

from our readers

League defends political ways

Editor:

On behalf of the League of Women Voters of the West Bloomfield-Farmington Area I want to thank the Farmington Observer for the space devoted to coverage of the League of Women Voters in the September 17 edition.

We also appreciate the thoughts and concerns expressed in the "Crackerbarrel" column, and while we always are responsive to constructive criticism, we feel some of the comments made there deserve a reply.

The League always has been concerned about the fairness of methods of conducting candidate debates. If objectivity is a "sterilizing" process, then we accept the consequences — but it is our way of making it possible for voters to compare the viewpoints of the various candidates. The principal reasons for screening questions are to eliminate duplications; to see that each candidate has an opportunity to answer the questions posed; and to eliminate those questions that attack a particular candidate. Admittedly this does not lend itself to a free-wheeling unlimited give-and-take but it does allow the voters to hear the nominees express themselves on the issues.

As to Voter Guides, the primary objective is to present candidates' viewpoints in such a way that they can be compared and evaluated. Space limitations are no more stringent or less necessary than those frequently imposed by newspapers. In Oakland County

various newspaper editors often are asked to help formulate questions for the Guide. The necessary word limits are imposed with a sense of fairness and a reality of space limitations. In West Bloomfield and Farmington, if a candidate exceeds the limit the person is contacted to reword the reply, and is not chopped off in midsentence.

The statement that the League lacks understanding of the political system is unfair and untrue. Many of our members, both past and present, are part of the political system, serving as elected or appointed officials. Neither an organization nor an individual can survive in the political system without an understanding of it.

Again, we are open to any suggestions that would help improve our purpose of informing the voters in the community.

Mrs. Patricia Smith
Farmington Hills

Girl gymnasts needed

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