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REVISED
5/1/86

"Duck Tales"

SHOW PREMISE

"Duck Tales" is a comedy/adventure series focusing on the exploits of Scrooge McDuck, explorer, adventurer and world renown business duck. Scrooge's mischievous and precocious nephews, Huey, Louie and Dewey, now live with Scrooge and join him on his globe-trotting adventures.

Scrooge's home town and base of operations is Duckburg, U.S.A., a bustling American "every city" which ranges from industrial megalopolis to surrounding rural countryside. Scrooge oversees his vast financial empire from the office complex housing his money bin. He lives in a hilltop mansion in the Duckburg suburbs. Managing his world wide business interests demands all the guile and fortitude he's acquired over the years, but his new and unfamiliar status of family man makes his home life equally demanding.

Duckburg, however, is merely a starting point. Our stories take our characters well beyond the boundaries of their home town. All it requires is even the slightest promise of profit, and Scrooge is off on exciting adventures in exotic locales! Expeditions in search of lost civilizations, voyages to uncharted islands, treks across unexplored wilderness, and underwater searches for sunken treasure are just some of the "Duck Tales" we'll tell!

Shadowy figures skulking in alleyways, mysterious eavesdroppers, footprints where there shouldn't be footprints -- all of these build an atmosphere of "Watch out! Things aren't always what they seem."

But always, always think visually. We have the luxury of real animation -- use it! Don't have a character TELL the audience about a plot point, SHOW THEM. Leave out superfluous dialogue. If Mrs. Beakley finds herself on a bucking brahma bull, she's going to be too distracted to come up with witty remarks. Get the gags out of how she bounces, what the bull hits and the effects on innocent bystanders and China shops. Go for the visual.

If we venture into outer space, or do a time travel story, we will probably only do it once in each case. However, lost underground cities or ancient ruins may be used more often. Genuine magic can be part of a few select episodes, probably featuring Magica De Spell, but must always be disposed of at the end.

But don't forget "heart." The back story of a slam bang adventure should be rooted in some character trait or human foible. No preaching, no blatant education, but, instead, lessons we all learn from real life experiences.

In each story, at least one character should learn something about himself or something positive about some other character. Our characters are not "altered" by experiencing the story. They grow.

A WORD ON ANTHROPOMORPHS

Consider this scene:

Mrs. Beakley serves Scrooge and the nephews a scrumptious turkey dinner.

This scene is either terrifying or mundane depending on your point of view. We opt for the mundane.

Scrooge's family and the rest of the characters in DUCKTALES are humans. Don't look for the logic in it, just accept it. It's the Disney tradition for all their characters derived from their short subjects. Minnie Mouse keeps Figaro, a kitten, as a pet. Donald has fried eggs for breakfast. Mickey can mingle with humans and no one will raise an eyebrow at the three foot mouse at the buffet table. Don't make references to the types of creatures they apparently are. Our ducks swim using a breaststroke and the "Dognose" citizens of Duckburg eat people food, not Alpo. If you treat the characters as humans, you won't run into any problems. Any animals they meet are real animals who don't wear clothes and don't talk.

CONCEPTS AND BACKGROUND

When it comes to adventure, the whole world is our playground! Our ducks can travel to the real pyramids of Egypt or the real Grand Canyon, but are just as likely to venture to strange locations like the Island of Boola Boola and the Grand High Yodel Mountains.

The ducks' hometown of Duckburg is colorful and fun as well, and its inhabitants all possess an "Andy of Mayberry" kind of quirkiness. Duckburg is a conglomeration of skyscrapers and general stores, mansions and junkyards and, of course, all the really important places, like pizza parlors, video arcades and rollerskating rings.

Not far from the skyscrapers, there's the Junior Woodchuck's secret treehouse, Launchpad McQuack's tiny, one-holed airport and Gyro Gearloose's nearby "Brainstormin' Barn." (With ads boasting he can invent anything in ten minutes or While-U-Wait, whichever comes first!) The Duckburg ice cream parlor is secretly a favorite of Scrooge's. He often sneaks out in the middle of the night for a dip of his favorite ice cream: mint!

Think of Duckburg as your old neighborhood, with all the funny hang-outs and weird characters every town has.

Uptown, in an outrageously huge mansion, lives SCROOGE McDUCK, eccentric, adventurous zillionaire. His family migrated to Duckburg from Scotland just before he was born and as a young duck, and made his fortune bustin' his

feathers diggin' for gold in the Klondike. Scrooge is one tough cookie, but he has a warm side to him, which he tries to hide. This warm side will become evident when Scrooge's nephews, HUEY, DEWEY and LOUIE, come to live with Scrooge in the pilot episode.

