

Yes — yes!

Library proposals merit OK

Yes . . . and yes. That's what we're advising Farmington-area voters to say in the special library election Tuesday, Aug. 10.

Say **YES** to the bond issue that would provide up to \$15.5 million to erect, furnish and equip a new, 80,000-square-foot main library in Farmington Hills and to renovate the branch library in downtown Farmington.

And say **YES** again on a separate millage proposition that would provide funding to operate the local library system. The millage amount is not to exceed 1.1 mills (\$1.10 on each \$1,000 of state equalized valuation) for 20 years.

While we are asking voters to approve both proposals, we do have some concerns about the Farmington library situation. We're not questioning the need to dump the old facility, but we worry about the location of the new one.

Library officials say (and we agree) that the Farmington Community Library's popularity has propelled use far beyond design capacity. During peak periods, the main library on 12 Mile Road — the one that would be replaced — operates beyond capacity, 38,000 square feet. Noise is up, waits are longer and seating is limited.

We've never cared much for the 21-year-old Farmington Hills branch library. The building itself has never been user-friendly, to our thinking.

Twelve Mile has become a real speedway over the years. It can be a tough drive in and out of the library parking lot over that narrow, sloping access road. The lot is too far away from the main door, and there's a stairway to climb before you get there.

Luckily, there's not enough land to expand there, and the library building was never designed for an addition.

But the site of the proposed new library — nine acres on city-owned property east of Orchard Lake Road and south of I-696 — doesn't

Designing the new library . . . that'll be the real challenge for officials.

look that much better to our eye.

Orchard Lake, the main north-south highway through Farmington Hills, is always busy with traffic. Oakland Community College is just to the west, and cars are coming and going.

There's talk about putting a pedestrian bridge across the freeway to the north (it's not part of the proposals), but somehow we just can't see hordes of youngsters picking their way through the traffic to use the library. And it's going to be a long drive over crowded roads for folks from the populated north end of Farmington Hills to get down to Orchard Lake and I-696.

Perhaps some of these problems can be solved through inspired planning and architecture, but we think it's going to take some design job to make the new library user-friendly in that particular spot.

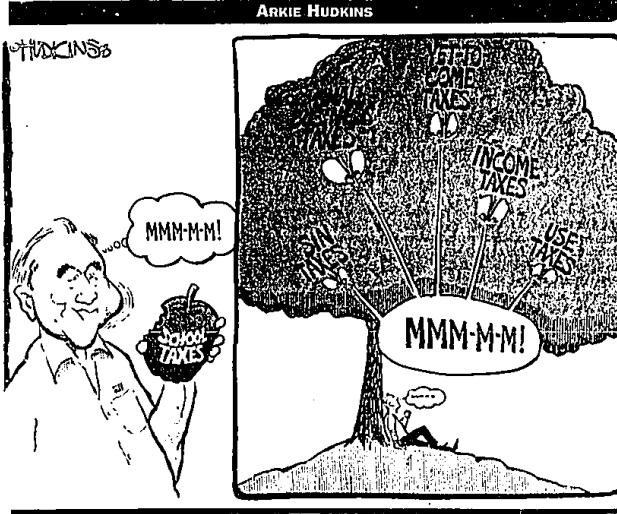
These concerns aren't enough to sink the two proposals, but they certainly should be addressed if the questions are passed by voters on Tuesday.

Designing the new library . . . that'll be the real challenge for officials.

Anyway, "YES" votes on both library questions will assure local library needs will be met for the next 25 or 30 years based on a realistic projection of more than 100,000 residents in the Farmington area by 2015.

On the millage question, costs for a larger, improved library operation will amount to an additional \$16.50 a year for the owner of a home assessed at \$50,000. That's about the cost of one hardbound book.

That's also not too much to ask.



LETTERS

Thanks given

On Saturday, July 31, Brownie Troop 1973, in conjunction with Kroger's at 11 Mile and Middlebelt, collected more than five boxes full of canned goods, diapers and bottled water, and about \$200 to be sent to the Mississippi River flood victims.

They wish to thank all of these who donated. Thanks also to Kroger's, which provided the collection location and flyers, and the Salvation Army in Farmington Hills, which will be sending the packages to the areas in need.

The Brownies that participated are: Elizabeth Abajay, Jenna Charbarneau, Nicole Kollias, Andrea Peczynski, Alicia Polk, Andrea Secney, Alana Stuart and Ashley Wexler.

Sharon Wexler, Farmington Hills

single parent, but the more choices that are offered, the better chance it has of pleasing most of them.

Finally, I would like to say that it is important to know that a curriculum that works great for one child may be terrible for another. People on both sides of this issue should be working for more educational choices, not just for what they want.

It is not ignorance that makes a parent on the side of basics, nor is it irresponsibility for someone to want a progressive curriculum. They both have their place. I hope the school administration will remember this.

Dianna Dovenmuehle, Farmington Hills

Still has concerns

I have been asked by the Observer and many Farmington residents if I plan to run for the Farmington City Council in the upcoming election, and the answer is no. My not running will be a relief to many, especially my family.

I still have many of the same concerns that prompted me to run in 1989 and 1991.

They are:

- Does by-passing competitive bidding give the taxpayer the best value per dollar spent?
- Does the taxpayer get the most qualified candidate for a position when only current city employees are considered for certain positions?
- Is it fair that homeowners bear the burden of the recycling program?
- Do we create too many new ordinances?
- When elected officials obtain our tax dollars, they become theirs, not ours.

I would, however, like to thank all of the individuals who have voted for me in the past and the Farmington High students who elected me in their mock election.

