

Farmington Observer

Successor to the Farmington Enterprise

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comment

New amendment foreseen

The fight for ERA is not over

BACK IN WORLD WAR II, the women of the 1940s came out of the kitchens and nurseries to stand shoulder to shoulder with other factory workers at assembly lines.

They turned out tanks, guns and planes that really flew and functioned. Detroit was called the Arsenal of Democracy, and it was a good enterprise.

Though women made gains — and some never retreated from the world of work — the law, in schools and on the job were far off. We still had miles to go.

Years later, in 1966, it was brought home to me that women were second class in the ivory towers of academia, at least in the field of history.

My journalism degree was ready for framing, and I ached to continue studies in history. As a graduate student at Wayne State University, I submitted a proposal to a history prof, and he said: "Apply for a fellowship, you should get it."

My grades were good, my recommendations impeccable and I did get the fellowship, which lead to a masters in religions and colonial American history.

HISTORY WAS AN old boys' club in those days. When my fellowship came through, the professor who was my adviser made a point of telling me: "If it

wasn't for the Vietnam War, you wouldn't have had a chance."

What he meant was that graduate students were draft bait. The university wasn't about to train a male graduate assistant and then have him drafted mid-semester. Some unfortunate professor might have had to grade his own papers or do mundane library research.

Second choice or not, I was awarded the masters and taught history for three years in a community college.

TODAY, WOMEN are in law schools, medical schools, schools of veterinary medicine, engineering and architectural curriculums as students and faculty members alike, and one, an astronaut, will lift off from this planet soon.

Though we've moved ahead, still it's a time of mourning for the proposed ERA, which will die in just two days, at least for now. Women in the thick of the battle for its passage, vow this is just round one.

ERA may not be dead, because the Helen Milikens, Laura Callows, Gloria Steinem, Eleanor Smalls, and thousands like them just won't let it happen. They will use newly realized political clout and determination.

A CENTURY ago, this nation made it illegal to discriminate because of race, and only 62 years ago gave the vote to women.

Already scheduled is the reintroduction of an Equal Rights Amendment on July 1 by Rep. Patricia Schroeder, D-Colo., said Martha Griffiths, the former congresswoman who introduced a like bill a decade ago.

Women have gotten equal credit written into the law, have obligated schools to provide athletic programs for both sexes, and they're pushing for equal pay for equal work and equality of pensions.

YES, WE'VE come a long, long way. Women are organized politically, economically and socially. Though there is strong dissent, few argue about the correctness of equality of the sexes.

What a fantasy it is to think that we could have been celebrating the 27th Amendment's addition to the U.S. Constitution next week rather than its defeat, but first, round two.

We've logged some gains, though the road ahead is long and bumpy. But we've got the road map now and no matter how long it takes, equality by reason of sex will one day be part of the U.S. Constitution.



Shirlee Iden



discover Michigan
Bill Stockwell

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What really sells newspapers

IT'S HUMBLING TO a newsmen to learn what sells papers.

Lots of folks on the street think news of crime sells papers. Others think disasters, gore, sex, scandal and politics sell papers. Not so.

Garage sales sell papers. It's true. I saw Observer & Eccentric Circulation Director Fred Wright's charts.

Newspaper street sales — as opposed to home delivery — shoot up during the garage sale seasons. These occur in the first warm, weather of late spring and early summer and at the end of summer. People from all over line up to buy a paper strictly to get the classifieds.

Our own garage sale showed how eager the public can be. I call it "our" garage sale, but it was really the Oakway Symphony Society Women's Association garage sale, and my wife and her colleagues did all the work.

The moral of her story is: "If you don't want to lose something, get it out of the garage."

My boat occupies an honored place in the garage, but of course it had to be moved to a relative's place during the two days of the garage sale. As I towed it down the drive, a chap stopped and offered to buy it.

THE CANOE stays in the garage, strung up from the rafters because it's light. Five guys offered to buy it.

A man looked over the offerings, then asked if he there were any antiques in the house he could look over. (There weren't.)

A woman approaching from the north noticed the iris plants along that side of the house. She asked if she could dig up some for her garden. (Impossible once



Tim Richard

they're blooming, but otherwise we may have had a deal.)

The Oakway women are always happy when they get donations of records because Harry our mailman will lap them up.

TOOLS ARE big things at garage sales. Men will come up without looking over the offerings and ask the person in charge, "Got any tools?"

The furnace repairman came the day of the garage sale. He remembered he had to get something from his truck and put down his tool box at the door. That was a mistake. In the 10 seconds he was absent, two people offered to buy the entire box.

A preacher came by and admired our new puppy. I call Kirsten a puppy, but she's 11 months old now and a loud-mouthed, boisterous, practical-joking Norwegian elkhound. Actually, all elkhounds are loud-mouthed, boisterous practical jokers, but in addition Kirsten is a very pretty young lady.

WE DADDIES get so wrapped up in our darlings' loud-mouthed, boisterous practical jokes that we sometimes forget our little girls are very pretty. People tell Kirsten she's pretty so often that she's beginning to think her name is Pretty.

Anyway, the preacher said that if we ever have her bred, he'd like a puppy. That was polite enough.

Beau, our departed Head Poodle, had a mother, Dodi, who was enchantingly lovely and good-natured. Puppy shoppers would forget her offspring and offer to buy her. Now that was going a bit far.

To sum it up, Oakway has a hefty cash balance as it signs up soloists for the coming season, my watercraft are intact, both Kirsten and The Boomer are still with us, and the furnace repairman still has his tools.

Garage sales sure are popular, but it's humbling to a newsmen to learn what really sells papers.

Death is always a bad story

I DON'T THINK you ever really get tough in this business.

The stereotype of the hard-nosed, stone-hearted, insensitive newswoman ruthlessly pursuing a sensational story with total disregard for human feelings and privacy doesn't quite wash.

How can reporters be callous about wasted young lives and the suffering of those who are left behind to cope with the pain of loss and the agony of unanswered questions — "Why me?" or "Why my child?"

THE PARENTS of Eve August, 24, might be asking those questions. But Elsie and Herbert August of Southfield say they bear no animosity toward the person who shot and killed their daughter.

Why was the young law student the only person killed in the recent shooting and firebombing rampage at the Buhl Building in downtown Detroit? The answer we've heard most frequently is "She was in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Eve August was enthused about her summer internship in the law offices of Edward Bell and Lester Hudson. And



Jackie Klein

according to everyone who knew her, she had a love affair with life.

I spoke to Elsie August by phone the day after her daughter was killed. It wasn't easy to do. But Mrs. August seemed anxious to talk, and she told of her daughter's zest for life and love for people. There was no bitterness in the mother's voice, though there was deep sorrow.

THE HEADLINE in the Southfield Eccentric read "Dead law student leaves legacy of love, laughter." That's a paraphrase from the eulogy given Monday by Rabbi Dannel Schwartz at the young woman's funeral.

These are words for Eve August's parents to live by. There are questions that have no answers. They are beyond human ken.

No, you never really get used to it. With each new tragedy, it seems to get tougher.

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