

editorial opinion

Telethon is refreshing change from usual apathy

When I was a kid, not really so many years ago, I was mesmerized by a young comedian named Jerry Lewis.

Week after week, I would trek on down to the local movie house and watch him ply his trade in a most artful manner. In those days I thought being an actor would be about the greatest thing in life. And being the king of comedians, as was Jerry in my mind, would have been pure heaven.

Well, as time testifies, I ended up attached to the end of a typewriter with a phone permanently glued to my left ear.

In those ensuing years I changed and so did Jerry. Today I admire the comedian more than ever. Here's a man who has taken his talent and turned it into one of the largest benefits in the United States—the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon.

Jerry was more than a little miffed this year because of criticism launched his way saying that he was involved in the yearly telethon Labor Day telethon event for his own aggrandizement and enrichment. The charges are obviously bunk and demonstrate a total lack of insight by the critics.

For those of you who either wear blinders on the Labor Day weekend or escape to the state parks sans television, Lewis hosts a 22-hour telethon to raise funds to combat muscular diseases.

This year close to \$30 million was raised through television viewers' donations. This money doesn't include the millions of dollars donated by numerous businesses which Jerry has convinced to become involved.

Last year the total money raised from individual and business contributions was \$59 million.

FRANKLY, I'm totally entranced with the whole thing. In these days of public apathy and downright Scrooge stinkiness, I'm amazed that this much money is raised.

It speaks well for the people of this country. The telethon is much more than Jerry Lewis standing up for 22 hours. Sure, he probably gets a charge out of doing it. But so what?

What the critics overlook are the hundreds of thousands of volunteers who band together to make the project work. Lewis is only one man. He

Suzie Marks writes

Rape: The baffling crime

Proponents of rape prevention warn women against stopping, walking or traveling alone.

It's good advice, but sometimes hard to follow and definitely not foolproof.

Recently, for example, three women were driving together around Oakland County when a man sideswiped their car.

When the women got out of their car to investigate the damage, the man forced them back into their car at knifepoint. The assailant then had them drive to a secluded area and raped two of them.

There was no power in numbers for those women. They were helpless to a young man armed with a knife. Happening right in the middle of Oakland County, coupled with memories of recent sexual assaults in other communities, makes fear an only recourse.

Police caution us against getting caught up in fear. They say it causes irrational behavior that impairs our ability to react safely in emergencies.

But then we ask, what is a safe reaction? Should we run, try to hurt our assailant or submit to his perverse actions in hopes we will walk away unharmed?

POLICE CAN only advise a woman to act in her best judgment when a rapist strikes. That means nothing. Since most women never see the rapist before the attack, they must assume that he is playing with half a deck, and probably reacts spontaneously.

It may be more advisable to submit than resist

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Shirlee's sallies

by Shirlee Iden



When our town's on top

There's a poll for just about everything these days and sometimes that kind of huckstering takes the fun out of everything.

They tell you in advance who you'll vote into office and if the winter will be harsh. Heck, we knew months ago the Tigers couldn't finish anywhere above third place in the baseball wars.

That's why it's so great and so very proud to see this town, so often hamed-mouthed, come out on the top of a very important list.

While we all watched over the Labor Day weekend, the whole south part of Michigan came through with flying colors for muscular dystrophy. All the little people pitched in, put it all together and raised more than \$2 for the Jerry Lewis Telethon.

There was a great deal of suspense involved throughout the nearly 24-hour marathon of pledging and casting because things did not look good for a long time. Channel 2 telecaster, Joe Glover, the local MD guru, announced a \$1 million total pledged at 3:30 p.m. Monday, but by the end of the broadcast at 6:30, all records had been smashed.

What was truly heart-warming is that it was such a complete community effort. Folks got together who work for the same company or belong

to the same club and put their nickels and dimes together and stepped up to announce a \$150 donation or some such.

Dedicated young people here in Southfield, and in other communities, produced carnivals that in turn produced big bucks.

A SINGLE Southfield carnival, that is now an eight year tradition, raised more than \$800 for muscular dystrophy.

Comedian Jerry Lewis chose the battle against neuro-muscular disease as his cause several years ago and he has never let up. The goal is a cure or who need braces, wheelchair and the even deeper knowledge about the causes of the muscular dystrophies which are a whole group of muscle destroying ailments which vary in hereditary pattern, age of onset, initial muscle weakness and the rate of progression.

The funds raised go for this kind of research and also to help care for thousands of persons already afflicted who need braces, wheelchair and special medication and therapies.

Some of those MD victims appeared on the telethon in their wheelchairs, on braces or crutches with a few able to walk. They told their stories and about the help they get from all the area

folks. They described the selfless volunteers who go to muscular dystrophy camp each summer and act as constant support to each ailing camper.

The telethon brings it all home to the large audiences around the country. They cheer up goals and try to reach them.

Well the Detroit area has lots of kinds of goals and has had for a long time. There are goals for a peaceful society, for reducing crime, poverty and unemployment. And there are the positive goals of a happier, more integrated society and a viable education system.

We don't meet them all, but we keep trying.

LAST weekend the people around these parts did more than just try. When things looked bad, they didn't give up, they gave more. People gave money, time and deeply of themselves to make it all happen.

And what happened is that of the \$29 million-plus raised nationwide, this community beat every other city, even populous New York City.

You can say what you want about Detroit and it's its image, when it comes to reaching down to help afflicted MD victims, no one stands taller than every one of you and your neighbors.



couldn't possibly do it by himself. He knows that.

There isn't another country which could pull of something like this. There isn't another country which has even tried to band together in an attempt to raise enough money to cure a disease.

