

Young paints picture of cooperation

Mayors Coleman Young and Ed McNamara did their best last week to paint a rosy picture of urban-suburban cooperation.

They laughed and smiled, said nice things about each other, said nice things about cities and suburbs, and tried to help raise some money for the Livonia Chamber of Commerce political action committee.

Everything went well — except for the fund raising.

McNAMARA INTRODUCED Young, who spoke for a half-hour Tuesday night at Madonna College, just prior to an art auction to raise money for the committee.

But when the Detroit mayor was done and everybody shook hands again, most of the audience walked out — either because of the heat or because they didn't really come for the art in the first place. Organizers of the event had hoped the presence of the political luminaries would up the bids at the auction. That part didn't work.

But Young and McNamara did their best to dispel the notion that they'd most likely be found at opposite corners of a boxing ring.

McNamara gave Young credit for convincing Detroit's City Council to give General Motors a tax break for moving its Cadillac Engine Plant to Livonia, rather than out-of-state, as GM had threatened.

Artist exhibits Hawaii series

Dolores Demers, a local artist and teacher who just returned from Hawaii, is exhibiting her water-colors of the islands at the Troy Public Library during May.

Her paintings incorporate the color and warmth of the lush vegetation, the sunny beaches and the blue oceans.

Ms.Demers has been an art teacher in the area for a number of years.

Her paintings will be on display at the library until May 31. The library is at 510 West Big Beaver just east of I-75, off Civic Center Drive.

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"He recognized that jobs in Michigan are extremely important," McNamara said.

And Young gave McNamara a verbal pat on the back for his role in leading the board members of the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority to finally agree on an area mass transit plan.

"I believe your mayor has shown outstanding leadership," Young told the crowd of about 150. "I believe we've been together more often than we've been opposed to each other."

YOUNG DEVOTED the bulk of his comments to the idea that city dwellers and suburbanites should think regionally instead of locally — that the problems of one area are the problems of the rest, as well.

"Those matters we have in common far outweigh our differences," he said. "Anything that's good for the region is good for the city and good for Livonia."

The Detroit Democrat said the suburbs cannot remain prosperous if the central city is dying.

"You cannot have crime running rampant (in the city) without having crime affecting you," he said. "You cannot have dope in Detroit without having it affecting you."

Young said he believed things in Detroit have been looking up in the last couple years. The city's much-touted renaissance, he said, is real.

Four years ago, he said, there were complaints that downtown Detroit was deserted after 5 p.m.; that you could shoot a cannon down the street and not hit anyone.

"Now they're yelling that there's not enough parking. I think that's a healthy complaint."

"The whole area is looking a lot better today than it was four years ago," Young said.

The mayor of the country's fifth or sixth largest city (he says fifth, others say sixth) said the energy crisis and the dwindling supply of empty land is hurting the outer ring of suburbs.

And the discussion in Congress to cut funding for the CETA program, which pays the salaries of many city employees in Detroit, Livonia and other cities, could be disastrous, Young said.

"This move by Congress could very well bring us all to our knees," he said. "The same knife that cuts us cuts you."

"If we fight, we will get nothing. Together, we can get everything."



SEMTA board chairman Ed McNamara and Detroit Mayor Coleman Young seem to agree that cooperation is needed in Detroit-suburban relations. Young was at a fundraiser in Livonia. McNamara is also mayor of Livonia.

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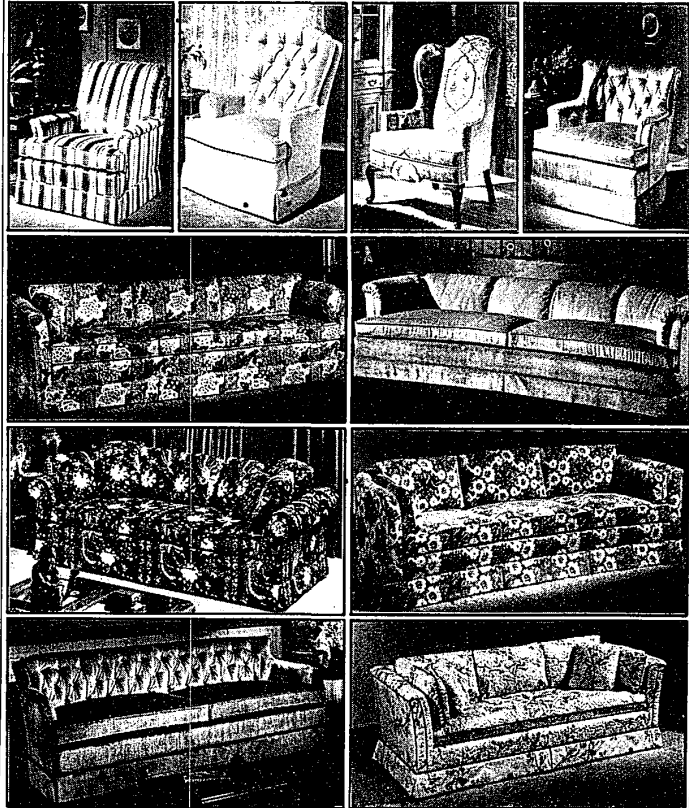
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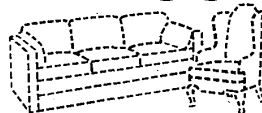
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