editorial opinion



Downfall of a liberal

A eulogy in the American political tradition was onducted at this week's Farmington Hills City

conducted at this week's parmington this Chy Council session.

And as in any American political event, there were grandiose speeches, much emotion, some wheeling and dealing, and, among it all, a little bit

The occasion was the removal of Farmington Hills Councilwoman Joame Smith as a potent political power. Joanne was slated to become the city's next mayor, having served for one year as

is mayor pro-tem.

But her political opponents had a different idea

But her political opponents had a different flues and they prevailed.

Joanne is the kind of politician who stirs high emotions among voters. They either love her or can't stand her. Both forces were in play Monday

emotions among volers. They either love her or can't stand her. Both forces were in play Monday night.

Added to the fray was Councilman. Earl Opperthauser, lover of few, compromisor with all. And, as is almost always the case, Earl strolled; away with the bag of political marbles, while all the strong strong of the strong with the bag of political marbles, while all the strong the strong with the bag of political marbles, while all the strong with the strong with the strong the strong with the strong wit

believed
Although she still has a year to serve on the council, a new generation of local politicians will have to pick up the torch of liberalism in Farmigton Hills.
But she can walk away feeling proud. Last Monday night a rare thing happened—one person after another stood before the council to praise the ideal which she represents.

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I've covered a lot of council meetings over the years and have yet to see such an outpouring of honest praise for a local politician.

Ostensibly, her supporters were there to implore the council to elect Joanne Smith mayor. But everyone knew the decision had been made weeks, if not months, earlier

everyone knew the decision had been made weeks, if not months, earlier.

Some said her public defense was orchestrated. If that is true, it was done with an honorable intention—to pay homage to a friend. It truly was a dramatic moment in Farmington Hills history.

As for the outcome of the debate, Earl was elected mayor, which he wanted. He won the support of the Homeowners Council to support senior citizen housing, which he wanted.

The recall is dead and the Homeowners Council came away with nothing.

As for Joanne Smith—she has her friends, which is more important than all the rest.

Wrights' lesson

Judges who call secret court sessions, city councils who hold secret interviews with job candidates, education boards who call secret meetings—all can learn a practical lesson from Wilbur and Orville Wright, who 75 years ago this week made the first motorized airplane flight—and tried in vain to keen it secret.

Orville Wright, who 75 years ago this week made the first motorized airplane flight—and tried in vain to keep it secret.

On Jan. 5, 1904, 18 days after they had made world history, the Wright brothers told the world.

".. But since the contents of a private telegram announcing to our folks at home the success of our trials was dishonestly communicated to the messipapermen at the Norfolk office, and led to the imposition upon the public. by persons who never saw the 'Flyer' or its flights, of a fictitious story incorrect' in almost every detail; and since his story together with several pretended interviews or statements, which were fakes, pure and simple, have been widely disseminated, we feel impelled to make some correction."

The lessons are clear:

If you try to keep secret something several persons know, someone will leak it.

When news spreads by word of mouth, there will be distortions can be damaging to imocent parties.

The person practicing secret cannot hope to gain.

The public is certainly "imposed on" by official

gain.
The public is certainly "imposed on" by official

secrecy.

If the Wright brothers hurt themselves and the public by keeping news of their private flights a secret, think how much worse it is for courts to impose gag orders and for policy-making bodies to attempt secret meetings.

Suburban Communication

Corporation

Philip H. Pow Chairmon of the Board (on leave of absence)

Richard D. Aginian
President
Chief Executive Officer



A hearty Zalig Kerstfeest and a festive Buon Natale

Bless ye, merry lads and lassies. Greetings of the season to one and all. The cherished hope here is that you and yours have the most joyous holidays ever, and that a bountiful year lies ahead. Wesolych Swiat Bozego Nardzenia to Jerry Coomiak, Art & Eleanor Koberzynski, Walter Hochlowski, George & Adele Tabaka, Maurie & Mary Breen, Joe & Irene Bida, John McDevitt, Ben Celani, Dick Rose, Jack Daniels, Angelo DiPonio and Ron Seeley.

A Smile from St. Nick to Harry Nederlander, Wayne Klein, Chuck Walby, Bob Brown, John Ivory, Emie Jones, Dick Janes, Chrystine Hogan Zalig Kerstfeest to Ralph & Mabel Lorenz, the Jabaras all, John Van Wagoner, Irv Rozian, the Metteal clan. Troy Ruttman, Ed McNamara, Carl Wagenschutz, Dan Gilmartin, Bob Turner, Danny Obonnell, Hayes Wilson, Carl Pursell, Bob Geake, Paul Kadisth, Bob Law, Mary Dumas, Al Wistert and Bo Schembechler.

and Bo Schembechler.

