propose the creation of a uniquely suburban hero—a man of heroic strength and intellectual dynamism. His name is coined from the current academic excitement over the pursuit of excellence.

Introducing: Excelman.
By day, Excelman is indistinguishable from any other suburban executive. He is a coordinator for a thriving new technologies firm. His family, home and crabgrass lot are located in the sparkling suburb of Communityville Township, located outside Gosham City and only a few hours from Metropolis.

His appearance is superficially bland, attracting no attention. Excelman, you see, is a modest hero who prefers to perform his meaningful civic functions (good deeds are old-fashioned). Most of the time, no one realizes he has been at work.

No one but us.
Look a little closer: The dusty, rusty station wagon Excelman drives converts at the flick of the mock air conditioner dial into an electric helicopter.

What appears to be a bag of fertilizer in the rear is, in truth, sensitive electronic data collecting paraphernalia. Our hero could abuse his power, but virtuously he uses it only for such tasks as eavesdropping on the secret, sneak "executive" sessions of the Communityville Board of Education.

All heroes must have a traveling companion—a Robin, a Ton-ton to a saucy secretary. Excelman is no exception. His aide-de-camp is a typical, suburban cover, a miniature poodle named Beau. By day, Beau innocently chases chipmunks and annoys the neighbors' bushes, but when night falls he says the magic word, "Mazahs" (that's "Shazam" backwards), and with an explosion that sounds like a backfiring power mower, Beau turns into a German shepherd.

Really ferocious.

(At this point, the incredulous and unromantic will ask how a dog can say "Mazahs." All poodle owners, however, know a poodle can say that word forward, backward, or start in the middle and go both ways, whenever he isn't nervous. . . . But I digress.)

By night, Excelman and his faithful companion cruise about in their station wagon through Communityville Township performing meaningful civic functions.

For example, with his electronic equipment that looks like a bag of fertilizer, he discovers that a group of suburban right-wingers are plotting to forge 300,000 signatures on petitions requesting the legalization of restrictive covenants.

He breaks up the meeting — tock! tock! Take that, you cal-

lous right-winger.

Excelman's arch-enemy is the Mad Martini. The Mad Martini is an apartment-dwelling villain who doesn't have Communityville's best interests at heart. He lives in an establishment decorated entirely in olive green and vermilion yellow, and plots viciously when he ought to be out planting shrubs or guiding a Scout troop.

The Mad Martini has concocted a plot to break the hearts of the new residents flocking into Communityville. Prostituting the advancements of science, he has devised a bacteria that he plans to spray over a seed farm; the bacteria won't act for a year, but then it will kill all the grass and leave only noxious weeds with roots an inch and a quarter thick in its wake.

What will Excelman do? Can he detect and head off this anti-social and sub-human scheme?

Anyway, that's the kind of folk-hero suburbia needs. A man with appearance and apparatus and ethics of the suburbanite, performing suburban deeds against suburban foes.

A man like Excelman.

—Tim Richard

Motorists!! Only Gripes Will Ease Traffic Jams

It's about time motorists in the Livonia and Plymouth area started complaining about the traffic congestion and the daily tie-ups on the streets of both cities.

Otherwise, the conditions are going to remain as is until the Wayne County Road Commission reopens Farmington Road in Livonia between Five and Eight Mile Roads to traffic and Sheldon Road in Plymouth Township.

It is these two projects that are the big bottlenecks. Each has forced traffic to move into areas that already had a high traffic flow—now with the additional cars, the flow has just about stopped at peak times during the morning and early evening.

A week ago, we suggested that officials of the two cities should do something to ease the situation.

A few days later, we contacted both governmental units to see if there were any plans or any suggestions to ease the traffic flow.

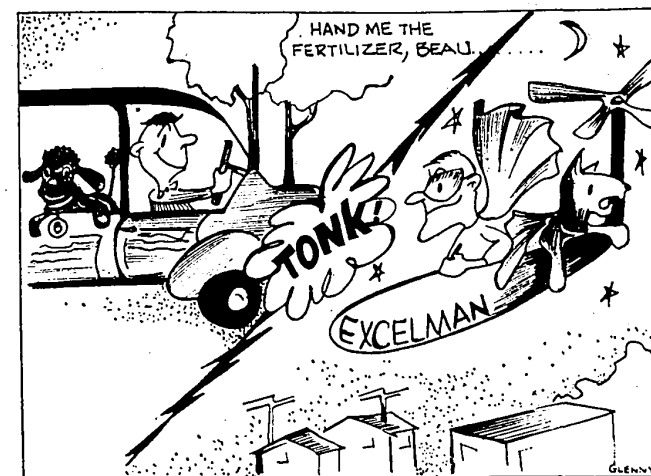
From Plymouth's City Manager Richard Blodgett came a blunt "we don't have anything in the budget to spend for additional traffic lights. We are still negotiating with some of our employees over new contracts and can't even make any adjustments at this time until we see what happens in the negotiations. People will just have to get used to the situation, we can't do anything now."

Blodgett did suggest that the City may eliminate left turns at the intersection of N. Main and Starkweather — and all that would do would be to jam traffic at the intersection of Mill Street and N. Main where there is a traffic light. It would be some-

"POLITICAL man speaks with forked tongue." You bet.

