

# Who cries the loudest during 1982 trickle-down?

"Trickle down." I first heard the words as a kid when my father and uncles sat around the kitchen, having a shot and a beer and talking politics.

Ardent Democrats, they used the term to describe, disparagingly, the programs of the Herbert C. Hoover administration. The term came from a speech Democratic candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt made Oct. 2, 1932 in Detroit.

FDR debunked the theory "that if we make the rich richer, somehow they will let a part of their prosperity trickle down to the rest of us."

"Trickle down" almost went out of the American language until Ronald Reagan came to the White House. I'm not so certain the Reagan program deserves the label.

LAST WEEK I sat through four and a half hours of testimony in two public hearings on the impact of Reagan's proposals on 1) senior citizens and 2) the administration of social programs.

There were lots of plain, ordinary citizens in both audiences. Oddly enough, they had little to say. I was a trifle surprised.

In the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging hearing in Livonia, 20 persons spoke, 19 of them deploring what Reagan was proposing.

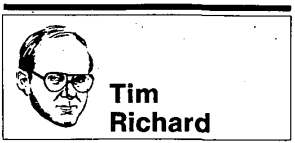
Seventeen of the 20 were in some way on a government payroll. Some directed local offices on aging. An interesting one was a coordinator of volunteers. Some were involved with meals-on-wheels programs.

Still others oversaw programs which took care of home chores for the elderly. The sheer number of programs they worked in was staggering.

"Serving the aging is an industry," said one.

THE OTHER hearing was at the state fairgrounds in Detroit. It was conducted by several department heads and deputies in Gov. William G. Milliken's administration.

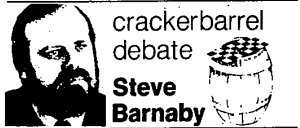
You may have read about that one. Snakes, eggs and dog food were thrown at the panel. Who did the throwing? Not rank-and-file Democrats. Not some zany from Wayne State University. Not old people. Not college students losing their loans or grants.



**Tim Richard**

The deed was done, as I heard it, by the State Workers Organizing Committee. I didn't keep a tally of speakers at the fairgrounds hearing, but it is safe to say the pattern was much the same. People who make their livings in governmental social programs did virtually all the talking.

The final hour was dominated by persons from the Detroit Department of Health, putting in pitches for a bewildering variety of programs: rat control, VD education, anti-smoking education, and so on and so on.



**crackerbarrel debate**  
**Steve Barnaby**

## Cop's family learns to live with terror

Death is part of living in a cop's family. However you're related, as a cop's relative you know the possibility exists that your very special person in blue could be killed in the line of duty.

I know. My dad was a cop for 25 years. And although he now is retired and safely tucked away in a North Carolina fishing haven, it bothers me to see a cop on the street alone. It just isn't right.

It isn't right for society to expect a person to needlessly risk his or her life so taxpayers can save a few bucks. But society, in many cases, insists upon it. Unfortunately, many police administrators and union officials have bowed to this wish with barely a howl of indignation.

Thousands live with the silent horror which pervades every aspect of a cop's family life. The televised funeral of a fallen police officer is more than just a curiosity on the news. It is a grim reminder. Many times it is the funeral of a man or woman you knew, one whose children you played with.

For some, like the families of Michigan State Police officer Craig Scott and Detroit Police officer Frank Siemon, in the last months those black and white nightmares have turned into technicolor reality.

ESPECIALLY INFURIATING is that Scott was alone, defenselessly gunned down, stripped by society of a comrade to aid him.

Scott wasn't on any dangerous mission. He simply was issuing a traffic citation — something just about every uniformed cop does every day. I'll always remember the night my father came home and told us his friend had been killed in the line of duty. The expressions on my mother's and father's faces were ones I had never seen.

Up until that time, being in a cop's family had been fun. Just two weeks before, my parents had hosted a luncheon party at our house. Everyone had a good time, including my father's friend.

For a long time after that my mother never slept very well, always getting up to look at the clock, waiting for dad to come home. An unexpected phone call in the middle of a shift was a ring of terror.

All we shared the terror, but never did we talk about it. It was just there, waiting for something to happen.