BUON NATALE to Fabe Mirto, Bill Rucks, Dan Ross, Frank Millington, George & Alice Babich, Toney & Angle Sitca, Bill & Jean Upton, Ted & Marge Thrasher, Keith & Eleanor Burton, Bob Calihan, Walt Doherty, John Mulroy and Father Norbert Huetter.

Happy Yuletide to Bill Sliger, Jack Hoffman, Bill McLaughlin, John Carlo, Nanette Slavin Rakieten, Bruce Martyn, Sid Abel, Lyall Smith, Al Coffman, Dave Diles, Al Ackerman, Bill Plemming, Lucille Wattrick, Don Kremer, Doc Fenkel, Al Rice, Bill Garwood and Paul Masson.

S Rozhdestvom Khristovym to Bob Barrick, Marilyn Dwyer, Smith & Jean Horton, Bob & Joan Marquardt, Jack McEwen, Orville & Peggy Tungate, Bob Stremich, Harris Machus, the Larco family, Doc Forsyth, George Dufour, John Dufour, Art Hill, Lee Fidge and Ray Williams.

May the Yule Log burn brightly for Ed LaCroix, George Worrall, Abdul Jarrar, Bob Jones, Dick Sorch, Chuck Wadowski, Tom & Charlotte Kuzma, Jim Jorissen, Earl & Gerl Brown, Harry Bouwman, George Maskin, Barbara Rutkowski, Johnnie Walker, Pat McDonald, Ruth Sulliwan and Mary Childs.

Childs.
A Gay Noel to Fred & Bill Beitner, Nick & Antha
Kerbawy, Fred & Ron Buesser and all the oncelittle Buessers, Bob Deadman, Don Fracassi, Robert Kelly, Cliff Lilly, Tom Turner, Sam Pappas,
Mike & Dolly Ettenhofer, Norma Cassady, George



Bowles, Tom Foley, Pat Foley, Dunbar Davis, Jirk Garber, Mike Hand, Gus Cifelli and Carl Ingraham.

FELICES PASCUAS to George Puscas, Herb Boldt, Buddy Puscas, Jon English, Rich Hewlett, Tom Moshimer, Ron Holland, Al Fracassa, Bill Rankin, Ken Tirmons, George Van Wagoner, John Sandmann, Jack Cotton, Ron Kramer, Monte Clark, Dick Vitale, Jim Rossman and Mike Hoben.

A Toast to Bob Sego, John Conn, Howard Spleté, Jimmy & Mary Ann Odom, George Lawton, Doro-thy Chandler, Bob Shank, Philip Rodgers Magee, Fred Hill, Uncle Bill & Aunt Jane Clarke, Bob Sui-cock, Bill Maybury, Esther Hulsing, Judy Lewis, Denver McCord and Woody Hayes. (Woody WHO?)

WHO?)

Kung Hei Shing Taan to Pat Cavanaugh, Cliff
Tait, Harper-Stephens, Fred Thomann, Craig Bell,
Laura Corkum, Bob Rhein, Gary Whitener, Mac
McElmurry, Bud Erickson, Paul Carey, Bill Prew and Joseph Priestly McCarthy.

GLAEDELIG JUL to Lee Bowden, Harold Guenther, Arch Vallier, Steve Redfern, Pat Hann, Earl Smith, Elton and all McAllisters, Vern Fes-ter, Jim Bean, Joe & Lois Gilmore, Ned Stirton, Hank Meijer, Ed Wendover, Ken Vogras, Dick Molyneaux, Ben Creech and I. W. Harper.

Jingle those bells, Santa. Jingle them loud on a midnight clear for Bob Waters, Kathy Himes, Anh Bouie, Wayne Weimer, Ruth Koepke, Carl Ceder-berg and Nat Sibbold.

orig and Nat Sidbold.

In any language, and in any religous belief, may
the blessings of the season be yours.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

1944 Christmas mass that continues

It was late December 1944. America's Seventh Army in Europe was battling through Alsace, heading towards the Rhine and Germany.

Germany.

One 23-year-old infantryman, in combat since August, was exhausted.

Then he heard nine words that mustered an inward sigh of relief. An aid station doctor was saying, "I'm sending you back to the field hospital, soldier."

A bumpy ride in the packed GI ambulance seemed like a jaunt in some chauffeur-driven

THE JOURNEY ended in the square of a tiny Alsatian village. U.S. medical personnel had taken over the local Catholic hospital.

An ancient structure, the building was two stories, complete with a beautiful chapel. It had been run by an order of German nursing nurs until a few weeks earlier.

The infantryman kept thanking God that he was alive. The first two days he slept almost round the clock.

clock.

