

# editorial opinion

## Tinkering Around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

### Hey, quit horsing around

I want to give Henry Ford a big hug and a kiss. I don't mean the one that never explains or complains. I'm talking about the man who invented the car and took man's mode of transportation out of the hooves of a four-legged animal that probably couldn't care less.

In the mood I'm in today, I'd chase an Edsel over a four-legged Mustang. At least an Edsel, whatever faults it did possess, listened to you once you passed your drivers test.

Horses should be forced to pass passenger tests to make sure they're qualified to carry people.

I like horses—as long as they keep to their place in front of a ragman's wagon or under some graceful rider who's been studying dressage.

I haven't had experience in either endeavor and that's probably where I went wrong. No, I take that back. Where I went wrong is in even entertaining Jaycee Walter Koning's offer to let us enter an Observer team in an celebrity rodeo match.

IT WAS A CASE OF those guys with the typewriters versus the ones with the microphones. In this case, the guys with the mikes were from a local AM radio station that rocks, giggles and rolls. (They shoot for a young crowd.)

Instead of being reasonable about it, we showed up for the event, and that is where I met the Horse.

If I may digress, a bit, the last time I was on a horse was about four years ago. Even then, it's debatable whether that run down, rent-an-animal was really a horse. My too gentle, verging on sluggish steed could have been a large dog in disguise for all I know.

Given that bit of information, you won't be too surprised when I tell you that I found the Horse to be rather large. I would say it was the size of a 1930s Buick but it didn't have a running board. It, however, was running.

Jim Zinser, owner of the rodeo being presented at the Founders' Festival was kind enough to mutter a

few words of encouragement as I sat on the Horse, trying to figure out which side was the accelerator. I found out soon enough, as the Horse tried to barrel its way around a series of old oil drums.

It wouldn't have been so bad if I could have left him on automatic pilot, but I never did figure out how to accomplish that.

HORSE IMMEDIATELY figured out that I hadn't the vaguest idea of what I was doing and decided ditch the passenger by going back to the starting gate. After two return tries, I decided that Horse knew best and got off at the first Equine Stop.

I found it extremely difficult to explain to my co-workers that all the time I was traveling with Horse, I was preoccupied in a search to find a way to put it into first gear.

All I can say is, that I wish the Jaycees had quit horsing around and bought a car.

And that ain't hay.



Observer reporter Louise Okrutsky wishes she was behind the wheels of her car rather than hanging in there on horseback. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Hors d'oeuvres by Lynn Orr

### Sizing up fashions

My complaints about women's clothing can be bumped into one category—sizing.

I don't mind straddling the seasons, which means being faced with an overabundance of winter coats on the racks in July when I'm looking for a bathing suit. The swim suits are skimpier in quantity (as to number of available suits of course) but they're on sale, which suits my lifestyle. The fashion industry's jump on the seasons allows me to save money almost all the time.

But why can't I walk into a store and purchase a pair of slacks by waist and length? Instead, I have to try on three different sizes and very often none of them fits well. Length I just don't worry about. I learned how to hem skirts and slacks at an early age out of necessity. The last time I tried on a pair of slacks that could be worn without alteration the saleslady had to revive me with smelling salts.

I HAVE slacks in three different sizes in my closet, not because my weight fluctuates to any major degree but because the fashion industry manages to ignore all concepts of sizing. The reason women gave up dresses for separates is because dress sizing is obsolete. What do you say to a saleslady who tells you "That's just perfect. If you hem the skirt (a handkerchief hem that requires major surgery), take up the sleeves a bit, and

move those buttons, you'll have yourself a smart little number."

I always want to say "OK, I'll take it if you knock off about 50 per cent of the price since I'll have to do all those alterations." But I don't have the nerve to say it, and most American merchants don't go in for haggling.

It would seem that American women could fight back with a sewing backlash, but I know why that's never transpired, despite the fact that lots of women sew beautifully. Sewing is frustrating, one of the most frustrating things I've ever tackled. My husband asked me to refrain from near the sewing machine again the last time I tried to use it. He said my feeble attempts at sewing a hostess skirt (that's how long ago it was) were sending my blood pressure to an unbearable level.