In our pilot, Sailor and chief deck-swabber DONALD DUCK will be sent to sea on a mission for the Navy. He leaves Huey, Dewey and Louie in the care of their Uncle Scrooge until he returns.



MAIN CHARACTER

4412-



SCROOGE MC DUCK





MAIN CHARACTER

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SCROOGE MC DUCK



SCROOGE McDUCK

Scrooge is a fighter, a "duck of iron." He learned the importance of an unbending will while prospecting for his original fortune in the Yukon. He is a very "big operator" and dreamer who has conquered commerce on every front and built a monument to himself: three cubic acres of cash! He will employ any means to increase or preserve his fortune, except dishonesty. His wealth was not handed to him on a silver platter. He spent a lifetime of sweat acquiring it, and there is no such word as "quit" in his vocabulary.

Scrooge is also incredibly resourceful, drawing on wide and varied experience: he has hunted diamonds in the Amazon, sold yaks in Tibet, prospected for platinum in Africa, etc. And he has acquired an impressive knowledge of languages from business conducted all over the world. His frequent run-ins with the Beagle Boys demand cleverness, fortitude and sometimes trickery. In short, Scrooge displays good old-fashioned American know-how!

Scrooge also has a heart and it's best shown in his treatment of Huey, Dewey, Louie and Webby. He enjoys their companionship on adventures and delights in teaching them about the "real world" especially if it involves revisiting some scene of his youth. He'll get down on his knees to play marbles and climb tree at a moment's notice. There's an especially tender spot in his heart for Webby because he doesn't quite know how to deal with a little girl.

The bottom line is that Uncle Scrooge is gloriously alive and energetic; fighting, scrimping, and building his masterpiece of success!

SCROOGE'S DIALOGUE

Scrooge's grandfather brought his family to America before Scrooge was born. So his accent has been filtered through a couple of generations. Don't write for a Scottish accent. Don't say "wee bairn" when you mean "little baby" or "me" instead of "my".

Every once in a while, he might say "aye" for an affirmative and probably calls the nephews "lads" as often as he says "boys" but don't overdo it.

The only exceptions are in times of extreme stress or worry. Then he sometimes slips back to the expressions he heard bandied about as a babe:

"Curse me kilts!" when angry.

"Burst me bagpipes..." when amazed.

"Oh bless me bagpipes" when all looks hopeless.

You might play around with similar phrases, but don't get too esoteric. The words should play off some well known object or symbol. They should also sound like exclamations. For example, "By me mother's plaids" is familiar but not explosive sounding enough.

SCROOGE AND HIS MONEY

Care must be taken in the portrayal of Scrooge's "love" of money or he'll seem like a cold hearted skinflint. He is

not Dicken's Ebenezer Scrooge, who lived in rags and only spent money to make money. McDuck treats his money as a trophy of challenges met and obstacles overcome. "I made it by being tougher than the toughies, and smarter than the smarties!"

True, he can't pass up a good deal and will cross the street to pick up a penny, but he'll spend it on a wise investment. (Don't confuse "wise" with conservative. There's a pile to be made on lunardust investments.) Although he'll pay his nephews some ridiculously small amount for a backbreaking job, they room and board in a mansion with every modern convenience. Scrooge is even capable of a generous act and he would risk a fortune, if necessary, to save his family or close friends. These rare glimpses of compassion give Scrooge his depth.

Scrooge's MONEY BIN is a symbol of all he's accomplished in his life. It's his history, photo album, self worth and memorial all wrapped up in one package. He can tell you a story behind every nickel. So when his bin is threatened, it's more than just a matter of dollars and cents. If he loses his bin, he's a pauper--no matter what overseas investments we might have referred to in other shows.

What McDuck does NOT do with money is use it to light cigars, as kleenex, as a fan, etc. However, in the privacy of his own bin, he might build coin castles or go skiing on the money piles. And, of course, he takes his

