

editorial opinion



Hors d'oeuvres

by Lynn Orr

Yes, ma you can go home

The "Woodcroft Gazette" had a fairly short life span for a publication — about three summers of irregular issues. But it served as a lifeline in inspiration for staff members Lynn Gregg and Lynn Cox, two 12-year-olds who received a fatal dose of pressman's pain back in the summer of 1959.

Lynn and Lynn—one guy, one girl—biked around Woodcroft subdivision around news and sent their parents' telephone bills skyward by calling 48 homes in search of the latest tidbit. After carefully recounting the month's events, a mother was coerced into typing the copy on stencils, and 30 or so copies of the paper were miraculously produced at someone's office.

Delivery was both the joy and despair of the job. Only one family consistently refused to shell out a nickel for the precious commodity but their thrift was compensated by the tips of others. The staff worshipped Earl Lathrup, founder of the sub, who never

failed to donate a quarter to the cause as well as sit around and talk about the latest news.

The net income—expenses had to be paid and younger brothers and sisters compensated for services rendered—was usually spent at the downtown Dairy Queen or Himmelsbach's throughout the month. Milkshake cravings developed then are still taking their toll.

ALTHOUGH THE EARNINGS were the impetus for the venture, the money took a back seat to getting out the news. When high school came along, however, the Gazette faded, since there were bigger and better worlds to conquer, and the Farmington Senior High "Blue and White" staff found themselves coping with two "experienced" journalists in 1964, much to the chagrin of everyone concerned.

At that time, the school newspaper was printed right on the second floor of the high school. The copy was sent to the "Farmington Enterprise," where it was put into type, and the

staffers lugged heavy trays of type back to the school each press day. Lynn and Lynn worked on pages two and three, somewhat of a comedown from publisher-editor, but a weekly paper required considerable effort from the 15 or so staffers. One of the Lyons copied, with extra care, Lee Peel's "Trite" stamp more often than anyone in FHS history. It's rumored.

Most of those staffers have gone on to other careers—banking, finance, underwood, teaching, photography—but Lynn and Lynn and a few others are still in there pitching the news. One of them is teaching journalism to junior high students in Westland, with a sideline in photography.

And the other finally came home again to get the scoop on Farmington folk for the "Farmington Observer." If experience counts, this staffer should have an edge on everyone trying to find the pulse of Farmington—after all, when you've scooped the local paper about missing family pets, you're ready to hit the big time.

My Cup of Tea

by Loraine McClish



Musicale does top notch job

I recently accepted an award from the National Federation of Music Clubs, given to me by one of the Farmington Musicales members, Beverly Nestline.

It is a handsomely framed piece, given "for outstanding participation in National Music Week for the year 1976." Mrs. Nestline told me that no one was in any contest to get this award. They are given out whenever the national group has occasion to say thanks for helping.

I wondered what I had done to warrant the recognition of "outstanding" and set about thumbing through year-old clippings in our office file marked "Farmington Musicales." It was a thick file. It occurred to me that maybe the musicale members thought more of what they were doing was getting into print than they expected. But then, they were doing a great deal.

THE GROUP'S AIM is to promote musicians by giving them a place in the sun, both individually and in groups; and to promote the love of music for everyone.

The members were the first in the Farmington community to do this as a club. They were the first in the community to give scholarships to young musicians, and they have been doing this for the past 11 years.

Then, instead of dropping the budding musi-

cians and letting them wander off on their own, they feature the scholarship winners in a spring concert.

Running concurrently with these two projects, the big push for National Music Week is shaping up, and the show they put on every spring during that week in May is certainly the year's biggest music event in this area.

I think that's a safe statement since hundreds of musicians are coming from throughout southern Michigan to furnish free entertainment almost continuously in the Tel-12 Mall for seven straight days.

The club sponsors The Glockenspiels, their junior group, "Crusade for Strings," "Music in the Schools" and "Music in Nursing Homes."

THE MUSICALE CHORUS is on call to sing three part harmony with a varied repertoire for local clubs, luncheons or banquets, and it will come with costumes and stage props.

The Farmington Arts Council (now the Farmington Arts Commission), the Farmington Community Center, the Farmington Community Band, the Oakway Symphony, the Detroit Madrigals, the Farmington Community Libraries, and Harrison High School's music department are all recipients of Farmington Musicales's support.

Now I ask you. Who really deserves of the term "outstanding?"

Tinkering Around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Learn that body language

There's yet another conspiracy afoot. This time it's removed from the memo-ridden offices of politicians and corporation executives.

Instead, this one's being perpetrated in offices, lounges, bars, restaurants and living rooms all across the nation. Instead of priding ourselves on marching to a different drummer and letting our neighbors do what they please, we're unconsciously entering an age of self-consciousness.

It's getting to the point where you can't sit down among friends without being subjected to a discussion of what you're really saying through body language.

The first time I heard of body language I was sitting in an East Lansing bar with some friends, watching the little rituals that accompany the process of trying to pick-up.

"Look," said one of my friends, who was finishing up a doctorate in psychology. "You see that girl with her arms and legs crossed. She's not going to dance with anyone, tonight."

ON THE OTHER HAND, her friend, who's sitting with both feet on the ground and her hands on the table, will dance with the next person that asks her.

"Right," I thought, skeptically. "Give a guy a shot at a Ph.D. and he owns the world."

But he was right. The next young man that walked over to the table asked our crossed-legged subject to dance. She refused. But her friend

was out on the dance floor in three seconds flat.

"That's body language," said my future psychiatrist friend with the look of one who has cracked the secret of the universe.

"Ah," I thought. "This is what I've been waiting for. A chance to subtly control my surroundings."

After everyone left my table to dance, I carefully copied our successful subject's pose. Feet on the floor, a wide-eyed, alert expression on my face. And not a dance partner in sight.

My feet fell asleep. My eyes began to tear from trying to look wide-eyed. The hand quit playing. And body language lost a potentially great advocate.

I FORGOT about the whole business a few days ago, when an acquaintance looked at her crossed-arm sitting position and wondered aloud what it was she was really saying to me.

You're probably saying that you're comfortable sitting that way," I scoffed, as I sat crossed-legged with my arms crossed.

Body language advocates would say that we were cutting ourselves off from each other.

After that little episode, I began to notice more and more persons who were afraid to sit and stand comfortably. They were afraid some astute body language behaver would read their minds.

I even noticed a magazine story

which revealed to poor, unsuspecting readers what their sleeping positions said about their psyches. Now they can worry about what they've been telling their mates and close friends by sleeping in an embryo-like position. It means the sleeper is insecure and uptight.

And if it's true, this latest bit of information will probably compound matters. **IT COULD EVEN BE** the basis for the dissolution of a relationship.

Imagine it. She's telling him: "I just can't marry a man who falls asleep on the couch in an untrustworthy position. I've had it. I'm leaving."

For those true body language junkies who want to minimize the chance of being caught off-guard by their friends and strangers, there's another must for your reading list.

"Passages," a book by Gail Sheehy which has spent 32 weeks on the best-seller list, will tell you everything you could possibly care to know about what you'll be like when you hit 30, 40, 50 or 60 years old.

Why wait to find out what time will reveal? Between "Passages" and body language, the anticipation of the unexpected will be a thing of the past.

And of course, there'll always be the insecure ones who will worry if they're projecting the right body language and going through the correct crisis for their age group.

Join the age of self-consciousness. Just sit still there. Read the person sitting next to you.



Citizens can win

How to fight car fixit men

Citizens Can Win is a column by Doug Ross of the Michigan Citizens Lobby written in conjunction with Nancy Bonheim and Zina Kramer. Questions to this column by the public are welcomed. Those interested should write to the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, P.O. Box 69, Southfield, 48037.

Nothing is more maddening. You paid the garage \$70 just yesterday to fix your automobile because it wouldn't start on cold mornings. Now you're sitting in your car, waiting for the tow truck. You're late for work again and your car still isn't repaired.

It's such a helpless, frustrating feeling. And you aren't alone. At the Michigan Citizens Lobby we receive twice as many auto repair complaints than all other consumer problems combined.

Here are some questions about auto repair ripoffs we have received at the Citizens Lobby, and some answers we think can save both money and aggravation.

Question: I've heard that dishonest repair garages tend to take greater advantage of women because they know

less about cars. Is this true? What can a woman do to protect herself against repair ripoffs?

Answer: Studies have shown that women are more likely to be taken advantage of than men by unscrupulous repair shops. If it's a give or take situation, men don't have much luck either getting their cars properly repaired. An auto repair survey conducted in the Detroit area by Citizens Lobby and the Attorney General's office uncovered incompetence or fraud, or both, at 75 per cent of all repair businesses visited. Only 25 per cent of the garages discovered the problem, repaired it correctly and charged a fair price. Not very good odds.

One way to improve these odds is to avoid the temptation to play mechanic and tell the garage exactly what to repair. Never say, "Give me a tune-up." Because if the garage gives you a tune-up and your car still runs poorly, you've got no beef. Just tell the mechanic the symptom: "My car stalls at red lights." Then it is his responsibility to eliminate the problem.

Question: How can I use the new car auto repair law to protect myself?

Answer: The new law requires every

auto repair business in the state to do three things: 1) The garage must give you a written estimate of the cost of repairing your car, before you leave it. What's more, the garage cannot exceed this written cost estimate by more than \$10 or 10 per cent, whichever is less, without first getting your permission in person or over the phone. So make sure you insist on a signed copy of the written estimate. It's your insurance against being surprised by a big repair bill when you come to pick up your car.

2) The garage must inform you of your right to have all of the replaced parts from your car returned to you. Even though you don't know a car's rotor from a crankshaft, take that greasy bag of replaced parts and put them in your trunk. They may be important should you try to get your money's worth back.

3) When you come to pick up your car, the garage must give you a detailed, written statement that includes what you said was wrong with the car, their diagnosis of what was wrong, exactly what they did to your car, and the name of the mechanic who did it. And if the statement is illegible or incomplete, make them write it over.

Question: What if, after all this, the car still doesn't work right?

Answer: First, immediately call the owner of the dealership or garage where the repair was done. Don't waste your time with the mechanic or service manager. Tell the owner that you took your car in because of a particular problem, and that the problems still exist. Tell him, politely but firmly, that you would like either your money back or the repair done properly at no extra cost. If he doesn't give you full satisfaction, call the Secretary of State's office at 357-5108. Under the new auto repair law, she has the power to investigate and mediate complaints. That is, when your bag of replaced parts and the written statement of exactly what was done to your car comes in handy.

Question: Is there any way to know before I take my car in, which garages are honest and competent?

Answer: I'm afraid not. However, after the new law has been in effect a while, we will begin to develop a record of which garages receive a lot of car owner complaints, and which seem to satisfy their customers. At that time, the Citizens Lobby will publish an auto repair shoppers' guide to help car owners identify those garages with a good service record.

From our readers

Study was worthwhile

Editor: In reply to your March 3 editorial on the proposed Northwestern Highway extension, the days of "fer it" and "agin it" have long been over. This newspaper should know that local people have been working on alternatives to the Northwestern extension. This newspaper covered the last few meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Northwestern.

The CAC consisted of residents from Southfield, Franklin, Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield. These people represented such groups as chambers of commerce, subdivisions, civic and environmental groups. Also it included a resident appointed by each local government. These people worked for many months on the study design to be used by the constant checker, the EIS. A very important part of the study design was a list of alternatives to be studied.

Although our work was interrupted by the cancellation of M-275, I think it was not an exercise in futility. This was the first opportunity for residents to be involved in the planning process which would affect their own communities. While there were many problems in the operation of this committee, the residents constantly demonstrated their sense of responsibility to the project.

After all of this work, it seems unfair to label them as a mob trying to stampede the highway commission. These are serious residents who voluntarily spend many hours addressing

themselves to a serious transportation problem.

Just as it is unfair to characterize proponents of the proposed Northwestern extension as "commercial interests" and "leeches," it is equally unfair to characterize the opponents of the extension as exclusionary, narrow environmentalists.

Let us hope that the days of name calling on all sides are over, too.

SHEILA OATLEY
Citizens Advisory Committee
West Bloomfield

Is it road to nowhere?

Editor: If I understand your editorial of March 3, it is The Eccentric's opinion that public officials and landholders who want to build high-rise office buildings, hotels and shopping centers along the Northwestern corridor are "good" guys and the environmentalists and the residents who live along that corridor are a stampede.

To my knowledge there has been no plan to "exclude" outsiders from West Bloomfield, only a plan to save our irreplaceable wetlands and woodlands, to keep 300 to 500 acres of beautiful land on the tax rolls and to build what will be required in any event better county roads which will carry the traffic now and in the future.

And, there is little comparison between the environmental impact of widening existing roads with existing rights-of-way and creating a new sev-

READERS' FORUM

Letters must be original copies and contain the signature and address of the sender. Limit letters to 300 words.

eral-hundred-foot-wide concrete ditch through several communities.

Concerned Citizens for West Bloomfield has consistently stressed the need for better local roads. Northwestern, if extended, will dump cars at Orchard Lake Road, the Farmington-Maple intersection and the Pontiac Trail-Haggerty intersection.

The only way to get these cars away from expressway exits is to improve Orchard Lake, Maple, Haggerty, Pontiac Trail and other surface roads.

CWCB does have an alternative to Northwestern. We hope the proponents also have a plan other than to insist that this \$100 million road to nowhere be built.

HARRY L. BROWN
President
Concerned Citizens
of West Bloomfield

Councilman adds thanks

Editor: The City of Southfield recently awarded a plaque to Sanford Rossen, in recognition of eight years of service on the Planning Commission.

As a former member of the Planning Commission, I would like to add my thanks for his many years of service to the city, and my regrets that his professional responsibilities prevent continued membership on the board.

I am sure I speak for many others in evaluating the importance of the

input Sandy Rossen has given the commission, council and the citizens of the community over the years. His education, experience, expertise, wisdom, objectivity and sense of humor were all extremely helpful to planning commission members; and his influence in the development of this city is reflected in the many outstanding zoning ordinances passed during his tenure.

JOHN MARCOSKY,
Councilman

Look to scriptures

In the Jan. 20 Farmington Observer, a local church minister condemns capital punishment as a "primitive stage of moral development."

This viewpoint can't be justified through the scriptures, common sense or reality. The Hebrew word for murder, ratash, is used in the sixth commandment of the decalogue, rather than katal, the usual word for kill. Therefore this commandment is a prohibition against homicide only. The "eye

for an eye" principle is a directive from God designed for the preservation of freedom in society.

"He that smiteth a man so that he die, shall surely be put to death," says Exodus, chapter 20 verse 12. The position of the scriptures is clear. Apart from the divine standards revealed therein, there is no morality.

This may be a primitive book to some, but where the detractors are gone, it will still be here conveying the timeless wisdom of the Creator.

JAMES BYRNES
Farmington Hills

Farmington Observer

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STEVE BARNABY, Editor
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