

# Rising above the facts, it's Blanchard by a mile

Sometimes you just stumble across life's most important lessons. As a young city hall reporter on an estate daily paper, I was headed out the door for lunch one noon when I passed the state editor having an argument over the phone.

The state editor deals with what we call "country correspondents" in such towns as Otsego, Paw Paw and Gobles. One particular correspondent was phoning in a city council meeting story. The state editor could be overheard saying, "No, no, stick to the facts. We can't print that, stick to the facts."

After hanging up, the state editor turned to me and sighed:

"Tim, I've told the readers more damned lies by sticking to the facts."

THE TRUTH is probably that U.S. Rep. James Blanchard of Pleasant Ridge will sew up the Democratic nomination for governor in 1982.

It appears that the party leaders and money sources

will get in line behind him. He will have to work for the nomination, but his primary victory — if indeed he still has any opposition by then — will be decisive.

That seems to be the truth. It is not, however, a fact. There is no set of news sources any reporter can call, get a firm answer from, and quote. It shouldn't be reported in the news columns but is all right in an opinion piece. Jim Blanchard at the moment is the ordained one.

This kind of thing has happened before. In 1975, the UAW and some informal party leaders spotted a state representative who had been elected to a state senate and began grooming him for governor for 1978. They gave Bill Fitzgerald a nice platform as Senate majority leader.

Things didn't work out, however. Senate Democrats dumped Fitzgerald as their leader after two years. But that didn't stop the money sources and the informal party leaders from pursuing the promotion of Fitzgerald as governor.

I covered a couple of panels of the primary candidates — Fitzgerald, Zolton Ferency, Sen. Patrick McCollough, Public Service Commissioner William



Tim Richard

Ralls and Oakland Sheriff Johannes Spreen. Listening to Fitzgerald, a lot of Democrats in the audience shook their heads. The guy just wasn't bright.

Yet it was well known Fitzgerald had the money and would be the nominee. And in the primary, the ordained candidate collected 240,000 of the 605,000 votes cast, winning the right to be gunned down by Bill Miliken the ensuing November.

BUT LET US not stretch the similarity of Fitzgerald and Blanchard too far.

I heard a lot about Blanchard before talking to him. The 18th District congressman has won deep respect in his party that is difficult to express in words. Politics aside, my own impression is that he is smart, enjoys zinger-type jokes and has no pomposity about him. Politics aside, some women swoon over him.

In other words, if he is the ordained one, then the Democrats in 1982 will be in better shape than in 1978.

Five members of the Michigan Senate, which is coming to be known as the House of Governors because it is spawning so many candidates, may have other impressions. David Piaweck of Dearborn Heights, Kerry Kanmer of Pontiac, Gary Corbin of Clio, Ed Pierce of Ann Arbor and William Faust of Westland are interested in the big job. So are Ingham County Commissioner Zolton Ferency and Shiawassee County Drain Commissioner Robert Tisch.

Well, it's a free country, and they are entitled to run for the Democratic nomination for governor. But I have a hunch one or more are thinking of cutting a deal with Jim Blanchard to be his running mate as lieutenant governor.

And that, to the best of my knowledge, is the truth.

# As the nation goes, so goes marriage

I couldn't help wondering the other day how well marriages would work if the principals conducted their family affairs as the government conducts its domestic and foreign affairs.

I mean I can see some value in adopting the Reagan posture. When the wife asks for some help in getting things out of the car, the husband can lean back, put a big smile on his face and say, "Really dear, for your own good, I'm going to have cut out all this help. It merely maintains a plateau of failure. You can't learn to help yourself, if you make yourself dependent on the government, or me, all the time."

"Perhaps you can get some help from the volunteer fire department. That's the American Way," the husband could say.

I talked this over with friends Stan and Jerry the next day at lunch.

Jerry said that, in fact, he had for years been operating on the basis that maintaining a marriage is like conducting the affairs of government.

"You must be very clear about what is in your own national interest and realize that anyone who doesn't recognize your interests must be considered a potential enemy who will be cut off from aid, trade and protection."

His own policy, he said, is patterned after John Foster Dulles' policy as secretary of state under Eisenhower.

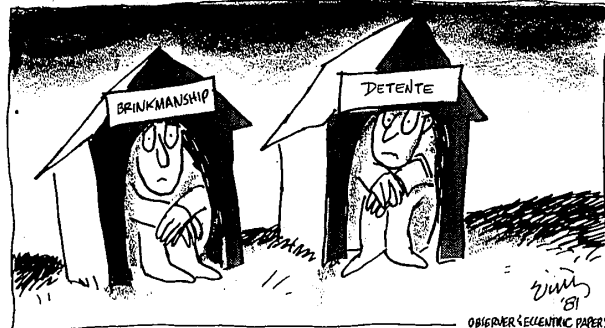
"I'm a firm believer in massive retaliation and brinkmanship," said Jerry. "The way to win at marriage is to take the offensive to show 'em who's got the big boys."