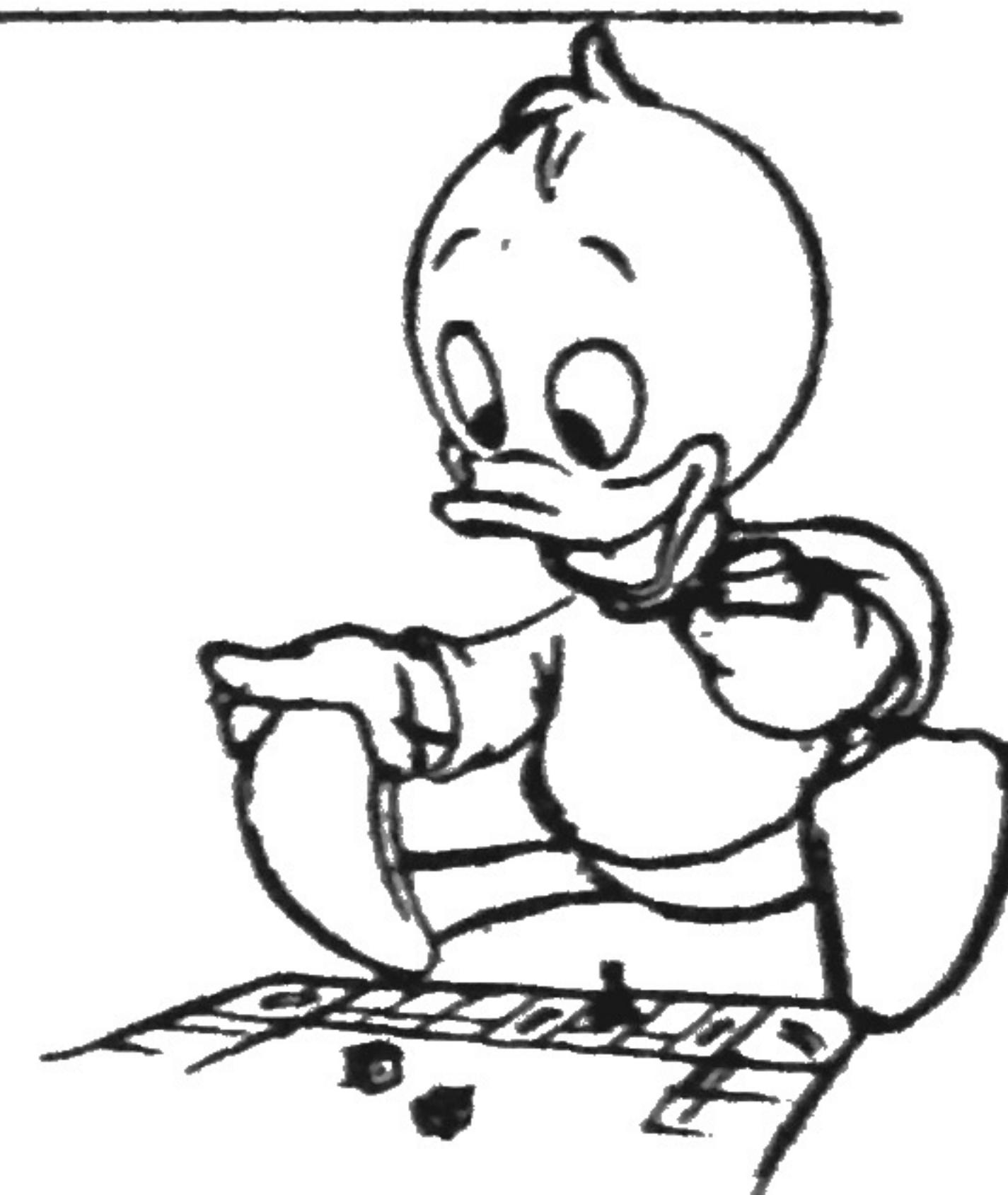
daily swim in it where he loves to "dive through it like a porpoise, burrow through it like a gopher and toss it up and let it hit me on the head!".





MAIN CHARACTERS

4412.



NEPHEWS



HUEY, DEWEY AND LOUIE

These three are boys with all the inherent mischievousness and curiosity peculiar to that species. They don't appreciate being coddled or held in check by Mrs. Beakley, but they like her and are always respectful to her and other adults. As sometime girl-haters, this trio usually treats Webby as a pesky little sister type, but they are also protective of her. They are very fond of Scrooge and know his blustery exterior hides a nice uncle somewhere underneath.

Balancing their mischievous and precocious natures are the nephews' unshakable values of compassion, loyalty, good spirits, and uncommonly common sense.

They are the keepers of the JUNIOR WOODCHUCK'S GUIDE. This can be a "deus ex machina" that comes to the rescue whenever something needs to be done that no one should be able to do, such as translate ancient writings or explain how to rebuild a rocket engine or state the incubation period of a dinosaur egg. But this use of the GUIDE should only be resorted to in the most outrageous situations. DON'T OVERUSE IT!