One of the things that sets a newspaperman's hair on end is the common practice of saying

one thing while meaning something entirely different. You know the bit.



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This Is The Week That

... By Don Hoenshell

Nobody tinkers anymore trying to improve the Commencement Address or the corkscrew. Straighten out a corkscrew and what have you got?

And try to sense out of a Commencement address and you destroy a fine old American institution—the speech that says nothing to kids who won't be listening. It works out.

Commencement, a time of beginning and a time for realism. Of taking stock and measuring shortages and of figuring how to get where one is going.

The kids get that old sauce about the bright new world and the pot of uranium that awaits the true of spirit and the All-American cloud klasser. Then he grandly invites the kids to take the world.

So, O.K., kids, it's all yours and lots of luck.

Your elders, including the guy telling you how to make it run, have messed it up pretty good. Now we have wars everywhere, one for each edition, crime, traffic accidents, skulduggery in public office and you name it.

Welcome to it all.

First of all, an 18-year-old getting out of high school is unprepared for much of anything at this point in history. That kind of talk was all right when all you needed was the skill to handle a hoe or a dump rake on a farm or do 10 hours a day in a simple factory job.

It's a terrible crime if all the hoopla of graduation from high school allows these youngsters to think in terms of final, great accomplishment and ultimate victory over ignorance.

High school graduates now need two more things, at least.

More education is one.

Experience is another.

General Motors, some newspapers and every other outfit hoping to be a profit-making operation have on-the-job training courses. This economy has no

time for long haircuts with nothing much underneath.

This world has become so specialized that the schools can teach—if a student will learn—the rudiments of the mechanics of life and that's about it. And even that costs a heck of a lot of money.

So, come on in, kids, and learn. But, first take off the mortar board and get ready to work and fight for everything that means anything to you.

The schools haven't prepared you for tomorrow because you don't know, and neither does the tomorrow be going to toss at you.

You have to fend and you have to cope and miracles don't happen. Maybe, if you marry the boss' daughter . . .

Take all this advice and you'll be a booming success, climbing the highest mountains, hitting tape measure home runs and collecting after every race at DRC.

Go ahead, take the advice.

It's from a guy who thought World War II was the last one and that sliced bread was the greatest human achievement since the wheel.

Sense 'n Nonsense

The battle over "fast" and "slow" time in the state has hit a lull. One can be certain, however, that the Michigan Farm Bureau will have more to say on the subject.

For years the Michigan Democratic Party has been pointing to the Farm Bureau as the greatest bunch of Neanderthals in modern times. The Dems never lost the opportunity to hang the "Farm Bureau dominated" tag on the Michigan Republicans.

Who is the attorney for the Farm Bureau on the daylight saving question? He is one Tom Downs, long active Democrat,

and the Democratic vice-chairman of the State Constitutional Convention.

During the 1964 presidential campaign, Senator Goldwater discussed at length the serious problem of "crime in the streets." What he really meant was "Negroes in the streets," which went with the implication that LBJ and the Democrats were soft on Negroes and other similar dead-beats.

Equally, President Johnson would discuss "the dangers of extremism in our country," by which he meant the John Birch Society. This suggested of course that Goldwater, if not a full-blown, Bircher, was at a minimum getting a lot of money from quasi-fascists.

The thing that really irritates newsmen about such speaking is that it's their job to quote people accurately and directly.

So when people say one thing while meaning something quite different, you then have to write a sentence something along the lines of, "Senator Goldwater, while calling for more safety in the streets, was regarded by most as attacking Negro anti-segregation demonstrations."

Then some public spirited soul accuses you of editorializing a news story.

There's a good example of speaking with forked tongue going on right now.

State Representatives Jim Tierney, Louis Schmidt and John Bennett, who hail from this area, and others have been pushing three bills in Lansing. Passed by the House and now in a Senate committee, they would establish a method of voluntary cooperation between local government units.

Areas of concern would be air pollution, child and youth guidance, education, environmental health and social services, housing and urban development, parks and recreation, refuse and sewage disposal, transportation and water pollution.

Which covers just about every ill that our badly planned, uncoordinated local government units in Observerland now face.

Trouble is that the conservatives are pretty sore at the plan, and they're speaking with forked tongue to try to defeat them.

The Oakland County Conservative Club recently sent a letter to all members of the Legislature attacking the proposals.

Among other things, the letter charged that "The financial backing for this movement has come through the tax-exempt foundations including Rockefeller, Carnegie, Ford, Julius Rosenberg and many others."

Translation: "The nasty Jews with all their money are trying to take away our traditional liberties."

Alternate translation: "Those Eastern Establishment pink liberals and their allies, the monied Jews, are trying to take away our traditional American liberties."

Another charge says, "We recall that Hitler had youth guidance programs—so does the Soviet Union."

We can assume this does not mean the Oakland County Conservative Club, in its collective wisdom, is opposed to any sort of counseling for our children.

Rather, the charge implies: "These proposals are just like what Hitler or Stalin would do."

And so on and so forth.

By saying one thing and implying another, the Oakland County Conservative Club is not only confusing the basic issue—whether local governments ought to cooperate to solve problems—but also bringing in red herrings of Stalin, Hitler, socialism, etc.

If people are opposed to the bills, they ought to say so.

But the least they can do is keep the arguments to the point and avoid speaking with forked tongue.

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