"Like if I stay out one night with the boys, I don't want all things creative I start defensive bumbling. I immediately go home and start yelling about the way the joint looks, what kind of food's in the ice box, the laundry gap, deficit spending and whatever else I can find to complain about."

"If I get any lip, I start talking about cutting off all domestic aid," Jerry said.

"After a few days of brinkmanship, where we each are threatening to go to the lawyers, things start cooling down," he said. In this way Jerry protects his territorial imperatives, he said.

"If you don't maintain your territorial integrity, the



Bob Wisler

wife will start chipping away at your privileges, and one will go and then they'll all fall, just like dominoes."

Stan, who is considered a weak-kneed jellyfish by Jerry, said he doubted the validity of the domino theory.

"I'm a believer in negotiations to attain peaceful coexistence," he said. "I think detente is worth achieving."

Stan said he and his wife send each other signals the same way the state department sends signals to foreign nations. "If I don't like the kind of dinners we have been having, for example, I send her a signal that she can interpret as meaning some dissatisfaction," he said.

"If detente is so great, how come you can't go out with the boys on Friday nights anymore," butted in Jerry.

"It's not that I can't — we negotiated a settlement in our disarmament talks," Stan said. "I gave up my high-level flying and getting bombed Friday nights, and she gave up attacking me Saturdays and Sundays."

"She brought you to your knees," said Jerry.

"I call it peace with honor," said Stan.

"Both approaches sound interesting," I said, "but does either really work?"

"To tell the truth," said Jerry, "the wife recently filed papers and I had my lawyer file papers too. The only thing is, my lawyer tells me that if things keep going like this, I'll be lucky to be able to visit the dog every third weekend, let alone see my house or kids."

"I'm thinking of an agonizing reappraisal of the situation."

"And how about you, Stan?"

"Well," he said, "I think somehow I'm missing the boat. The wife just got a new sports car and I can't afford to drive — I'm taking the SEMTA to work."

"What really bugs me, though, is her wardrobe. All of her paycheck and half of mine are paying off the charges. Yesterday, she came in telling me she had to have a new punk-punk wardrobe which involves buying pre-ripped T-shirts. My charges are so high, I can't see the light at the end of the tunnel."

As the luncheon ended Stan was asking Jerry how to conduct a policy of deflation of a wardrobe.

Maybe it's not too good of an idea to conduct marital business the way we conduct our national business. I don't know if we can live through it.



Nancy Walls Smith

## Soaps? Who me? Maybe sometimes

Garth died last week, and I didn't even know that he was sick.

For that matter, I don't even know what he died of. Maybe he was stabbed or something.

That's the trouble with soap operas. If you miss one week, something interesting always happens. But if you manage to watch them every day, it seems like you just hear the same conversations over and over and over again.

On each soap opera there seems to be at least 100 main characters. And every time something happens to one of them, we get to see each of the others (in sets of twos) sitting around, walking around or driving around — discussing this momentous event and how they feel about it.

Their feelings may vary from rage to envy or from compassion to grief.

Mine tend toward boredom.

IF I HEAR one more pained discussion about why evil John Dickson won't give wimpering Dee a divorce, I think I'll gag.

Actually, I know that the soaps aren't meant to be watched all that thoroughly, and that's exactly how I watch them — out of the corner of my eye. Those programmers know what they're doing.

We housewives are busy ladies. We seldom have time to sit down and watch a movie straight through during the day. The last time I did that was in 1974 when I was pregnant with my first child.

The programmers developed an ingenious form of entertainment that only requires about one-fourth of your attention and the minimum daily requirement of thought.

And these soaps are addictive — that's the insidious part.

Two years ago a friend explained a few of the basic plots on "The Young and the Restless." Because it came on right after "The Price Is Right" (which also must be taken in small doses), I found myself getting involved in the storyline.

I WAS surprised, and maybe even a little ashamed of myself, because I had always been one of those snooty people who groaned disdainfully whenever the subject of soap operas came up. But I figured if I kept my viewing down to half an hour a day, I could keep my new vice a secret.

Then the network pulled a dirty trick. They extended "The Young and the Restless" to an hour. Not only that, but because I leave the TV set on for most of the day, I found I was getting involved in the plot of "As the World Turns." Lisa Coleman was staying at a very spooky inn. It was fascinating.