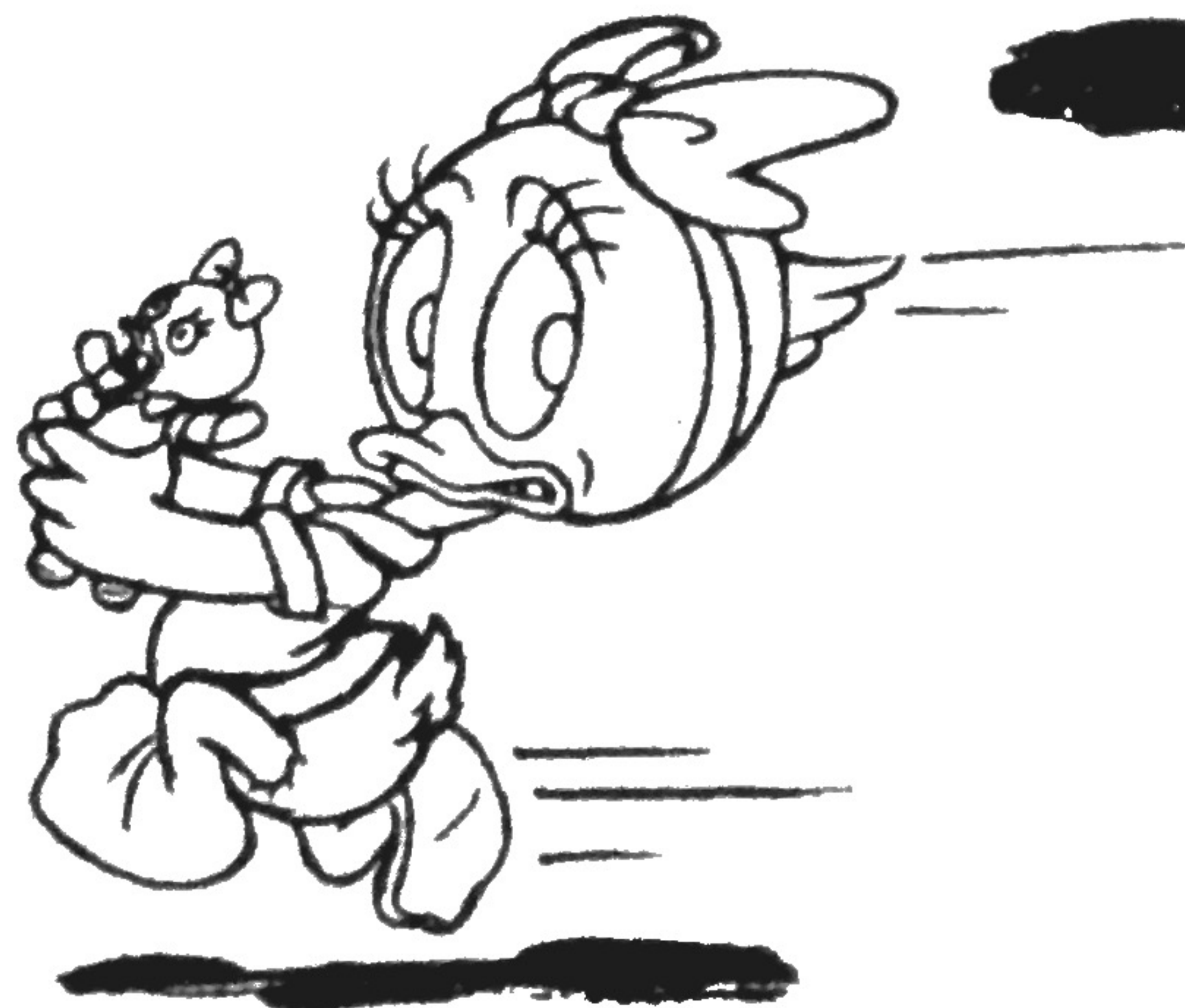
The Guide can also function on the level of an encyclopedic Boy Scout manual. It has information on how to build a bear trap, plug up a geyser, navigate by stars, etc. Some of these may backfire, not because of misinformation in the guidebook but because of the inadequacies of materials used or their implementation.



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MAIN CHARACTER

4412-



WEBBY



WEBBY

WEBBIGAIL is Mrs. Beakley's granddaughter, a wide-eyed innocent whose one goal in life is to become the fourth in the trio of nephews. She idolizes them and often follows them, and sometimes putting herself in the midst of their adventures.

Perhaps because of her innocence, Webby has a special affinity to animals and they to her. She's often able to calm a growling dog or tranquilize a baby dinosaur. But this is not a superpower, it's usually the result of a kind and thoughtful act. Don't put her in a cage of lions and expect her to walk out unhurt.