CONSEQUENTLY, non-sewers are stuck with the goods the industry provides for women, which are an especially sorry state when compared with men's clothing. Men's shirts are either sized small, medium, large and extra-large or by neck and sleeve size. A very sensible and commendable system. Women's shirts or blouses can be sized 6, 8, 10, etc. or 7, 9, 11, etc. or 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, or small, medium, large, or even broken down into junior and misses sizes, the logic of which I've never understood. Men can buy suits 38, 40, 42, etc.

and then alterations are done at no charge to make sure the suit fits. Even if women spend a goodly sum on a suit, charges are almost always made for alterations.

Then, there's the problem of blue jeans. If you didn't know it, men's and women's blue jeans are made from different kinds of denim, at least by the major manufacturers. So while women's jeans tend to fit our hips and waists better, they also tend to wear out faster and cost more to begin with. To get the hips of men's blue jeans to fit a woman, you usually have to put up with a lot of slack in the waist. But the initial cost is cheaper and the material wears better. So figure it out, because I can't fathom it.

In a few weeks, when the fashion magazines start hitting the stands with all the fall clothes and most women get that look in their eyes that means wool sweaters and leather boots, I'll be sitting in my lawn chair in my bathing suit, purchased off the sale rack, enjoying a cool drink and trying to get a tan.

Every year it simply gets a lot harder to get excited about fall clothes when I know I'll have to spend so many hours trying to find something that fits and too many hours over ankle length hems with needle in hand.

I don't have any answers, but I'd sure like to know the reasons why.

### Candidates try tiptoeing through election issues

Every political campaign should have a theme song.

With Franklin Roosevelt, it was "Happy Days are Here, Again." LBJ fostered a spin-off from "Hello Dolly" and effectively turned it into "Hello Lyndon."

Farmington Hills council candidates are marching to the tune of "Tip-toe Through the Tulips," as they parade towards the August 2 primary.

I came to this conclusion after wandering over to the Farmington Democratic meeting place a few weeks back to hear candidates expound on the issues. Along with a handful of other political aficionados, I amazingly listened as nine of the ten candidates danced around, over and under what is shaping up to be the campaign's main issue—senior citizen housing.

Afterwards the Dems were faced with the grim task of figuring out who to endorse for the upcoming primary. As it was they only could tap five out of the ten, leaving three possible candidates spots unendorsed.

OH SURE, the candidates can be divided into a couple-three factions on the senior housing issue. Now mind you, all confess to be in favor of senior citizens. And if you believe that, you'll believe that Rhino's tusks are made out of gold. But then, what self-respecting candidate is going to say they're against the old folks.

Frankly, I don't think many of them are crazy over the idea, although at least half of them will be facing senior citizenship in the next ten to fifteen years. Strange how folks believe financial insecurity will never hit them when they become senior citizens.

At any rate, the spectrum of how to talk around the issue and still be in favor of it is wide and very, very blurry.

At one end of the heap we've got Farmington Hills' own Fearless Fossick, Melvin Panovich, a Southfield cop. Melvin is emphatic in his opposition to low-income housing. As he puts it, nobody wants "them" living next door—whatever "them" means. You decide that one.

Of course, Melvin forgets that not everyone makes as much money out of the public coffers as a Southfield police sergeant or, for that matter, receives a big fat pension to lounge on after retirement.

LIKE IT or not, the majority of senior citizens can neither afford mortgage payments on single family housing units or exorbitant rental charges.

If you think it's bad now, Melvin, wait in another 30 years when the majority of Americans are senior citizens. Watch how much your taxes will skyrocket because of the need for senior citizens housing.

On the other end of the fuzzy spectrum, we've got good old Earl Opperthaus. I thought I'd never see the day when Earl would be the top "liberal" candidate in an election. But that day has arrived.

Earl, whose political clout has been waning in recent years, is counting on his support of senior citizen needs to get reelected. The graying veteran politician just squeaked by in his reelection bid two years ago and he is hoping to survive against this bevy of new, lackuster faces.

