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Each to his own

That's the way this happy gang felt as it celebrated a very traditional St. Patrick's Day at Farmington's Old Village Inn, which for one night, at least, was a pub, rather than a bar. Celebrating

(From left) Tom Berrie, Pam Touchie, Gary Friedman and Donna Madigan. (Staff photo by Harry Maute)

Michigan Bell dials new local numbers

Nearly 5,000 Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield residents soon will be able to dial direct overseas—among other things—when their new telephone numbers go into service Sunday morning, March 27.

The West Bloomfield area to get new numbers is bounded by Haggerty Road north to Fourteen-and-a-half Mile, east to Halstead, north around Pleasant Lake to Walnut Lake Road, east to Farmington Road, south to Fourteen Mile and west to Haggerty. Michigan Bell Telephone customers there with 628, 831 and 855 numbers will now have 661 as a prefix.

The area covered by the new numbers in Farmington Hills is Haggerty north to Fourteen Mile, east to Farmington Road, south to Thirteen Mile, east to Orchard Lake Road, south to 1-696 and west to Haggerty.

The area now uses 474, 477, 478 numbers. The new ones will start with 533. Announcement of the change was made last week by Paul H. Hines, general manager of Michigan Bell's operations in the northern suburbs. He

gave details of the number changes at a town meeting attended by local business and government leaders at the Bloomfield Canopy in West Bloomfield.

ALL NEW PHONE numbers will be published in the North Woodward and Pontiac area directories, which will be distributed in Oakland County starting March 21. Meanwhile, intercept service will be provided both residence and business customers so that people calling the old numbers will be given the new ones. Unlisted numbers will not be given out.

The reason for the changes, Hines said, is the transfer of telephone service to West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills from two other central offices to Michigan Bell's new \$49 million electronic switching facility at Thirteen Mile and Drake.

With the start-up of the electronic switching system at 2:01 a.m. March 27, customers in the two local areas will be able to subscribe to the following custom calling features for the first time:

•Call waiting—in which a short tone informs a customer using the phone that there is a second call waiting.

•Call forwarding—which automatically transfers an incoming call from one phone number to another.

•Threeway calling—which allows a customer to add a third party to a conversation.

•Speed calling—which permits a customer to reach frequently called numbers by dialing one- or two-digit codes.

In addition, a few days after the changeover and following special testing by Michigan Bell personnel, Hines said local customers will be able to dial direct many overseas calls.

This new electronic switching system is the 78th one Michigan Bell has installed in the state and several more are expected to be placed in service later this year.

Hines advises that telephone users in West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills areas interested in custom calling features should contact Bell's business office for information and rates.

Media violence stirs debate about TV impact

By LYNN ORR

Can the behavior of television viewers be significantly affected by violent programming? If so, what can viewers do to counteract the impact?

These were the concerns of panel members and audience at a "Media Violence" program last week, the fifth in a series of seven "Youth Advocacy" seminars sponsored by Farmington Public Schools and Oakland University.

Panel members were Bob McBride, of WJBK-TV; Dave Cooper, associate editor of the Detroit Free Press; and Victor Klein, a child psychologist and researcher into the effect of television violence on children.

"There are other things besides television that desensitize people," said McBride, citing such factors as high unemployment and the increasing use of the drugs.

"To me, the whole permissiveness and breakdown in our society is just as terrifying as violence." He said he is not convinced that television is shaping society.

TV is an advertising medium, and the individual TV viewer has made the violent programs the most popular. TV is a reflection of what has happened in our society."

COOPER SAID he is not convinced that newspaper reporting of violence has an effect on violence, citing a study done after the year-long Detroit newspaper strike of 1965-67. The study indicated that the crime rate wasn't affected by the lack of press coverage, he said.

Cooper believes television news coverage, in most cases, avoids sensationalism, but such exploitation does occur because TV is operated primarily as an entertainment medium. He described much of non-news television programming as "gore passed off as entertainment."

"I am personally appalled and ang-

ered by the way the TV media goes about reporting news of violence sometimes," he said, citing as most unjustified the invasion of privacy of people involved in tragedies and attempts to sensationalize violence by showing extended footage.