I have enjoyed meeting the people of Farmington and running for our city council. I hope several candidates are willing to step forward with a commitment to make Farmington a better place to live, and I challenge all Farmington residents, young and old alike, to attend one city council meeting a year.

John Kenney, Farmington

How much crime pays

The person who originated the phrase "Crime does not pay" never imagined the likes of Charles Keating, Jr.

Having been found guilty of looting Lincoln Savings and Loan and defrauding investors out of more than \$280 million, Keating was recently sentenced to just 12½ years in prison and ordered to pay \$122.4 million in restitution. Even the sentencing judge conceded that "restitution is very, very remote."

Deducting the \$122.4 million (if paid) from the \$280 million leaves a difference of \$157.6 million left for Mr. Keating. If we spread the \$157.6 million over the 12½ years we find "earnings" of \$12,608,000 per year or about \$1 million each month.

Had he used a gun to steal this \$280 million, he would have received an additional two years in prison. Is justice blind, or what?

Anthony Drehtler, Livonia

She enjoyed it

I just came from Harrison High School and saw two plays put on by the elementary and middle school kids.

The kids are attending the Summer Arts Camp sponsored by the Farmington School District. In eight short days it is amazing how much the kids have accomplished.

I have to admit I'm not totally with some of the things our schools are doing, such as the new report cards, but I have to say Paul Barber and all the staff involved in the Summer Arts Program, you've done a great job.

My daughter thoroughly enjoyed the camp and hopes to attend next year.

Sandy Brozovitch, Farmington Hills

Offer choices

After having read the articles and editorials of the last few weeks on the basic versus progressive curriculum issue, I thought I might put my two cents in.

Our family moved to the area last November from Colorado. So far, we have been very pleased with the district. Our youngest son attended Fairview this year and after having failed to get into Highmeadow, will attend Alameda for first grade.

He responds very well to the progressive curriculum. If he does not get into Highmeadow for second grade, we will probably put him in private school.

My daughter, a student at Eagle, does not respond to a progressive curriculum. It takes many repetitions for her to internalize information and concepts. If the district goes progressive throughout, it will help my son, but fail my daughter.

It seems to me that if the district really wants to help all students learn, it will offer both choices. It will also listen and act on what it is hearing from parents on both sides.

It will not tell parents that educators are the experts and know what is best for every child. Most elementary schools in the district have two classes of each grade.

Would it be that hard to have one class with a basics emphasis and one class with a progressive emphasis? Or if that doesn't fly, why not a school of choice with a basics emphasis?

Obviously, the district cannot please every

Repel gypsy moth invasion

Although we don't usually condone killing, we make an exception in the case of the gypsy moth and highly recommend that communities spray their trees to repel the invasion.

Brought to this country in 1869, the gypsy moth has since spread like butter on bread from New England to the Carolinas, west to Ohio and up into Michigan, defoliating trees all along the way.

And we were worried about the Communists.

"This is not going to go away," said Rochester Hills parks and rec director Mike Hartner. "We know they're in every section of our communities."

Last year the gypsy moth defoliated 700,000 acres of forest in the northern lower peninsula. However, healthy trees can survive one or two defoliations, and the caterpillar population will ultimately crash thanks to a naturally occurring virus that kicks in when the gypsies are legion. For this reason the moth is left to its own devices in sparsely populated state forests.

The problem is that the gypsy moth has marched into metro Detroit, where folks get real upset when healthy trees are stripped of greenery and caterpillar feces fall like rain from the bare branches.

Franklin Village and Bloomfield Township have already been sprayed from the air this year to kill the intruders. Rochester Hills and Troy might be next. A recent reconnaissance in Rochester Hills turned up a "low" infestation of about 250 egg masses per acre. Caterpillars have also infiltrated West Bloomfield Township, Livonia, Beverly Hills, Plymouth and Birmingham, among others.

The naturally occurring bacterium that moth sprayers use to kill the gypsies, bacillus thuringiensis, or Bt, has so far proven to be harmless to everything but other caterpillars, many of which are not feeding when the trees are sprayed.

Although spraying can be expensive (Bloomfield Township paid more than \$100,000), the alternative is permitting the gypsy population to grow until the virus kills 95 percent of them. But by then the trees have been ravaged, and irate residents are dragging rusty cans of DDT out of their basements to destroy who knows what else along with the moths.

Even Farmington Hills naturalist Joe Dorek, who tends to oppose spraying, says, "If a hundred million caterpillars came here and ate everything in sight I'd be upset, too."

So we come down foursquare in favor of urban trees and can only cheer the mass destruction of their enemy through the miracle of aerial spraying.

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

Are you doing anything special to keep physically fit?

We asked this question at the Farmington branch Library.



"Unfortunately, no. I used to be active. I ate less and exercised more."
 Alan Matten
 West Bloomfield



"I mow the lawn, and I have a Schwinn stationary bike that I ride in the basement."
 John DenHooten
 Farmington



"I walk every day for a mile or two. I love it. Yesterday I didn't walk and I missed it."
 Pat Query
 Farmington Hills



"I belong to a fitness club at Six Mile and Farmington Road. I like situps, although I may not show it."
 Jim Gray
 Farmington Hills

The Farmington Observer

Tom Baer Editor, 477-5450
 Steve Barnaby Managing Editor Dick Isham General Manager
 Judith Doherty Berne Assistant Managing Editor Mark Lewis Director of Advertising
 Fred Wright Director of Circulation
 Suburban Communications Corporation
 Phillip Power Chairman of the Board Richard Agnlan President