He is coming out strong for the newly formed Commission on Aging, senior citizen transportation, sidewalks and last but not least, senior citizen housing as interpreted by the Housing Commission.

In case you didn't know, the Housing Commission was given the unseemly task of putting to



gether alternate zoning ordinance proposals to allow senior housing which, in Farmington Hills, is like being ask to swear at your mother.

The Commission's study results read like a book on why not to do the impossible. So, in reality, Opperthaus has taken a safe stand by endorsing something which isn't going to happen anyway.

IN THE MIDDLE of these two "extreme" views we have a host of candidates who are looking for one way or another to skirt around the emotional senior citizen housing issue.

Joe Alkateeb, leader of the "We Like Senior Citizens, But Don't Want Them In Our Backyard Inc." is calling for a 30-year plan to develop senior citizen housing.

Bill Twigg, leader of the senior group, Nardineers, was gutsy enough to stand up and inform Joe that he didn't have 30 years to wait.

Aligned with Joe are Jody Sorenen and Robert Anzlovav. You can bet that after this election Anzlovav will be about as memorable as William Miller, Barry Goldwater's running mate in the 1964 presidential election fiasco.

Next on our list of notables is appointed councilman Bob Amori who says senior housing would be nice but would prefer it to be somewhere else besides in residential areas. To put a cherry on top of the cake, Amori would like to skirt the low income housing requirements set down by HUD by allowing low interest rate loans to middle income folks.

Yet another idea is thrown out by candidate Ben Marks who says we don't have to be afraid of low-income housing because we can get federal aid through the "back door" without complying with federal regulations. All we have to do is show Uncle Sam we've got some guts.

Sure, Ben—now it's easy to understand why the Housing Commission zoning study is so courageous.

Cathy Jones, who has been endorsed by both the Republicans and Democrats, acts like it. Where she stands is anybody's guess.

We're still waiting to find out who Jack Renaud is because he hasn't shown up anywhere to state his views.

Last but not least, is George Roberts, long time resident who adds a welcome bit of humor to the campaign. George is a nice guy but obviously just wouldn't be able to hack the workload of a council member because of his health.

So there you have it folks. Hopefully, after the August 2 primary out the candidates will start addressing the issues rather than tiptoeing around saying they are for senior citizen housing and a myriad of other needs facing the elderly.

Admittedly, we can make a joke about this motley crew running for council, but senior citizen needs are important issues. So candidates, get serious and tell us where you really stand.

## From our readers

### Stomp out tomato bugs

Editor:

The article in last week's edition about tomato worms prompts me writing you.

I believe I have a method of disposing of them which has much more finesse.

I was about 40 years old when I first came in contact with a tomato worm. My first reaction was that it was beautiful—the delicate green and the geometric pattern of black and yellow on its back. Then came the awakening when I saw the destruction it caused.

One way you can determine if there are any tomato worms on a plant is the black droppings on the ground under the plant and another is to seek out the worms. When you try to pick it off the stem or leaf to which it is clinging you find that it has suction cups along its underside and it refuses to let go. The first time I destroyed one by putting it on the ground and

stepping on it, there was a splash of green gook.

That is when I found out that the best way to eliminate it is to pick off the leaf and stem to which it is clinging, put them on the ground with the worm still attached, then take any large leaf and place it over the worm and step on it.

THE WORM is destroyed and you do not have to handle it.

I have been told that in the stillness of the night if you bend down near a tomato plant that has a worm clinging on it you can hear its chomping.

Thus endeth my tale of the tomato worm.

Josephine Pink Farmington

### Headline protested

Editor:

I was shocked and very embarrassed to say the least to read the heading in such bold print "Agnes Arthurs turned 80" in the Observer of July 14.

We think it was very poor editing.

The dinner party with family reunion was the important item.

Nowadays it is not unusual to reach 80 years but believe me you will not be reminded when I reach 90 or 95.

AGNES ARTHURS Farmington Hills

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