

# editorial opinion

## Helping hands

# Community owes thanks to disaster workers

Actions by our local public safety departments, rescue and repair crews during West Bloomfield's tornado disaster merit recognition.

When tragedy strikes, the same brave men who responded to last weekend's catastrophe always can be counted on to assist in every way they can.

The City of Farmington and Farmington Hills public safety departments responded immediately to West Bloomfield's call for help.

ALL AVAILABLE officers, volunteers and reserves from both departments joined forces with state troopers, county sheriffs and officers from

other surrounding communities to stand watch all weekend in the tornado zone.

Farmington's Public Safety Director Daniel Byrnes and Capt. Russell Conway of the Hills department maintained their professional manner Sunday even after staying awake all night, coordinating rescue efforts in the debris-scattered subdivision.

More than 180 men from both departments were there when duty called.

March was a disastrous month for Oakland County and utility companies.

After working overtime for more than two weeks repairing damage caused by the recent ice

storm, repair crews were called back.

This time they worked overtime again, replacing downed wires and utility poles that littered the West Bloomfield community after the deadly tornado raged through nearly 100 buildings.

Who thanks these men, who worked through the night after Saturday's tornado, assisting in rescue efforts to help people they will never know?

WHO RECOGNIZES the hundreds of rescue workers who responded in force to the early evening disaster call last weekend to begin the clean up that may take months to accomplish?

What words of gratitude do Red Cross workers

receive for the many hours they spent on the tornado-torn scene, helping families pick up the pieces and start all over again?

And what about the Salvation Army? They were in the area within hours, pouring hot coffee and providing food for rescue teams.

For some home owners in the tornado riddled area, it means starting all over again. For many others, the road to recovery will be a long one.

But for the hundreds of policemen, firemen, volunteers, reserves, repair crews and rescue workers, the Farmington Observer & Eccentric and the community thank you for a job well done.

RON GARBINSKI



This storm victim takes out a moment to give thanks as she stands among the rubble of last week's tornado. (Photo by Craig Newman)

## City, suburbs: chances to cooperate

Detroit's Mayor Coleman Young spoke last Sunday to all the suburbs. Although his speech was delivered only to some 200 parishioners of Birmingham Unitarian Church, his words and the attitude behind them should be read and pondered by every thinking suburbanite.

His plea was for understanding, conciliation, cooperation. His method was to examine the model by which relations between the core city and the suburbs is usually described, as a doughnut in which a ring of mostly white and rich suburbs surround the squalor of a mostly black and poor Detroit.

Young's words rejected this notion in soaring language: "There is no way in hell or in heaven that the outer rim of suburbs can survive with any viability or health while a vacuum exists at the core. If the heart stops, the body dies. If the roots wither, the tree will fall."

"I'm speaking to you today from the roots. My future is your future, and yours is mine. The more we recognize that, the better we'll move forward together."

MAYOR YOUNG has not always taken this position.

Almost a year ago he attacked the suburbs bitterly in a speech to the Detroit Central Business District Association, demanding that the suburbs "get the hell out of the way" and let Detroit start a rapid transit system, and he roasted suburban developers for leading "raiding parties" to snatch tenants from downtown office buildings.

But last Sunday Young was prepared to admit that he himself has in the past been a source of conflict between the suburbs and the city.

"A sort of parent-child, love-hate element illustrates the relationship between the city and suburbs," Young said, comparing the relationship between the suburbs and Detroit to that between the 13 original colonies, loosely linked by the Articles of Confederation which reflected "the jealousy

## Observation Point

by PHILIP POWER



and suspicion that has characterized some city-suburban relationships 200 years later."

In short, Mayor Young was making the old American argument that if we don't hang together, we'll surely all hang separately.

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT about Young's speech is that it sets forth a new and constructive attitude on the part of Detroit.

What is needed now is some reciprocity from the suburbs. A number of possible areas exist. First, suburban leaders and politicians can start saying openly what most of them really believe—that continued conflict between the suburbs and Detroit is in nobody's interest.

Birmingham's Mayor David Breck made a good start in introducing Young. "I have enough experience to know how effective government is when close to the people. Yet there is need for regional cooperation in water, air pollution, transportation and similar services. We must have a change of attitude. We must share. We must care."

This will not be easy. There are many vitally important issues on which the interests of Detroit and the suburbs are deeply at odds. The non-resident income tax on suburbanites working in Detroit is one; the rates, procedures and attitudes in the Detroit Water Board have become another.

But many suburban politicians have found in the past that a good way to get a good press in suburban newspapers is to blast Detroit at any op-

portunity. Cheap shots, however, are no substitute for reasoned leadership.

SECOND, there needs to be a deeper and wider recognition in both the suburbs and in the core city that there are important areas where their separate interests coincide. Nobody, for example, wants full-blown regional government, and everybody realizes that the entire metropolitan area needs a rapid transit system desperately.

Third, both sides must realize that although development of a spirit of cooperation is important, it will be nothing more than a vacuous platitude unless followed up with concrete results.

Given that a climate of suspicion does exist and that the realities of the issues separating the suburbs from the city are hard concrete results will be difficult to obtain.

But a start can be made on some points where agreement should be within reach, such as suburban support for the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Detroit Zoo, which are heavily used by suburbanites but get their tax support from the City of Detroit.

Who knows? With a little courage and a lot of hard work, the suburbs and the city just might start to work together, which certainly would be a change for the better.

## It's all public

Each house of the legislature may establish the committees necessary for the efficient conduct of its business and the legislature may create joint committees. On all actions on bills and resolutions in each committee, names and votes of members shall be recorded. Such vote shall be available for public inspection. Notice of all committee hearings and a clear statement of all subjects to be considered at each hearing shall be published in the journal in advance of the hearing.