So today I'm hooked on "The Young and the Restless," and "As the World Turns," getting involved in "Search for Tomorrow," and developing a mild interest in "The Guiding Light."

There's obviously no hope for me now.

I've heard that "General Hospital" and "Ryan's Hope" are much better shows. And sometimes I get so fed up with the ones that I am watching that I need a barf bag.

But if I change channels and loyalties, that means I'll have to get acquainted with about 200 new characters whose backgrounds I know nothing about.

It's taken me two years to get this far. The prospect of starting all over again boggles the mind.

I'll just continue on with my old friends, the rich and wrinkled Mrs. Chancellor, the evil and dashing James Stenbeck, the memory of the late Garth, and overly-freckled, sweetie pie, Morgan.

By the way, if anybody in the world knows whatever happened to Derek Thurston, please write me in care of this newspaper. (Why isn't he married to Mrs. Chancellor anymore? The man just virtually disappeared.)

I'd appreciate it — a woman needs to know these things!

# Carrying the community torch

Long before presidents invented "safety nets," societies looked after their poor and provided services that individuals couldn't obtain for themselves.

Whether you call it being your brother's keeper, a good neighbor or a bleeding heart, private giving has long been the American way.

The concept of united giving is newer. There are those among us who can still remember the multitude of appeals that once were visited on citizens each year.

Now it's streamlined. A donation to the United Foundation Torch Drive is funneled into channels that branch out and help about 150 agencies of all kinds.

Take children for instance.

Life just isn't fair. This year's torchlighters for the drive, just 4 years old, are a pair of bubbly, blond-haired twins with a problem.

The girls have cystic fibrosis, a genetic disease that affects the lungs, clogging them with a thick mucus that makes breathing difficult. The disease also affects digestion.

IF KRISTIE and Kimberly Pearce had been born more than a decade ago, they probably would not be alive today. Until 1969, most children born with cystic fibrosis died before age 5. Today the life span has been lengthened to about 21 years.

To enjoy these added years, the twins have to be regularly checked and daily medicated, something children so young should not be bothered about.

Torch Fund dollars work at Children's Hospital of Michigan every day. Cystic Fibrosis is just one of a litany of cruel ailments that afflict children and are treated at the hospital. Of course, people of every age encounter sickness and accidents that require extraordinary care. Often Torch Drive dollars and equipment are the answer.

Torch Fund dollars pay for services to physically and mentally handicapped persons and assist with social problems as well.

Seating programs, senior citizens programs, recreation are provided by the drive and the pennies and dimes raised. A little green and white booklet, printed by the United Foundation, is a primer for help for victims of domestic violence.



Shirlee Iden

BATTERED SPOUSES and their offspring can start with a counselor who will speak to them on the phone at any time of day or night and be directed to the proper place for help.

Agencies such as Common Ground, Oakland Crisis Center, Women's Survival Center and the Rape Counseling Center, all United Foundation affiliated, are listed.

Emergency shelter for those with no safe place to go, counseling for the problem drinker, and help for the hungry are just a few needs torch fund dollars can help to meet.

## overheard over coffee

● After a number of Birmingham residents reported sighting four erie red lights Aug. 15 and 20, the Birmingham Eccentric asked whether area residents believed in the existence of UFOs (unidentified flying objects).

Of the 25 persons who responded, 18 said they believed in UFOs and 16 said they had actually seen UFOs. One woman said the UFO she saw years back was "surrounded by red, green, blue lights. Its charcoal gray metallic body was dark against the night sky. It had a tower that looked like a lookout station and receded as the vehicle accelerated its speed."

No trace to the rumor the object was an American car before the car companies started downsizing.

All this from one slim booklet published with UF monies.

A few weeks ago, many of us pitched in and helped the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon, in an effort just short of miraculous.

Despite swollen unemployment rolls and the critical state of the economy in our area, more than \$2 million was raised, nearly equalling the record-breaking dollar amounts of previous years.

Now they're here again. People who want your money when you're hurting financially already.

This time it's not for one group of neuro-muscular diseases, but for many causes. Carrying the community torch is the way to be your brother's keeper, and your sister's, and your parents' as well. It's the kind of giving that only hurts for a minute and leaves a happy afterglow.

● Detroit Edison has mailed out notices to its customers informing them the utility will discontinue fixing portable appliances. The company says fewer people are bringing appliances in for repair since the cost of repair is often higher than the cost of buying a new portable appliance.

It's a trend that we've noticed in manufacturing circles. The next thing, it will be cheaper to buy new washing machines, TVs, etc. than to repair them. A yearly car repair and maintenance bill could become more costly than the car payments.