But Cooper added that he is convinced that neither the editor nor the print media should censor what they report.

"For example, I wouldn't have used as large a headline for the story about the man who was killed in the Olympia Stadium parking lot, but he was killed in a city-owned parking lot, and people have to be warned. The story actually helped correct the deficiencies, but on hindsight, I would have used a smaller headline.

"I certainly wouldn't have buried the story, however," he said.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS seemed particularly concerned with how to persuade the networks and television producers to soft-pedal violent shows.

"If violence is hazardous, how can we get around the whole business of the first amendment?" asked one person.

McBride and Cooper agreed that government intervention or self-censorship would not be a good solution. Local station managers do not want to censor programming or inflict their tastes on the audience, said McBride.

"The movie, 'Mr. Majestyk' had a five-to-one audience over the news special that followed it. And out of five million viewers, we had only four complaints when 'Helter Skelter' was on the air," he said.

Victor Klein suggested that if the public vocally opposed the current level of TV violence, the networks would respond.

"You no longer see denigrations of minority ethnic groups because the community won't allow it," he

said. "The Scandinavian countries have a consensus against violence."

COOPER BELIEVES public pressure on advertisers can influence TV programming, pointing out that General Motors has announced that it takes into consideration the level of violence in programs which it sponsors and that the J. Walter Thompson ad agency advises its clients that violent TV shows can hurt product sales.

McBride, however, said that a company like American Motors, with financial difficulties, buys a lot of time on violent shows.

"Pragmatically, we accept and do some things that personally we don't want to do, but everybody has to share in the responsibility."

Klein, Cooper, and several audience members argued with McBride concerning his claim that viewers determine programming.

"If you tie a goat to a post, it will eat what's available," said Klein. "I don't buy the idea that this is what people want. You can cultivate a taste in almost anything."

Cooper said there is no excuse for the lowest-common denominator theory to gain mass audiences.

"If we wanted to, we could put out a publication to rival National Enquirer or Hustler. I have trouble with the idea that in any communication business you do only what is popular."

ONE AUDIENCE MEMBER AGREED with McBride's assessment that parents advocate responsibility to guide their children's viewing.

But Klein and several other people in the audience pointed out that single parents, especially, are often forced to rely on television as babysitters.

"Parents have that responsibility and cannot turn that over to the boob tube," said McBride.

"I don't think that parents can control TV to the extent that Bob does, but I do think tv has marvellous potential that's not being tapped," Cooper contended.

School social worker Virginia Britton, who was in the audience, suggest-

ed that perhaps teachers have the responsibility to teach children how to separate reality from fantasy.

Klein suggested removing the TV set or strictly controlling viewing time as one solution.

McBride said that writing letters to networks, local stations, and advertisers expressing concern about violent programming, as well as joining PTA

Research on TV influence reveals link to aggression

By LYNN ORR

Television is the single most powerful influence in shaping children's lives, surpassed only by the family, believes Dr. Victor Klein, of the University of Illinois.

And he is convinced that the nature of television violence has a direct impact on the rising crime spiral in the United States.

"On TV, killing is as natural as taking a walk, a gun as natural as an umbrella," says the child psychologist, whose research and theories into TV violence is causing ripples of concern across the nation.

"Research indicates that television can lead to violent behavior in some children," Klein told his audience last week at a forum on media violence, one of the "Youth Advocacy" seminars sponsored by Farmington Public Schools and Oakland University.

"Observation learning plays a highly influential role in accelerating social change," he said. "The pre-school child at home spends more hours watching television than the average college student spends in the classroom over a four-year period."

"The average child between the age of 5-15 will witness the destruction of more than 13,400 individuals," he said, and the lessons being taught radically oppose the traditional morals of the American family.

"THE MAJOR MESSAGE is that violence is the way to get what you want, and that violence is acceptable if the victim deserves it."

Klein's controversial conclusions are based on studies conducted with both children and adults. He is convinced that one particular study confirms his theory that violence on the screen directly contributes to a lack of sensitivity to violence in the real world.