Certainly everyone who becomes a police officer knows that facing death is part of the job. Family members soon become used to the idea also.

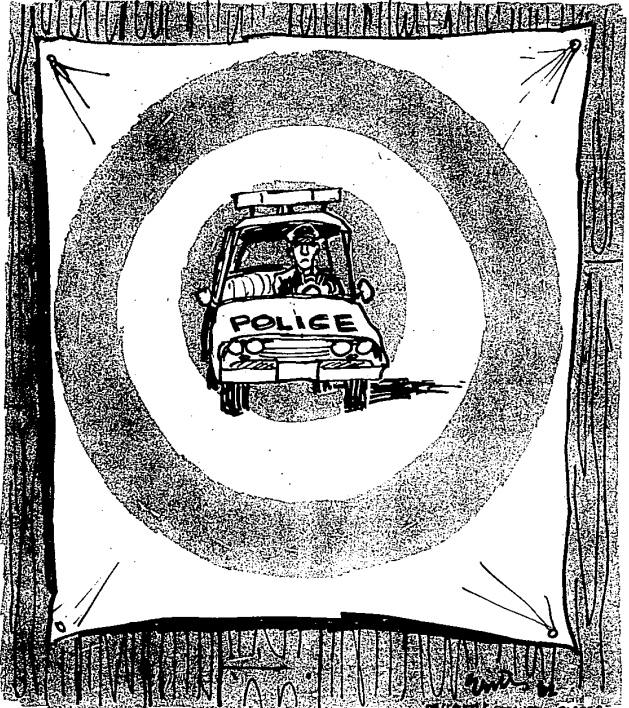
HAVING A COP for a dad was something special. My bro ers and I always were proud to tell our schoolm es that while their fathers were auto workers, bankers and salesmen, our dad was a 100 percent bona fide cop.

I still get a kick out of telling people today. The one comfort my family had through all those years was that my dad never was alone on the street. Sure, he went through some dangerous times. Like his friend, he could have been killed.

But he was given an even chance, a comrade to work with. That's worth every lousy tax dollar I can think of.

## discover Michigan **Bill Stockwell**

Did you know that splitting an upright match with an ax is one of the contests engaged in by University of Michigan forestry students when they meet and compete with natural resources students from other midwestern colleges? Women forestry students compete, too, and are included in such events as crosscut sawing, speed woodchopping and log-throwing.



## Unfriendly delays

# Slow day at supermarket

It isn't often that The Stroller yearns for a return to "the good old days." He is willing to let bygones be bygones and look with keen interest to the robotics era which lies ahead.

But the other morning, he made one of his rare exceptions. It came about when he was on his weekly shopping tour. He had finished the hunt up and down the aisles for the items his wife wanted and took his place in the "express" line.

For a moment, it looked very simple. There were only a few persons ahead — but oh, what a shock he got! Those few persons were veteran shoppers armed with fistfuls of coupons.

AMONG THEM was an elderly lady. She not only had a folder filled with coupons but several cards filled with pink stamps. These are the latest gimmick to get you into the store.

When her turn came, the little old lady just opened her folder and told the cashier what she wanted. That done, she also handed in the card of stamps. Then the fun began.

She didn't know which articles could be obtained with the stamps. She had an ad with her, but it was an old one, and it didn't have the articles listed that were good on this day.

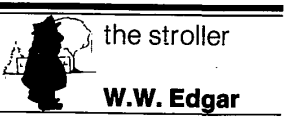
So there was a wait. Several of her items had no prices on them. The cashier had to take time out to call the desk and get the right price. All this took time.

But the real irksome moment came when the elderly lady began to pay by check. She fumbled around trying to get her glasses from her bag. Then the clerk had to check the book to see if she was listed as a check customer. She was.

Finally, after most of 20 minutes in an "express" line, she left. And as she passed the cashier on the way out, she turned and sneered just a bit because the folks behind her seemed uneasy.

RIGHT THERE The Stroller made one of his rare wishes that he was back home in the grocery store which thrived as a family institution in the "good old days."