Webby is two years junior to Huey, Dewey and Louie. The apparent ages of the kids might vary according to the needs of the story, but Webby is never a baby. She can parachute from planes, keep a drowning man from sinking, and generally carry her own weight on an adventure.

Webby is very fond of her Uncle Scrooge and often wants to sit in his lap or hold his hand. While hard put to deal with the nephews, Scrooge is absolutely at the mercy of Webby. He has no concept of what makes little girls tick. He is not afraid of showing affection and rarely puts on the grumpy act with her that he uses to hid his feelings from others.



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MRS. BEAKLEY

4412-01



MRS. BEAKLEY

She is gullible and easily flustered, but she is not stupid. Mrs. Beakley possesses a heart of gold and an ironclad sense of responsibility.

She can be manipulated through her good nature and confusion, as the nephews have learned, but not for long. She can't be manipulated by fear, however. Not even the most frightening person or circumstance has a prayer of harming her charges while she is there to protect them. If that requires coming on like a Sherman tank, then beware of the treads and cannon!

When it comes to her job as governess, we find that she can be very determined and down-to-earth. As a result, she oftentimes find herself bumping heads with Scrooge, functioning as the conscience he refuses to admit he owns.

This sense of responsibility often, but not always, drags her where he charges go, which is wherever Scrooge goes, which is ALL OVER THE WORLD! (So much for quietly knitting in the nursery!)



LAUNCHPAD・ランチパッド

4412・



LAUNCHPAD McQUACK

No one is sure if he's an ex-military test pilot or an Amazon bush flyer...Launchpad is always giving contradictory stories. It seems his memory is hazy. (Perhaps it's too many crash landings.)

He sees himself as Steve Canyon or Chuck Yeager, but he's really closer to a gung-ho Dudley Do-Right with Evel Knievel tendencies. ("Any crash you can walk away from is a good crash!")

Launchpad has a "gift" with vehicles -- if it moves, he can drive it. This is not the result of any excess of intellect but due primarily to his dashing self-confidence and devil-may-care attitude. From a Martian space fighter to a Mongolian shopping cart, he ALWAYS manages to get the contraption moving, usually at a dangerous speed and in the wrong direction.

Although Launchpad's thinking may seem a trifle tangled, his heart is in the right place. He views himself as "born to do the impossible" and takes his role as soldier of fortune very seriously. He often speaks in platitudes, like a John Wayne with feathers. ("Don't worry, team, we'll burn that bridge when we come to it.") And yet, you really wouldn't expect a hero of his caliber to speak in anything else. He considers himself an expert on everything and thinks nothing of making an explanation up on the spot if he doesn't know the real one.

He treats his young admirer, Doofus, with a kind of benign fatherliness that mirrors a superstar's affection toward his adoring fans.



DOOFUS

Doofus is a waddling advertisement to the greatness of Launchpad McQuack. Launchpad never needs to produce a resume or a business card -- he merely taps little Doofus on his frowsy head, and the lad launches into an excited, nasally monologue, retelling his hero's exploits.

But his well-intentioned chatter can also get his hero into trouble. He's terrible at keeping secrets and often lets important information slip to the wrong people. Poor, chattering, unathletic Doofus is usually more of a hindrance than a help, but he tries so hard to emulate his hero that no one has the heart to discourage him.

He is also a member of the Junior Woodchucks and, but seems to specialize in the out-of-the-ordinary merit badge like underwater beekeeping or Jello sculpture. He's sort of a computer nerd without the saving grace of a computer. These merit badge quests, such as collecting toadwarts in the Gobi Desert or identifying volcanoes from the inside out, often complicate the missions of Launchpad McQuack and the adventures of Scrooge and his nephews.

Species: Hero worshipcus tagalongus, DOOFUS idolizes Launchpad. He would follow his hero to the ends of the earth, and often does!



