

POINTS OF VIEW

We need to weather storm of forecasting jobs

Want a job that involves intrigue and the dissemination of disinformation? A job that calls for hating the anxiety of anyone listening to orbital levels?

It pays well. The hours are short. Best of all, inaccuracy and/or the repeated stating of the obvious will result not in punitive measures, but, rather, in lavish rewards.

Yes, you too can be a weathercaster.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:
 ■ Successful applicant must have ability to instill sense of needless yet overwhelming panic in listeners. Must be able to take an obscenely obvious situation, such as a snowfall in Michigan — in January — and elevate it to the same type of hyperactive emergency broadcast you'd give if a 14-foot wave of lava was boiling down Woodward.

■ Successful applicant must be able to

repeatedly interrupt early evening television programming with three high-pitched audio beeps, followed by highly menacing yet extraordinarily obvious weather statement in blinding yellow letters across bottom of television screen.

Example: "IT IS RAINING OUTSIDE. SINCE IT IS ALSO JANUARY, THE RAIN WILL FREEZE. IT WILL MAKE FOR A MISERABLE DRIVE TO WORK IN THE MORNING. WE'RE TELLING YOU NOW, SO YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO WORK YOURSELF UP INTO A LATHER AND WORRY. PLEASE STAY TUNED FOR MORE WORRISOME INTERRUPTIONS. THAT WAY, YOU WON'T SLEEP WELL AND YOU'LL BE IN FINE SHAPE FOR THE MORNING DRIVE. WE NOW RETURN YOU TO TONIGHT'S MOVIE, 'HIGH ANXIETY.'"



PHILIP SHERMAN

■ Successful applicant must have convincing, endearing shrug; doe-eyed facial expression; and on-air ability to say, while oozing sincerity: "Shucks. I sure thought that 400-mph twister/snowstorm/lava flow was headed this way, but I guess it's just going to be partly cloudy with a high in the mid 40s. Sorry."

■ Successful applicant must be able to

turn what would be a 20-second weather report, if presented without garnish, into at least eight minutes of highfalutin, meaningless mumbo jumbo.

Example: "The winds are crossing Montana in an easterly direction at an undefined yet significant rate of speed, where they'll mix with a jet stream and get redirected by the cold front over Wisconsin into a funnel formation that could go north or south of us."

NOTE: Successful applicant, at this point, must be able to turn inappreciable pseudo-information from 3,000 miles away into localized, seemingly accurate weather predictions.

Example: "That means if we get clouds tonight, then there will be a better chance of precipitation than if we don't get clouds tonight. If the cloud ceiling fails to materialize, we might call for a non-cloudy condition called 'clear.' Temperatures will range from a

high in the mid double-digit numbers to a low that's definitely less than the high and, in all probability, also less than the midrange forecast."

■ Successful applicant must be able to perform all of above duties in shameless fashion, day after day, with the bravado of one whose predictions actually are clear and accurate. Cellophane hair and insipid grin a plus; knowledge of using garage door opener to wow crowd with hoo-ha graphics a necessity.

Apply at any broadcast media outlet.

Apparently, too many on-air people juddering panic-laden weather information is never enough.

Philip Sherman is editor of the West Bloomfield/Lakes Eccentric. To leave a unicemail message for him, dial 644-1100 Ext. 264.

The more things change, the more they stay the same

The closer it comes to Bill Clinton talking over the presidency, the more I feel uneasy.

It's not that Clinton can't do the job, chances are he can. And it's not that I didn't vote for him. I did.

It's the baby boomer thing. I just find it hard to have confidence in somebody of my own generation. We're the folks who didn't want to go to Vietnam, cut our hair or go to church.

From there we went on to reinvent just about everything. Bars sported ferns and we doused offices with gray and mauve paint. We talked about being liberal, but voted for Reagan because we were making money. We came up with "diversity," baby

carriages that cost \$600 and started talking about letting women and homosexuals fight our next war.

Hopefully there won't be one. But if there is, I'm 100 percent behind having women in combat and homosexuals in the service. It's the level playing field idea that ultra liberals are always talking about. We need to create one.

Since we've kept women and homosexuals out of combat and being previous wars, it's now their turn. If we do that, it levels out the playing field for the heterosexual males who have fought our previous wars.

But baby boomers have reinvented more than the armed services. Back in the '60s you were embarrass-



JEFF COUNTS

ed if your parents sat around in their underwear at night eating popcorn and watching "The Honeymooners." We now call that cooning.

And if your dad could find his pants, put them on and head to the corner bar

to watch the Friday Night Fights on a 27 inch TV, he had an evening out. We now call that male bonding.

If your mom managed to get out of her house dress and into a blue suit for an evening of cards with old college friends, she had a night out. It's now called networking.

We baby boomers find everything traditional aberrant. But we need those activities, so we call them something else to make them new and trendy.

We've even forgotten how to take a walk. We can't do it without buying a special pair of \$100 shoes or reading a magazine that tells us how to put one foot in front of another.

Women buy expensive cookbooks to

basically learn what they should have from their mothers, and men watch tool and garden shows for the same reason.

American Indians believe people have a sickness, if they're out of touch with the land or their traditions. If they're right, we've got a plague on our hands.

As Jimmy Buffett said in one of his songs: "We are the people our parents warned us about."

Jeff Counts is the editor of the Plymouth and Canton Observer Newspapers and has been on the cutting edge of the recocking movement for about 10 years. He can be reached at 459-2700 or faxed at 459-4224.

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