Shopping was a delight. One looked forward to



**the stroller**  
**W.W. Edgar**

going to the grocery store. It was a grand meeting place because you not only knew the owners but most of the customers who came to shop and stopped to visit.

You didn't have to walk up and down the aisles looking for items you wanted. You asked the owner for them, and he soon placed them on the counter in front of you.

Not only that, but if the bag were heavy, he even took it out to the car for you or had it sent to your home.

Shopping was only part of it. Just the sight of the old store was enticing. There was the old pot-bellied stove. Next to it was the cracker barrel around which the natives gathered to discuss the problems of the day.

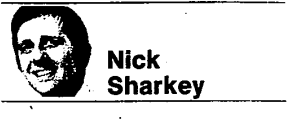
Around the store, you could find the pickle barrel and The Stroller's favorite — the mackerel tub. Salt mackerel was the regular Sunday morning meal in our house. It always was fun to dig around in the tub until you got one of the size you wanted. And how they were relished, just before we took off for Sunday school.

YOU DON'T see the old mackerel tub any more. And the cracker barrel is missing.

So are the friendly clerks who now don't even speak to you. They just stand there pounding on the machine and then showing you the amount you owe.

No one ever asks about your family or what is going on in your house or if you are going to the Sunday school picnic.

So it was no wonder The Stroller yearned for the old-time store the other morning while waiting in the "express" line at our modern supermarket.



**Nick Sharkey**

## Adventures of an adult hall guard

Rituals of the school year are as predictable as the changing of seasons. Fall means football and pep rallies. Winter is the time for the annual Holiday Concert. It's now time for spring musicals in schools throughout this suburban area.

Themes change from year to year but usually the format for a musical is the same. Every class presents a program consisting of a few songs. Auditoriums and gymnasiums are packed with proud parents and relatives who ogle on the budding talents of young family members.

School musicals are a large undertaking. Teachers spend innumerable hours rehearsing with their classes. Energetic fathers are recruited to build sets and handle sound systems. Ambitious mothers sew elaborate costumes.

At the end of the musical, all those who contributed are usually recognized. They are praised for making contributions "behind the scenes."

BUT NOT ALL the workers are recognized. I know because I was one of those persons last weekend. I was a hall guard.

You may wonder, what is a hall guard? I wasn't sure myself when I reported to work.

"Your job is to stay in the hallway near the classrooms where the kids wait before going on stage," were my brief instructions. "Make sure no suspicious persons are hanging around."

That was it. I was told what floor I would guard, and then I was sent off to the job.

I found my floor, but I felt awkward. Since I had no visible designation of my status, how would teachers and students know I was a guard and not a "suspicious person" myself?

DOES A HALL guard walk up and down the hallway like a sentry? Or does he find a chair, sit down and try to blend into the woodwork? Does he stand near the stairs asking the name, rank and serial number of anyone wanting to walk down the hall?

I soon found the friendly face of a parent who was a chaperone in a classroom. Better yet, he had been a hall guard last year.

"Keep an eye out for anyone coming down the hall," he advised. "Oh, and don't forget to keep checking the boys' john. We had a lot of trouble there last year."

That gave me something to do. I walked down to the boys' john, only to be disappointed in not finding any trouble. No one was even in the bathroom, but there was a pair of tennis shoes on the floor.

It looked suspicious. So I set the shoes out into the hallway, to keep a better watch. A few minutes later, a sixth grader rushed out of his classroom and grabbed them. He had changed into his costume in the boys' room and forgot to put his shoes back on.

THE FLOOR I patrolled was outside the classrooms of the fifth through eighth grades. They waited inside their rooms until they were called to come on stage and perform. I had to make sure no one entered the classrooms while the performers were out.

All of the classes returned to their rooms after their presentations. They waited there until they all were called down for the finale.

My job went smoothly. At intermission several friends of the students came up to meet them. I sent the friends back downstairs. The boys' john was only used for the purposes intended. In short, it was night without incident.

By the time the finale came, the hallway was empty. The children and their property had been protected throughout the evening. I knew they wouldn't call off my name when giving the credits on stage. Nor would I see my name in the program.

But what the heck, we all can't be stars. I knew I had helped to make the Spring Musical a success again.