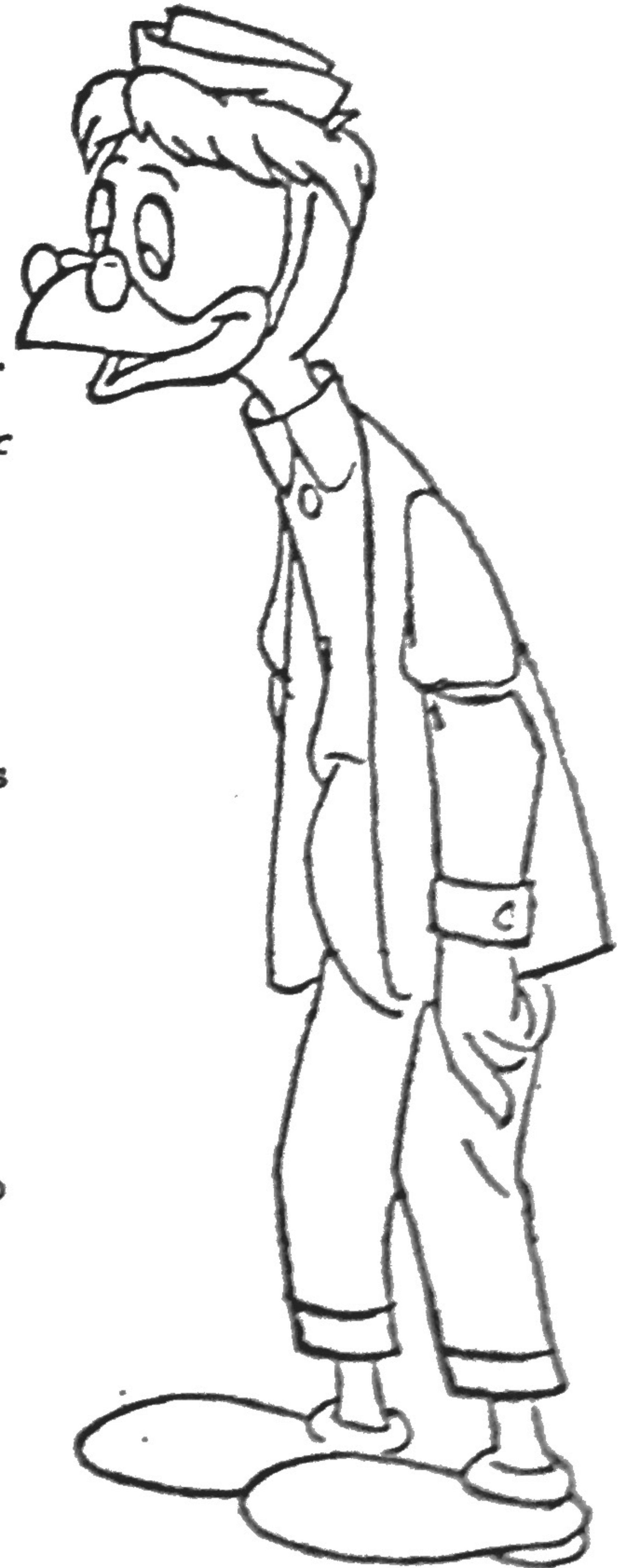
DOOFUS

GYRO GEARLOOSE

GYRO is Duckburg's wacky inventor. He's a gentle, passive soul who invents things to make the world a better place. He doesn't have much of a sense of humor because he gets so singleminded when it comes to a problem at hand. Jokes tend to sail over his head unless they're pointed out to him. Once he understands he'd enjoy the laugh and probably chuckle about it the rest of the day, long after everyone else has stopped laughing.

His inventions range from useful to the esoteric: stone walls from spray cans, hydraulic toothpicks, gasoline pills, portable skyscrapers, a grill that flips its own pancakes, and on and on and on.

There are three things we'd like you to remember about his inventions. First, his motivation, Gyro invents things because he perceives a need of mankind. Most often, the "need" is simple and the solution is not. It's the proverbial killing of a fly with an elephant gun. For example: Gyro has trouble moving his heavy furniture to dust underneath. "Aha! Everyone has this problem." (He doesn't say this aloud, but it's his thought process.) So he



invents a matter transmitter to move the furniture to the front lawn while he sweeps the floor. Of course the Beagle Boys steal it to move Scrooge's money to their hideout and that's the beginning of an episode.

Two, Gyro never has an invention that exactly fits an immediate problem. For instance, Scrooge needs something to fly him across town immediately. Gyro has no flying machine on hand but he does have an old megawatter pogostick that he designed to speed up apple picking. Scrooge doesn't have time to find anything else so he's forced to bounce across the city. Obviously, there's some funny action humor that we can get from such situations. The invention works perfectly, it's just not quite the right thing for the job.

Finally, we hate miraculous inventions that make things too easy. Electronic monitors that pinpoint the whereabouts of the Beagle Boys, radar scopes that can track the radiation from Magica's spells, super computers that give all the answers, etc. We want our characters to be active and find information from the search for clues. We want complications in our stories so avoid having Gyro invent things that get rid of them.