The study tested the reaction of 120 boys age 5-14 to an eight-minute segment of a boxing movie, 'The Champion.' Half the group had been exposed to little or no TV for the previous two years, while the other half watched an average of 46-48 hours of television each week, particularly programs with a great deal of violence.

The program was backed up by a physiograph, a machine that measur-

es responses of the autonomic nervous system, including pupil dilation and heart beat.

The study revealed that the boys with the extensive TV viewing background showed little reaction to the violence in the film compared to the response of the non-TV viewers.

Klein said the study reveals that TV violence acts as a numbing agent on children.

"They are desensitized to human violence, which suggests a loss of consciousness. They've developed a tolerance for violence and are no longer shocked or horrified, suggesting bystander apathy."

KLEIN COMPARED the lack of response to human suffering revealed in the study to the ability of ancient Romans to delight in decapitations and human destruction in gladiatorial contests.

"The brutalizing response to human suffering may make a difference as to what kinds of adults they will become," he said.

Klein cited other cases where violent crimes committed by children were, in his opinion, initiative of behavior they had observed in movies shown on television, and is con-

cerned that television-watching children are being taught damaging lessons.

"Many TV programs bear an anti-social lesson value," he said. "Violence leads to goal attainment, and criminals too frequently are shown as daring heroes. They die like heroes or martyrs."

He also cited the results of another study conducted over a period of years that indicated that greater amounts of TV watching produced more aggressive youngsters.

"Even if you're a concerned parent who monitors your child's television programs, your youngster can still become the victim of another child whose parents aren't concerned," he warned.

However, he believes television has great potential as a teaching instrument, including the power to teach self-control, increased vocabulary, and willingness to help others.

"I would plead with television producers to give us new heroes," he said. "On TV, violence is acceptable for the good guys, but every man believes he is in the right."

inside

Matinee honored Farmington area wrestlers took the big honors in the Observer & Economic All Area team picks. Farmington Editor Steve Barnaby thinks these hard working guys deserve credit for a job well-done. To see what he has to say, turn to page 6A.

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Local cancer society ahead

Jaycees organize unit

With a little help from the Jaycees, the American Cancer Society soon will be more active in Farmington and Farmington Hills. As part of a society pilot program, it is establishing an area unit to help establish local projects.

The size and population of Oakland County requires more than the society's one office in Southfield, according to Laurie Anderson, an American Cancer Society representative.

In establishing a new unit in the area, the society called on the Jaycees to help them contact persons who are active in the two communities.

"One office did not reach enough people," said Ms. Anderson. "We want to bring service to the communities. To accomplish this, we need a group of volunteers to carry on the program in their own areas."

Although the Jaycees are helping the society find volunteers, Ms. Anderson stressed that anyone who is interested in the two communities can join

in the organization effort. Volunteers will help carry on the society's efforts to serve patients in the community, educate the public and crusade for funds.

PATIENT SERVICES HELP make life more comfortable for the 4,300 cancer patients receiving medical care in Oakland County. Of that number, 1,500 will die and 930 persons will be cancer survivors.

There were 2,800 new cases of cancer reported in Oakland County during 1976, according to Ms. Anderson.

If the present rate continues, 250,000 residents in Oakland County will develop cancer within the next few years. Of these, 150,000 will die.

To help these persons, the Cancer Society provides transportation for out-patients as well as operating a loan closet.

The loan closet provides hospital beds, walkers, wheel chairs and other supplies to patients on a temporary basis.

To prevent the spread of the disease, the society sponsors anti-smoking clinics and mother-daughter breast examinations.

"We help the families of cancer patients, too," she said. "We send children to shovel the snow from a cancer patient's sidewalk. We have volunteers sit with patients while mothers, wives and other relatives get out of the house for a while."

Education is another way in which the society fights cancer.

"WE MAKE AVAILABLE literature about cancer in stores and doctors' offices," she said. "Volunteers make information booths in shopping areas. We go to the schools," Ms. Anderson said.

The Jaycees are sponsoring an organizational meeting for volunteers at 7:30 p.m., March 21, at the Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Company, 33945 Hamilton Boulevard, between Twelve Mile and Farmington Road in Farmington Hills.