During the afternoon of Dec. 24, word was passed along that the GI chaplain would say midnight mass in the hospital chapel.

By 11:30 that evening, most patients able to walk found their way into the pews. The only illumination inside the chapel came from two flickering stubby candles on the altar.

There were executed that the property of the control of the chapel came from two flickering stubby candles on the altar.

stubby candles on the altar.

There was occasional light from outside, when the 155 mm artillery battery camons near the village fired at German positions. Their must blasts momentarily lit the area and the chapel's stained glass windows came alive, rattled by the

oncussions.

As the congregation quietly sat awaiting the tart of the mass, there was a slight rustling in the

balcony of the chapel.

And then a squeaky organ started playing some familiar notes. Every American recognized them.

Then it happened.

A CHOIR OF magnificent feminine voices began

"Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
"Alles schlaft, einsam wacht
"Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar
"Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
"Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!"

Chills shot up and down the young infantryman's spine. Time tumbled backwards to a familiar Christmas story he knew so well.
It happened in 1818, when these same words

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were sung for the first time. It was in another chapel, not too many miles from where he knelt, at another midnight mass, much like the one he was

oung infantryman silently mouthed the The young words in English:

"Silent night, holy night,
"All is calm, all is bright.
"Round yon virgin mother and child,
"Holy infant so tender and mild,
"Sleep in heavenly peace,
"Sleep in heavenly peace!"

Tears streamed down his cheeks. So this is what Christmas is really all about, he thought. An emo-tion he had never felt before welled up within his

WHEN THE PRIEST prepared to distribute

cony. The GI congregation stayed motionless.

From the rear of the chapel a line of robed figures seemed to float down the aisle to the

sanctuary.

The nursing nuns—theirs had been the voices which sang so beautifully.

That mass moved the soldier as no other service he had ever attended.

The next morning after breakfast, a Red Cross lady toured the wards, offering a warm greeting to retients.

patients.

At each bed, she handed out a single, brightly wrapped present. There were cans of shaving cream, bars of soap, packages of razors, whatever she could scrounge up.

At each bed, that is, save one.

"Sorry, soldier," the Red Cross lady told the young infantryman. "You weren't here four days ago when I made the nose count, so we don't have anything for you."

The GI grimed, his broadest smile in weeks.

"That's all right, I don't mind, I already have the greatest gift a person could ever have—my life."

As the years moved on, and he married and had a family, he never forgot that Christmas in Alsace. To his children, he told and retold the story of his happiest Christmas, the one when he didn't receive a single present. They never seemed to tire of hearing it.

And each time he recounted the tale, he would feel that special joy well up within him. The state was the most wonderful Christmas; I ever had.

Tree heralds Christmas

The fancy tree was ordered from a greenhouse. The big green tree still had to be purchased from a lot by the whole family, and to me this is when Christmas started.

When the tree was selected, everyone had a responsibility. I always had to put it up. Fortunately, as our son got older, he could help because the trunk never fit in the stand and the tree was always to tall to fit in the room.

After shaving the trunk and pruning the tree, the family had a ritual of deciding which was the best side to face out.

Being the tallest in the family, I put up the lights, but from that point on, the kids took over. For many years we had to wire up the tree because it was so overladen with goodies. We probably could have selected any tree around because no one ever saw what the tree really looked like with all the ornamentation.

WE NEVER tried an artificial tree. This con-stituted an artificial Christmas to us.

While we were trimming the tree, part of the family baked Christmas cookies. So when the job family baked Christmas cookies. So when the job was done, we were really ready for St. Nicholas. Even when we were away for Christmas, we always had a tree as a sign of the season. When it came down, we knew the Christmas season was over and the New Year was upon us. When does the Christmas season star? Some people with long faces say. "Too early." Merchants say the Friday after Thanksgiving. The season probably starts at different times for different people. For some people, it doesn't ever start.

It is something that starts inside you when you

by HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.

make a commitment to think about what you are going to do for other people. This is what the joy of Christmas is all about.

TO ME, THE REAL Christmas season starts when you go out and get a Christmas tree. When our kids were younger, we all used to go out to a tree farm and search for hours until we found the perfect tree. We would all help cut at down, and it was our own tree. Then as they got older, we went to a decorator's tree. It was beautiful with its flocking and turnouse lights Not exactly very Christmasy, but beautiful.

After a while we called that "Monte tree!"

beautiful.

After a while, we called that "Mom's tree," because she was the artistic soul in the family and each child had his or her own small tree with lights and ornaments that fit their ideas of what a Christmas tree should be. Then we added another big tree which became "Dad's tree." It was green with multicolored lights and basic things like strings of popcori, candy canes and homemade ornaments. The kind-of tree I remembered having as a boy.