Locally, we've got Channel 2's Joe Glover handling the master of ceremony duties for the telethon. The first year, as he admits, he did it as a matter of course in the line of duty. By the end of that first telethon he was totally caught up in the whole thing.

Now, he spends many of his off work hours doing volunteer work for the Muscular Dystrophy drive.

Volunteer is the key to this American phenomenon. The more conservative in the nation can gain satisfaction from this event because the government has nothing to do with the telethon. It's all private sector. For us more liberal folks, it's a reaffirmation that the American public still cares enough to band together in a constructive collective action.

I've got to admit that every year I say to myself that I will only watch the telethon for an hour or so but I end up keeping track of the event throughout the 22 hours. This year I found myself wandering around in an insomniac state about 3 a.m. and turning on the boob tube to see how Jerry was doing.

Jerry Lewis has a right to be proud of this movement he has fostered and so do the American people.



"Around the edge"

by Jackie Klein

The key to your heart

Under a pile of bills, I just found a mailer which promised me a key for opening doors to better relationships.

In case you haven't guessed, the folder was from a dating service. It said a staff of professionals, not one of them a computer, would introduce me to my perfect mate.

He would be similar to me in temperament, sociability, moral outlook, interest, intelligence, education, work knowledge and personal background. He wouldn't be a clone but a reasonable facsimile of me. This poor, unsuspecting male has his work cut out for him.

A tall, dark handsome stranger hasn't shown up with a key to open a door to my heart. You see, there's a catch to this matchmaking game. You have to take an exam on the mailer and turn it in to the dating service. The test is supposed to reveal all.

The first question is, "Should the theory of evolution be taught in public schools?" In my opinion, sex education is a more fascinating subject, but many parents object to it. How many parents understand Darwin's theory? Isn't it something about monkeys?

"SHOULD SINGLE men and women ever take trips together otherwise unaccompanied?" was the next quizzer. I can't imagine a pair of single adults taking a chaperone along on a trip. How many unmarried pairs live

together with an escort? I checked "undecided" for that query.

The next biggie was, "Can theft ever be justified?" I suppose it can if you're a thief. If you lift a package of sugarless gum, that can be justified by good check-ups from your dentist. There are many variables.

"Do you normally repeat the good jokes you hear?" was a toughie. I haven't remembered a good joke, or even a bad one, for 20 years. I even forget to write them down. Will my perfect mate think I have no sense of humor? My column readers may wonder the same thing.

I don't quite dig the question. It asks if going to night clubs is permissible for people who work with children. If you can afford a babysitter, why not go out and groove? It's not permissible to take a kid to a cabaret unless he or she is old enough to drink. But first you have to find a night club within driving distance of Southfield.

"After you die, will you be penalized for your sins on earth?" How can they ask me that when they haven't even fixed me up with a guy yet? Besides, I don't know anyone who has ever come back to tell if they're suffering for their earthly sins.

THE QUIZ asks if my mood rise and fall for reasons I can't explain. Taking this exam is enough to put me in the pits, and I have no trouble

explaining that. Otherwise, I'm even-tempered—always mad.

"Are you sensitive about certain things? Are your feelings easily hurt when you're criticized by others?" I gave that a "definitely yes." I cry a lot when I'm criticized about my writing, my appearance, my temperament, my personality, my lack of tact, cracking my gum and even the way I breathe in and out.

"Is it all right for women to ask men for dates?" Women can ask men for firs for all I care. I expect my compatible boyfriend from the dating service to ask me out. After the first time, he'll probably realize he's no match for me in spite of our personality inventory.

To the question if I like to drink, I must answer that I do only when I'm alone or with someone. Actually, I would have to be for a big occasion—like the sun coming up in the morning or a dark night. So if the man they pick for me is a teetotaler, he'd better not apply.

I can't answer the question about whether nervous tension causes me to have aches and pains because my head is throbbing and I have to take two aspirin. Maybe the dating service will send me a doctor. A rich one would be acceptable. P.S.—being shy doesn't cause me problems. I gave that one a "definitely no."

from our readers

Editorial was timely

Editor:

I congratulate Tim Richard on writing a timely and most appropriate editorial. His Aug. 10 editorial tells us how the inflationary trend in the housing market is causing the American dream of home ownership to slip away from us.

At the present time, only 25 per cent of American families can afford to buy a new medium-priced home and, if the inflationary trend continues, it won't be long before only the elite or the rich will be able to afford the American dream of home ownership.

I predict that in the near future the housing industry will fall flat on its face because the American people can no longer afford to purchase a new home.

And Richard is right, if appropriate

action is not taken to alleviate the increasing costs, the construction industry, the material suppliers, the building trades and the bureaucrats in Washington will help to bring about stagnation in the housing industry which will cause many of them to lose their jobs and businesses.

I feel sorry for the young people who are just starting out in life, and who are now having a difficult time in finding adequate housing at a price that they can afford.

This problem has been on my mind for more than a year and in the near future, I expect to discuss it with my Congressional representatives in Washington to determine what action should be taken to bring the American people back into the housing market.

Richard's editorial was a gem and

enlightening; please keep up the good work.

JOHN BENNETT,
State Representative, 34th District

The Spectrum says thanks

Editor:

On behalf of myself and the members of The Spectrum Gallery, in Farmington Hills, I want to thank you for the terrific coverage in the Farmington Observer and the Birmingham Eccentric regarding our gallery. Everyone will be so pleased and delighted. Now we are sure that residents in these areas know that we are in existence.

EILEEN SCHENKEL
Spectrum Gallery