DUCKWORTH, Scrooge's live-in manservant. He's butler, chef, chauffeur, pool attendant, gardner, valet, etc. Scrooge is too cheap to hire more than one servant, so stuffy and properly aloof Duckworth plays all the roles, always with wry, deadpan humor, a la Sir John Gielgud in the movie "Arthur."



GLADSTONE GANDER

GLADSTONE GANDER is the luckiest duck in the world. He has an extreme aversion to work, which he never does because when he needs anything it just falls into his lap one way or another. He is the antithesis of Scrooge's philosophy that real success takes hard work and a sharp mind. His luck drives Uncle Scrooge crazy. He is almost obnoxious, constantly flaunting his unfailing good luck.

Gladstone stories give us what we love in an episode--twists, turns and always the unexpected. For example, Gladstone learns of a gold mining contest in Alaska but has no way of getting there. He immediately finds a ticket to be a game show contestant. The winner's prize is a tour of Alaska! But answering questions is a form of work so he gives the tickets to Scrooge. Scrooge wins the prize easily because all the questions are about Alaska which he knows from his Klondike days. But when he walks out the door of the studio, the wind snatches the tour ticket out of his hand. It blows across town and smacks Gladstone in the face!

Although Gladstone isn't an out and out villian, he has enough unlikable traits that make us want to see him get his comeuppance. How can the luckiest duck in the world lose? Sometimes, by letting him win by the letter of the law while our heroes get a bigger prize. In the gold mining contest story above, the nephews beat a gold trophy, that Gladstone sold Scrooge at the beginning of the story, into a nugget

and hide it right where Scrooge can't help finding it. But of course, Gladstone trips over it takes the last boat to head back to town and win the contest. When McDuck finds out, he throws down a pick in disgust and finds a nugget so large that they can beat it into the shape of a full sized boat which they ride back to town. Gladstone won the contest but Scrooge got the bigger prize.

Gladstone's luck is intentionally of mysterious origins. Don't try to explain as magical auras, lymph gland secretions or electrical radiation.





MAGICA DE SPELL

MAGICA DE SPELL

MAGICA DE SPELL fits nicely into the long line of Disney, bigger than life, villianesses. She is cunning, ruthless yet somehow seductive. Her powers are a mix of real sorcery and mechanical props. She spends much of her time in the pursuit of OLD NUMBER ONE, the first dime Scrooge ever earned. She is positive it is a talisman capable of making whomever possesses it the richest being in the world.

Scrooge isn't sure whether he believes this theory, but he's positive that, magic or not, no one is going to own the dime but him! (And when it's missing, bad luck seems to come his way but this may be because of his frantic state of mind.)

Be careful of making Magica too powerful. Her magic is best used in conjunction with a prop. She might bathe a magic wand in a special potion or create a spray bottle that instantly disguises the user. Rattles, masks, idols and talismans give us something visual to concentrate on and can be smashed, stolen, thrown, or lost to remove the magic. She can throw small lightning bolts but they come from an electric zapper that she straps to her arm. But it takes alot of power and she's constantly draining her batteries.



THE BEAGLE BOYS

These losers are practically an institution at the Duckburg Jail. They were thrown in on the day it opened and have been breaking out and being thrown back in ever since! They even have their own personalized parking space out front! There are four main BEAGLE BOYS: BIG TIME, BURGER, BOUNCER and BAGGY.

At the start of some episodes in which they appear, THE BEAGLE BOYS will receive a big cake from their mother, MA BEAGLE. In it will be the means to a ridiculous new way of escaping! At first glance, it often makes no sense. For instance, they'll cut open the cake and find a package of dental floss. Eventually, Big Time will figure out they can floss their way out through the bars! Or there'll be a new camera in the cake. Big Time will use it to fool the GUARD, by asking him to take pictures of them in various poses: behind bars -- in front of the bars -- and finally, leaving the jail and driving away in the Warden's car! The Guard isn't too bright. After all, he's been delivering the cakes for twenty-five years! (And if you'll take a look at the attached drawing, you'll see they're often pre-e-tty darned obvious!)



The Beagle Boys each have distinctive personalities.

BURGER BEAGLE is a shameless food lover, who dives into the cake every time it's delivered. If the Beagle Boys are staking out a bank near a donut shop, BURGER can't resist "dunking in" for a donut. He can sometimes be traced by following the trail of crumbs.

BAGGY BEAGLE is a clumsy sort, whose jail uniform is five sizes too large. In a family not known for intelligence, BAGGY is the dimwit cousin.

BIG TIME is the leader of the group. He loves to brag about his daring jail breaks of the past and of what he's going to do when he becomes the "kingpin" of crime.

