

Striped

Neckties bring a few chuckles

BUD GUEST WOULD have liked my favorite haberdasher, Fred Hill, and my linen friend from Coventry, Michael Maguire, not so much for their professional accomplishments in the workplace as for a mutual, sometimes weird, sense of humor.

It's too bad that Bud never shared chuckles with them, nor had a chance to talk of their necktie problem back in his "Sunny Side of the Street" days at WJR.

What necktie problems? If you have to be told that Bud (Edgar A. Guest Jr.) was one of the most popular radio hosts this area has ever known, you haven't lived here long. He was a warm, every-tempered, delightful person who did his "Sunny Side" broadcasts for about a quarter of a century before retiring in 1972 when his eyesight was almost gone. He was 73 when he died March 29.

TWO OF the most revealing paragraphs describing Bud, whom I had known since 1933, were in Bettylou Peterson's Free Press story the next day:

"Sunny Side" was a mixture of stories, humor and philosophy, much of it eventually contributed by letter-writing listeners. Such earthshaking things as which direction the water swirls when it goes down the drain or why a shower curtain always billows inward were the gist of "Sunny Side."

But what has that to do with neckties?

Well, Maguire and I were slipping in a pub one day when for no good reason we compared neck wear. It struck me as odd that my stripes descended diagonally from right to left, while on his tie purchased back in bloody old England — the stripes ran downward from left to right.

"Why?" I queried of this man who once had provoked a two-month research in our set of the question, "What is an ox?"



through
bifocals
Fred
DeLano

When he came up empty, we turned to Fred Hill, nearby, thinking a man in the trade would have the answer automatically.

Hill, who likes to laugh a lot, is celebrating his 44th birthday today. He's tremendously involved in affairs for the good of his adopted community of Plymouth and also enjoys harmless offbeat matters. A native of Port Huron, he is a 1984 graduate of Ohio State University but is gradually living down this blemish on his record.

FRED OWNS the John Smith men's store in Plymouth and from 1978 to 1983 had one by the same name in Rochester's Great Oaks Mall. He also has a Plymouth store of women's classics which he calls "me and mr. Jones."

He claims he adopted this mode of spelling just to be different, but I suspect the truth is that he never studied capitalization at all.

Admitting "I have to plan on growing up," Hills has sponsored elephants in Fourth of July parades; dressed himself in tails, derby and silk tie for a house-to-house distribution of store promotional materials, and has organized a 16-member parade precision drill team of men dressed in business suits who go through the manual of arms using briefcases instead of rifles.

He flunked, however, when asked about the necktie stripes. Had Bud Guest still been alive, we would have asked Bud to pursue the question. Instead, Hill wrote to Walter H.T. Raymond, editor of the Menswear Retailers of America newsletter, who re-

piled from Washington, D.C., "You didn't quite make my day, but getting the answers took up most of the morning."

Raymond even followed this up by writing of Hill's puzzlement in the June 9 edition of his newsletter under the headline, "Men's Fashion Trivia."

He said in that article, "All of the large display of U.S. made diagonally-striped ties at Arthur Adler's Washington store had the stripes running down from right to left. And, all of the equally large display of diagonally-striped (ties) in the nearby Burberry store had left to right running stripes."

"AT BURBERRY'S we were told that the left to right striped 'regimentals' ran in the same left to right direction that the Queen wears her sash when reviewing the regiments, and the non-regimental diagonal stripes follow suit."

"A good story," says Bill Keys of the 104-year-old Keys & Lockwood neckwear firm in New York. "But, the reason for the different direction of the stripes is that in this country standard practice is to cut the cloth face down. In England, they cut the cloth face up."

Now that we've settled that burning topic (maybe), consider this final touch which Bud would have liked. It reflects Hill's business philosophy. These are lines from an Edgar A. Guest Sr. poem which Fred has committed to memory:

"The reason people pass one door to patronize another store is not because a business place has better silks of gloves or lace, or better prices, but it lies in pleasant words and smiling eyes."

The only difference I perceive is in the treatment folks receive."

Farmington readers' forum

Letters must be signed, original copies and include the address and telephone number of the writer. None can be returned. Names will be withheld from publication only sufficient reason. Letters should be limited to 300 words in most cases. We reserve the right to edit them. Send letters to Readers' Forum, Farmington Observer, 332 Grand River Ave., Farmington 48024.

