

# editorial opinion

Dan McCosh writes

## 'Respectable' protests

"Oooh, we're going to picket? Honey, you're going to have to buy me a new dress."

This lady was in our PTA, and she had been there before.

We have a guy who is so fast stapling up a picket sign the staple companies send out engineers to watch. Mainly he wears rumpled shirts, because he has a constant shortage of shirt cardboard, which is his favorite for a lightweight sign.

We get a little light on slogans. If somebody can put together a couple of catchy phrases on the issue at issue we usually fill in with a pile of standards - stuff like "Quality Education," "Community Control," etc.

Just about anything with "the people" somewhere in the second line usually fits.

Maybe 10 years ago the same group would be getting the cupcakes ready for the sale.

Jackie Klein writes

## Add this to your misery

Tired of wallowing in Watergate, skyrocketing interest rates, inflation and the Tigers finishing last?

Let me take you away from all this as we escape into the magic world of the hospital.

Let me make this perfectly clear. At this point in time I cannot tell you how to curb inflation and fatten up the skeleton economy. But on the subject of hospitals, I am an undisputed expert.

What did you do over your summer vacation? Did you rent a cottage, improve your golf game, take up scuba diving, sun on the shores of the Mediterranean? While you were busy having fun, I was passively undergoing surgery.

I do not want your pity. To the best of my recollection and in the short run, it could have been worse. When I figure out how I'll write another column.

ANYWAY, I CHECKED into the world of the sick on Aug. 6. My room was ready, but there seemed to be a shortage of sheets. My husband referred to buy some at K-Mart and the nurse gave him an order for 12 dozen sheets and matching pillow cases—white.

One of the nurses, who must have been on probation for shoplifting, swapped some linens from a cart that was on its way to the maternity ward. I immediately thought about "Two on a Mattress," a new mother and her squalling infant.

I was finally settled snug in my bed

Carl Stoddard writes

## The city's last freeway

No one expected the fuel crisis to end the way it did. But in 1967, petroleum products simply ran out.

Of course, trickles were still coming in here and there, but for the average person gasoline was just a memory.

The government helped industry make a remarkable change - over to use a different kind of power - human waste. And more remarkable still, the power proved clean, efficient and in an endless supply when connected with mass transit systems.

Houses were heated by solar energy. Back in the early 70's they said it couldn't be done. But the human-waste power plants ran so cleanly that the smog disappeared and the sun power came streaming through.

ONLY ONE PROBLEM remained here in this northern suburb. What to do with all the roads and freeways?

The mass transit systems took up relatively little space and underground shuttle systems in the subdivisions developed during the change-over period made the roads virtually obsolete.

City councilmen proposed changing the roads to bike paths. But it was pointed out that bikes didn't need that much space. The sidewalks would suffice.

One of the older councilwomen sug-

gested that many of the local roads and streets could be used for horse-back riding.

A bonus to this plan, she noted, was that some of the by products of the horses could be used to help power the waste-powered mass transit systems.

The idea was an immediate success and a city ordinance was passed, recognizing horses as the official benefactors of the half-forgotten highways and streets.

However, a problem soon cropped up.

Horses were not doing well on the pavement. A number of veterinary experts asked city council to tear up the pavement. They claimed the horses could travel better on dirt roads.

THE COUNCIL agreed and sent the city's highway department out to begin tearing up the roads.

Of course, the tearing up was expensive, so people who lived along the roads being demolished were assessed the cost.

Some of the old timers complained that they were still paying assessments for having the road paved. Still, the road ripping went on.

Eventually, most roads were ripped up, and trees were planted along the narrower and muddier roads.

Only a few of the back roads, those seldom used, still had paving.

Since I'm insured at the office, it's possible my family can only collect if I pass away with my fingers caught in the typewriter.

Ah, what fond memories I have of that year I spent in the hospital one week. I remember the nurse who woke me at 5 a.m. to take my temperature. She was in such a hurry to go off her shift, she never bothered to read the thermometer.

I recall crossing my fingers hoping I wouldn't get sick on the weekend. Even hospital nurses work a five-day week.

I remember my first walk when I couldn't straighten up. The nurse told me it was in my head. I asked her how she would feel with 105 stitches slashed along her abdomen like the Magnol line.

They put me on a light diet because of the gas pains. For lunch I got bean soup, corned beef, broccoli, and cucumbers and onions. I wondered what the regular diet was and I soon found out. It was plain lousy.

I could go on and on about my private nurse who ordered three desserts, four appetizers, and two beverages for me. I was curious until I discovered it all disappeared when she took her lunch break.

She would give me a hypo and start telling me the story of her life. Believe me, short of a coma, it was a blessing to get the road improvement plan approved and much money to buy the rights from the recreation associations.

Then, after the sections had been purchased, the road people learned that they must get approval from environmental agencies. This proved difficult as the environmental people kept insisting that the horses were health hazards.

BUT PROGRESS had its way, and the freeways came down and were replaced by dirt roads.

Finally, only one freeway remained. The highway people made it their number one priority. Still they meet strong resistance from people who lived along the edges of the peaceful concrete river.

Even today, that freeway still stands amid a continuing battle among ecologists, homeowners and the highway people.

But predictions are that within six years, I-56 will finally come down and the Detroit area will at last have an across town route.

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# CROWLEY'S

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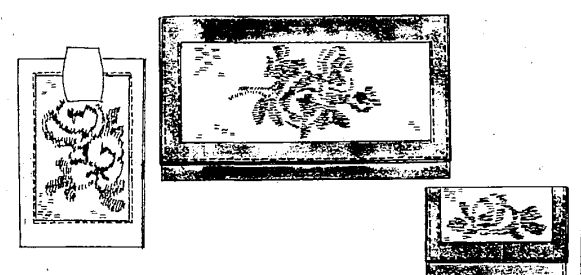
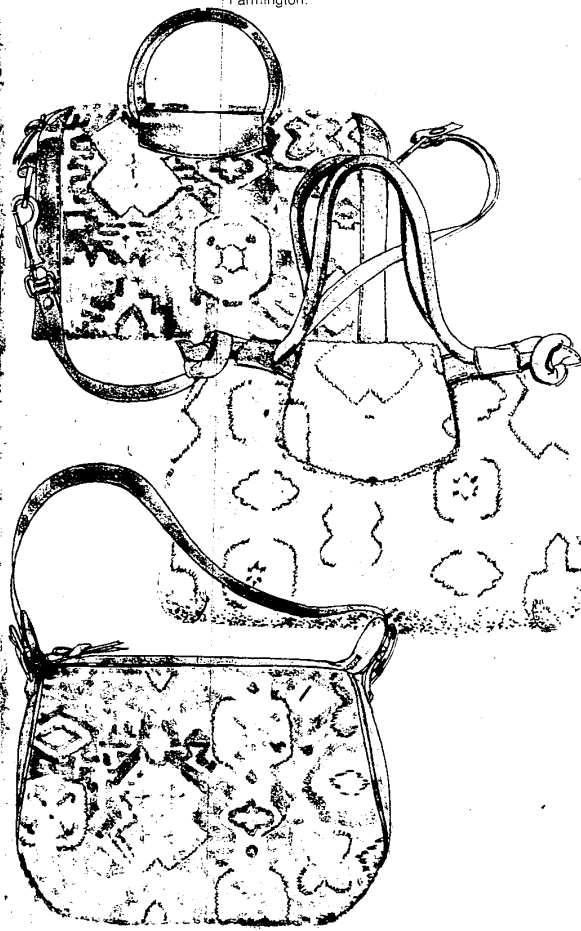
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