BOUNCER BEAGLE is the strong man of the group. If they're rushed for time, he'll carry out the whole safe instead of waiting around to open it. He has a personal grudge against Launchpad who seems more physically fit than him but the two never come to blows because of Launchpad's fumbling good fortune. When Bouncer makes a leap at him, he just happens to bend down to pick up a piece of litter, if he hides behind a door, the duck opens it in his face etc. etc.

Sometimes a heist requires more muscle than Baggy, Bouncer, Burger and Big Time can supply, so they might call in some of their cousins.

You might try experimenting with new characters. Just make their names begin with "B" and be a clear description of their personalities. Here are some possibilities:

BACKBITE BEAGLE
BACKCOURT BEAGLE
BACKOFF BEAGLE
BACKROOM BEAGLE
BACKSTAGE BEAGLE
BACKWOODS BEAGLE -Hillbilly cousin
BACKWARD BEAGLE
THE BAFFLING BEAGLO -magician
BALLPARK BEAGLE -Sports nut
BANKSHOT BEAGLE
BANTAM BEAGLE -small, spunky pugilist
BARGAIN BEAGLE
BARON VON BEAGLE -bogus European royalty
BELLYACHE BEAGLE
BIGHOUSE BEAGLE -the "kingpen from the State Pen"
BIG LEAGUE BEAGLE -sucessful uncle they all look up to
BIGMOUTH BEAGLE -lawyer
BLIMPY BEAGLE -makes Burger look anorexic
BOGUS BEAGLE -counterfeiter of just about anything
BUGGY BEAGLE
GENERAL BULLHEAD BEAGLE -General Patton
BUMMER BEAGLE -hippie malcontent

Transylvanian adventure--BOOGEY BEAGLE, BRAINSTORM BEAGLE
(mad scientist), BLOODSUCKER BEAGLE (just kidding)

Austrailian adventure--BUSHWACK BEAGLE, BOOMER BEAGLE,
BOOMERANG BEAGLE, BLIMEY BEAGLE, BLIGHTER BEAGLE

Blacksheep of the family: TRUEBLUE BEAGLE

Musical group: BUGLE BEAGLE, BLUEGRASS BEAGLE, BONGO
BEAGLE, BANJO BEAGLE and the BOOGIE WOOGIE BEAGLE
BOY FROM COMPANY B





FLINTHEART GLOMGOLD
"DUCKTALES" PRODUCTION 4412

FLINTHEART GLOMGOLD

The second richest duck in the world, Flintheart is determined to move up a notch. He is an exaggerated version of Dicken's Ebenezer Scrooge, mean spirited, miserly and with a set of ethics only marginally bound by anything resembling honesty or trust.

He makes Scrooge look like an outrageous spendthrift, except when it comes to schemes to oust McDuck from his pinnacle. But he is not as clever or honest or tenacious as Scrooge, so he never wins.

Flintheart might hire henchmen and thugs the world over to block many of Scrooge's quests for wealth. He's more than conducive to joint efforts, often joining forces or employing Scrooge's other enemies, like Magica de Spell or the Beagle Boys. For theirs is a common goal: the destruction of the Scrooge McDuck empire!

STORIES

Adventure, Mystery and Misdirection

There are a lot of character parallels between Duckburg and Mayberry, but the concept of our show is closer to "Romancing the Stone"--action adventure, interesting locales and heart.

The "adventure" part may sound easy but beware of the pitfalls of just putting one exciting scene after another. Scrooge could wrestle a boa constrictor, fall down a crack in the earth and shoot out a volcano and not have an adventure but just a hectic day. An adventure needs a goal and a sense of discovery to it. There must be a build to the story that give us surprises or a sense of wonder.

Mystery is great. Not in the sense of a "whodunnit" but keep the audience guessing. One way to do this is to avoid giving too much information at once. This doesn't mean that we want long setups for action. If Scrooge has a problem, he might not recognize it for what it is, but he's in trouble by page three. He then attacks the symptoms of the problem, which of course doesn't solve anything. The nephews might find a piece of evidence that puts him on the right track. Now he thinks he's onto the culprit but it turns out to be a ruse set up by the real villain. This is an example, not a formula. Just don't let the audience get ahead of you. Lead them up false trails.

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Like all good stories, "Duck Tales" episodes should have a "moment" where the point of the story is made, then a "twist" at the curtain that is always a surprise! Humor should come from character, paralleling the all-too-human quirks and foibles we all have. It's the reflection we see of ourselves in the characters that will make "Duck Tales" a truly special show.