Party was just super

To the editor:

A sincere thank you to all in the north Farmington community who contributed to the success of the party at North Farmington High following graduation.

The positive response from students, parents, neighbors, merchants, corporations, public agencies and civic organizations was overwhelming. Seldom is there an opportunity for so many to work in unity toward one goal.

Graduates, along with the community at large, we say, "Best wishes for the future, we love you and believe in you."

North Farmington Senior Parents Class of 1986

Encourage Hills voters

To the editor:

I was disappointed when I read in the paper several weeks ago that the Farmington Hills City Council had voted to cease its tradition of mailing absentee ballot applications to citizens 60 and over.

The city funds a Voter Participation Committee (to get out the vote) yet has cut the exact program that encourages the greatest voter participation.

I don't have all statistics for the recent city council election to display the importance of absentee voter participation, so let's look at the November 1982 general election, in which 5,022 absentee ballots were cast.

Absentee ballots represented 21.3 percent of the 23,588 total votes cast and 12.6 percent of the 39,494 of the registered voters.

By contrast, in the June 9 school board election, where absentee voter participation was not actively solicited, only 1,036 votes were cast from a total of 52,008 registered voters — or 2 percent. That's nearly criminal.

Let's reduce and combine the number of elections to pay for the mailing of absentee ballot applications. The 1986 calendar is full and includes at least two superfluous elections that should be combined:

- June 9 — school board election.
- June 24 — parks and recreation millage.
- Aug. 5 — primary election.
- Sept. 23 — roads and highway millage.
- Nov. 4 — general election.

Another proposal is the city could buy front-page advertising space and print the absentee ballot application just as it prints the meeting notices and legal notices.

To all my friends on the Farmington Hills City Council: Come on. Let's open the electoral process, not restrict it.

Michael A. Chehal
Farmington Hills

One day to remember

To the editor:

I would like to thank your paper for the excellent coverage we received on our Memorial Day Parade on May 26, 1988.

The articles by Susan Steinmueller, staff writer, and the staff photos by Rick Smith were the best and nicest articles and pictures that we have had printed in years.

This is one day that deserves to be mentioned and we most

certainly appreciate what your paper did.

Emily Sisson, President
American Legion Auxiliary
Groves-Walker Post
Farmington

River rescue huge success

To the editor:

Rouge Rescue '88 was an outstanding success. On Saturday, June 7, 15 sites along the 126 mile Rouge River were cleaned. The cleanup and the days' activities were coordinated through individual towns, the governments of Wayne, Oakland, and Washington County, SEMCOG, the River Rouge Watershed Council, Friends of the Rouge, Ford Division, WJBK-TV Channel 2, The Detroit News, Gannett Outdoor, and WRIF-Radio.

Local DPW's hauled trash and debris from the river the week prior to June 7. Then more than 2,500 volunteers hauled truckloads of trash and debris from the river banks and surrounding areas to trucks and dumpsters.

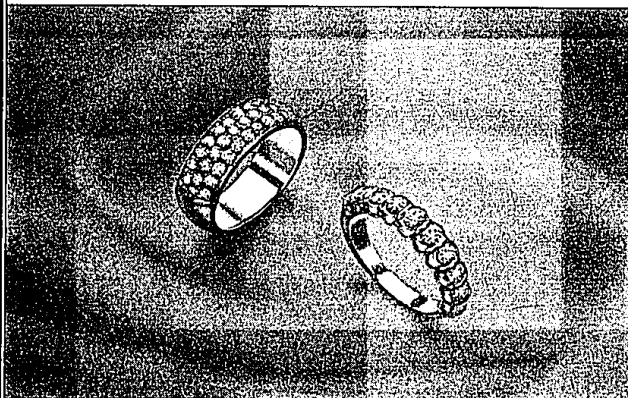
George Palmiter, a nationally recognized river-restoration expert, removed a large logjam along the river in the city of Wayne, enabling the water to once again run freely.

We were pleasantly surprised with such a large turnout, getting dirty and wet did not deter the volunteers. Rouge Rescue '88 was a huge success and we would like to thank everyone who came out and all the ambitious people who helped rescue a river.

The cleaning of the river will be continued throughout the summer by paid part-time personnel, providing summer jobs for the area's youth. And Rouge Rescue will be an annual event.

For a clean river, thanks.
Bruce Monson
River Rouge
Watershed Council

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