—Michigan Constitution

## If you seek clean industry, help promote state tourism

In the state of Michigan, the automotive industry is the No. 1 job and revenue producer. Travel and Tourism is No. 2.

The gross annual value of conferences, travel and tourism in Michigan is \$2.3 billion.

Approximately 400,000 jobs are directly related to travel and tourism, with additional jobs in allied categories.

TOURISTS—travelers, visitors, conference delegates—take no money out of the county, city, township or village. They bring it in, and for every \$12,000 they bring in, one new job is created in our state.

Tourism is a "clean" industry—no smoke stacks—requiring no social or welfare aid of any kind. Dollars brought into an economy by these visitors turn over approximately seven times.

When a conference is held, each delegate spends approximately \$137 in the area, in addition to conference dues and fees.

According to the National Delegate Expenditure Survey conducted by the International Association of Convention Bureaus, here's how an average visitor spends his or her money:

- Hotels, rooms and incidentals, \$33.50
- Food in hotel restaurants, \$12.90
- Food in other restaurants, \$12.60
- Retail purchases, \$11.90
- Beverages, \$5.59
- Theaters, \$1.03
- Local transportation, \$4.09
- Sightseeing, \$1.50
- Nightclubbing and sports activities, \$4.98
- Auto service, gasoline and oil, \$6
- Miscellaneous, \$5.98

## Eccentricities

by HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.



The visitors pay state sales taxes on these items but send no children to our schools.

THERE ARE ABOUT 5,000 national and regional conferences scheduled each year, but the decisions on where to go are made two, three or even five years ahead.

Michigan's economy is based primarily on a cyclical industry, the automotive industry, which has its good years and its bad years.

Everyone concerned with the economy of the state has been trying to attract more stable industries, yet we have one right at our doorstep that brings in revenue without the need to expand police protection, schools, sewer and water systems, and so forth.

Everyone in the state and in our own area should be on the lookout for potential conventions that could be brought into the area. We have convention bureaus which can assist in the planning of conferences, in Detroit for the metropolitan area and in Pontiac for Oakland County.

If we were to become tourist ambassadors, we could help relieve the pressures on the need for increased taxes in the state.

## The politics of transit: suburbs face a monolith

They're at it again in Lansing, playing games with the board apportionment of the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority.

Even though the new substitute bill by Sen. David Plawecki (D-Dearborn Heights) to "restructure" the SEMTA board repairs some of the damage Oakland County leaders had squawked about the new version is still bad.

The issue is important to Oakland County. The SEMTA board is going to decide whether a rapid transit system will go from downtown Detroit to some spot in the suburbs—such as Mount Clemens or Pontiac—or whether there will be three legs all on downtown Detroit and stretching little further than Grand Boulevard.

PLAWECKI'S NEWEST gem would expand the SEMTA board from the present nine members to 15, and on a "one person, one vote" basis.

The way his formula works, Detroit would get five members, suburban Wayne County four, Oakland three, Macomb two and the smaller counties one. But the catch is in how the board members would be appointed.

Detroit's five members would be selected this way:

- 1) By the mayor of Detroit.
  - 2) By the mayor of Detroit.
  - 3) By the mayor of Detroit.
  - 4) By the mayor of Detroit.
  - 5) By the mayor of Detroit.
- Oakland County's four members would be selected by this formula:
- 1) By the county board of commissioners.
  - 2) By the governor.
  - 3) By the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments.

In other words, the mayor of Detroit would have direct, 100 per cent control of Detroit's SEMTA board seats, but Oakland County would have direct, 100 per cent control over only one of its seats.

There's yet another flaw. While Detroit's chief executive has an exclusive role in picking SEMTA members, the Oakland County executive—whose job is analogous to a mayor's—is entirely ignored by Plawecki's bill.

If Oakland County gets bad treatment, subur-



Tim Richard

ban Wayne County gets worse. Its first seat would be filled by the Wayne County Board of Commissioners, which has a majority of Detroit members, the second and fourth seats by SEMCOG, the third by the governor.

THE EFFECT of Plawecki's bill is to allow Detroit to present a solid, if not monolithic, political front, suburban strength would be diffused.

Moreover, Detroit would have the capability of filling vacancies much faster than the suburbs would.

The present formula for SEMTA representation is that six seats are filled by SEMCOG, a regional planning agency whose voting members are local elected officials, and three by the governor. There's really nothing wrong with that system.

In fact, it's an excellent system because it assures that SEMCOG—the agency charged by law with regional planning—has the clout to pick people who will implement its plans.

If SEMCOG is stripped of its power to pick SEMTA board members, SEMCOG could draft a regional plan that is fair to everyone, but a SEMTA board dominated by one city could toss the plan out the 18th floor window of its downtown office building and build an expensive subway that serves only Detroit, but which all of us will have the pleasure of paying for.

Oakland County's state senators and representatives had better be on the lookout for the new Plawecki bill. The senate leadership is trying to pass it by sneaking it through a lame committee. There's an awful lot at stake.

## Farmington Observer & Eccentric

DIVISION OF SUBURBAN COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION

STEVE BARNABY, Editor  
132-1400

HENRY M. HOGAN, JR., Co-Publisher  
PHILIP POWER, Co-Publisher

JOHN REED, Executive Editor  
THOMAS R. WOLFE, Board Advertising Manager  
ARTHUR L. GINGER, Classified Advertising Manager

Member of  
MICHIGAN PRESS ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL NEWS-PAPERS OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION