

editorial opinion



Hors d'oeuvres by Lynn Orr

Stumping and seniors

Statewide political stumping over the last couple of weeks provides a strange backdrop for the furor over senior citizen housing in downtown Farmington.

Politicians are out pumping for elderly votes, predictably because our elderly citizens have strong voting records. At the same time, the Farmington City Council was accused of "selling out" the city because it approved the site plan of a rent-subsidized senior citizen housing project.

The same voters who presumably elected the council to office felt betrayed when the council gave the project the green light without acceding to a request for a ballot question on the issue.

It seems the whole problem starts because the average resident just doesn't take the time to know what's going on in town, much less what political candidates have to say about the issues.

The Doug Ross-Dan Cooper battle in the 15th State Senate race is a classic example. Wandering between the two post-election parties was an educational experience for a naive political observer.

A YOUNG campaign worker at Cooper's gathering didn't know which office Cooper held. Another young person at Ross' party was convinced Ross would be the state's savior.

Neither person displayed the slightest understanding of the issues, and yet they at least involved themselves in the election process. An overwhelming majority of those under 25 fail to vote at all.

At the public hearing for senior housing in

Farmington last week, many in the crowd displayed total ignorance of the planned housing, although articles concerning the proposed housing have made the front page of this paper consistently over the last eight months.

"We don't all read the papers," was one response. Well, I may have to plead bias, but if residents don't bother to read the paper or attend council meetings themselves, how do they expect to know what's going on? Considering only about 27 percent of Farmington's 7,000 some registered voters went to the polls last Tuesday, it's a good bet that the majority of residents wouldn't know the councilmen's names, much less what views they represented as candidates at election time.

WHETHER lack of knowledge about the governmental process is the result of post-Watergate apathy or '70s style hedonism, the net result is local government controlled by political cliques.

Whether those in power represent the majority's views is a moot point. Quite often I'm happier that the silent majority is just that, but I have a hard time swallowing complaints when the silent start to squeal.

For what it's worth, and newspaper copy isn't worth much these days unless a reporter's notes are under subpoena, the Farmington City Council took a courageous and admirable

The councilmembers backed a much-needed project for those elderly citizens who can't afford high-priced living.

Whether you're in the majority or not, you're right on target.



"Around the edge" by Jackie Klein

Discovery: We got legs

I made a startling discovery back in 1973. I found out I still owned a pair of legs, and so did a lot of other women.

No, I'm not putting you on. I remember going to a party where only two females wore pants suits. Most of us displayed that vanishing breed, reminiscent of yesterday—short dresses. Not mini-skirts or hot pants, but regular ladylike dresses.

But just as the men were beginning to admire dames who wore Haynes (nylons), Annie Hall in 1977 entered the feminine fashion scene with four layers of tops and bottoms and skirts down to the ankles. Now you meet an Annie Hall replica wherever you roam.

But getting back to that 1973 party. It took the ultimate of courage and soul-searching before I decided to abandon trousers in favor of a relic of bygone days. I hadn't bought a dress since BP (Before Pants). And here I was, planning a one-woman rebellion against fad fashion.

A decision as momentous as the one I was struggling with requires a jury of my peers. I concluded, but I cornered my teenage style setter who dresses like instant poverty in early mish mash design.

WEARING HER boyfriend's decaying sweat shirt—which was still sweating—and faded blue jeans cut off at the waist, the fashion expert guffawed. "Mother, you look like Gidget with a bangover. Where did you dig up that 1890 dress?"

My older daughter wasn't much

more help. "You spend \$10,000 a year on pants suits and all of a sudden you want to show your legs. That means you'll have to buy 20 pairs of shoes and wear out my best razor shaving."

Even the dog barked when he saw me trying on a dress. But he didn't whistle, and that was discouraging. He just closed his eyes, sighed and fell asleep.

As I looked in the mirror, I remember wondering what those funny things were sticking out below the hem. Could those be the legs I'd been hiding for years? That was pretty discouraging too.

I stood before the mirror a very long time wrestling with my conscience. After all, didn't I start out in life determined to be a rugged individualist a la Henry Thoreau in Walden Pond?

Wasn't I going to be unconventional, strolling on sun-drenched beaches, my hair rippling in the wind and my heart free as a seagull? Hadn't I planned a life as a wild gamin, flitting through Europe singing, "The Lady is a Tramp," and "I've Got to Be Me?"

YET HERE I was, a middle-aged conformist, following the sheep and marching to the tune of the same drummer as thousands of other convention-bound ladies. I decided I would never leave my footprints in the sands of time if I wore a pants suit.

Feeling like Gloria Steinem, Carrie Nation and Anne Smelee McPherson all rolled up in one radical wearing a dress, I climbed into the car as a few of my neighbors gave me strange,

sidewise glances.

I looked straight ahead as I gumbled to myself. "If it were up to these fellows, mid-dresses would have gone over big. Living bras would have died and, if it were in style, these women would be wearing body paint over their varicose veins."

Despite my bravado, when I arrived at the party, I crept out of the car and covered my legs with my hands. I wasn't were too conspicuous. I reasoned I could always put on the dirty raincoat that was molding in the trunk and pretend I had chilblains or malaria.

Well, by now you know the rest of the story. I guess every woman at the party had gone through the same decision. They must of had the same raging doubts and, in a burst of courage, were finally determined to flaunt their indecency.

To tell you the truth, it was a snug, comfortable feeling being part of the dress-wearing hot polli. A Gloria Steinem crusader or suffragette I'm not. I don't want to be the only pair of brown and white saddle shoes in a world of tuxedos and evening gowns. And I don't want to be the only pair of legs in a world of pants.

But, Annie Hall, you done me in. I wonder how long it will take me to succumb to wearing your grungy, Salvation Army rejects. I'm already hooked on your long skirts which make me wonder once more if I still have legs.

The next time I go beachcombing, with the free, fresh wind in my hair, I'll remember that.

tinkering around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Home grown spooks alive

Ever since Edgar Allen Poe perfected the art of making people quake in their boots, ghost stories have been in and out of fashion.

As dress fashions, ghost stories are usually the same basic spooky ingredients with a slightly different twist.

Nowadays, it seems the devil is in fashion. Take a look at the movies. The Exorcist and Carrie for proof. Just when we thought that it was safe to laugh at those cloven hooves, he's back.

At any rate, if it isn't devilish, it isn't a fashionable story these days. Too bad. I like the kind of straight ghost story in which there's a nice assortment of clanks and pranks with a good tragedy thrown in for measure.

But even white sheets are unfashionable these days and I doubt if any self-respecting traditionalist spook would want to don a Halston-designed set of bed linen.

I CAN JUST see a ghost attired in the setting sun pattern. It's a pitiful sight.

But in the days of all white sheets, beehive hairdos and Gidget movies, the kids on my block told some good spook stories.

And most of them were about Detroit. Like most Detroit stories, cars are involved in the action, too. One east side road suffers a lot of traffic every summer when the kids resurrect the story of Knock Knock street.

A little girl was run over by a car when she chased into the street after a ball. As she was being dragged to her death, she tried to knock on the car so the hit-and-run driver would stop.

Of course, every kid on my block knew that if you went down Knock Knock street, that sound on the back of the car wasn't caused by the road's surface.

It was the little girl trying to persuade a car to stop for her.

There was one girl on my block who swore that she and her boyfriend drove down that street and later found child-sized handprints on the trunk of the car.

And she swore that they had just washed the old junker, too.

Somewhat, because of my friend's testimonial, that story has remained my favorite.

ANOTHER STORY INVOLVES Belle Isle. I suspect that Belle Isle with its river view and wooded areas is the subject of quite a few spooky stories but I've only heard one.

This story concerns Tanglewood, one of the trails in the riverside park. Depending on which version is being told, an old hag, an Indian or a rebusulous white-sheeted thing haunts the area.

If you park there, roll up the car's windows. The entity shows up to knock on the window with its bony hands.

Needless to say, just about every teen who knew the story used that

area as a lover's lane just to brag about the time they were there.

The girl on my block who explored Knock Knock street went to investigate Tanglewood—of course.

You couldn't keep her away.

And of course, she claimed to have seen it. I remember her description of the group she went with careening away from the trail in a beat up '33 Chevy.

But just as city kids had their collection of spooky tales told on front steps during summer evenings, suburban youngsters have a ghost story or two in them.

A friend of mine who grew up in the suburbs told me the tale of a young man who had an inordinate fondness for Ma and Pa.

WHEN THE duo shucked their worldly prison for hopefully better things, Sonny couldn't take it and stuffed them to keep at their memory alive.

For a cozy atmosphere at home, he propped them up at the kitchen table.

Alfred Hitchcock must have heard this one and turned it into Psycho. Every high school kid who ever wanted to buy enough beer went searching for the house, never to find it but always to return safely home.

They must have been thankful they never found the place.

All I know is the I would hate to be the girlfriend that boy took home to meet his folks.

Shirlee's sallies

by Shirlee Iden

Carousel turns back time

If there's a time warp, then I was on it last Wednesday when I rode the Southfield Music Theatre's "Carousel."

Sitting in the dimly lit auditorium at Southfield-Lathrup High School, I met up once again with Billy Bigelow, the ne'er do well carousel barker, his sweetheart Julie Jordan, exuberant Carole Pepperidge fated to be Mrs. Snow and the mother of seven little snows. It was a musical trip back into time for me.

"Carousel" is a warm and touching musical, a celebration of life, of all that's pure and good. More than that, it was the very first musical, in fact, the very first live theater I ever experienced.

I was 15 years old and on a visit to New York City with a younger cousin. We agonized over whether to spend our meager entertainment dollars to see "Oklahoma" or the newer "Carousel" which had been playing Broadway for less than a year.

"Carousel" won and the wonder of that matinee has never really left me. I saved my allowance until I had enough money to buy a record album of the show and I have that scratched

and well listened to recording to this day.

As my children were growing up, we listened to recordings of musical comedies a great deal and a top favorite was "Carousel."

RICHARD ROGERS' music and Oscar Hammerstein II's book and lyrics were old familiar friends to the children and me. Sometimes they would act out the story and they loved to hear Billy's "Soliloquy" and the haunting "You'll Never Walk Alone."

When a movie was made of "Carousel," the whole family got to synchronize the sounds they loved so well with the visual impact of the play.

"Carousel" is timeless, tragic and romantic. It has comedy and pathos and evokes a lot of audience emotion. As the program book says, "a nickel may buy a ride on a carousel, but could anyone put a price on friendship? Or love?"

"Carousel" tells us that love and friendship make living worth while, that we should hold onto the good times and try to carry on through the bad. And when tragedy strikes and the world seems dark, one shouldn't be afraid to reach out to those you love.

About 100 members of the Southfield Music Theatre worked hard to make "Carousel" happen last week. The venerable show which first played in 1945 still had something to say to the audience.

That's a tribute to each singer, dancer, actor or technician who was part of the production, the ninth one for the Summer Music Theatre.

All those hundreds of rehearsal hours meshed into a pleasant, colorful show that sounded good, looked good and reached into the hearts of the audience.

DIRECTOR Ralph Valatta, producer Norman LoPatin and all the young people who sang, danced and worked on the production weren't even born when "Carousel" first turned more than three decades ago, yet they competently brought it to life again, it's timeless message intact.

Singing along silently with the talented "Carousel" cast makes last Wednesday a magic evening for me.

More super theater will come next year when the Summer Musical Theatre will mark its 10th year by tackling "Fiddler on the Roof."

Your Ecology Calendar

Ecology-minded persons who wish to save cans, bottles or newspapers for recycling, may use the facilities listed here.

To prepare glass for recycling, thoroughly wash the container, remove all metal caps and rings from the glass and separate the glass by color.

To prepare cans, separate steel from aluminum cans; paper need not be removed.

Newspapers should be tied in bundles

with heavy string, rope or secured in heavy paper bags.

• **SOUTHFIELD** — A glass recycling center operates 24 a day at the Burgh, 26680 Berg Road, at Civic Center Drive.

• **SOUTHFIELD** — A mobile aluminum recycling unit is in parking lot L at Northland Center, Tuesdays, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

• **LATHRUP VILLAGE** — A recycling center operates at the public serv-

ices building, 19101 Twelve Mile, adjacent to Southfield-Lathrup High School.

Volunteers collect newspapers the first Saturday of each month, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

• **FARMINGTON** — A glass recycling center operates Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon at the west end of Farmington Hills City Hall parking lot, at Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake Road.

Editor:

My God, what's the matter with you?

Do you know you voted for a 1.46 mill increase in your county taxes by approving the limitation? You limited them at 16.46. They have been limited to 15 mills since 1955. Didn't your commissioner tell you? Of course not, he thinks it's great. He advocated the increase in taxes.

You put the stamp of approval on a man who led the move to remove \$4 million from the county road budget.

You put the stamp of approval on the commissioner with the second worst attendance record.

You put the stamp of approval on the same commissioner who, in spite of his attendance record, voted himself a fat pay raise.

His administration voted to disallow any hospital construction in this area, but you nominated him.

His gang advocates bringing through

Novi and Walled Lake to Lyon Township more than half the garbage generated in this county.

YOU TURNED down a person who had no other goal than to serve you well. Believe me, I was going to take no pleasure in trying to beat Martha Hoyer and you can't beat a name candidate as issues mean nothing to you.

Editor:

This is a thank you from our CB club.

The first thank you goes to Louise Okrutsky for the marvelous writeup she gave our dunk tank efforts at the Farmington Founders' Festival. We put a lot of hours into the project, and it was fantastic to read about it in the paper. It was also pure delight to see the picture of our club president in

You just proved it. You vote for a popular political name regardless — it's incredible that you the voter are so unthinking and predictable that they can put you in a computer and gerrymander a district to within two percentage points. But even so, you are better than the stay-at-home.

I care,
LEW COW,
WIZOM

Thanks extended

such a dignified position. And we would like to thank everyone who stopped by and threw a softball. We raised more than \$700 for the National Institute of Burn Medicine in Ann Arbor. It was a great festival and a super amount of money to be able to give to the burn center.

BUD LeBLANC,
Farmington Hills
Helping Hands CB Club

A Division of
Suburban Communications
Corporation

Philip H. Power
Chairman of the Board
(on leave of absence)

Richard D. Aginion
President
Chief Executive Officer

Farmington Observer

"Successor of the Farmington Enterprise"

Steve Barnaby

Editor

2210 West Nine Mile

Southfield MI 48075

(313) 352-5400

John Reddy, General Mgr.

Thomas A. Riordan, Executive Editor

George J. Hagan, Advertising Director, Fred J. Wright, Circulation Director