

Local police get bum rap for crime outbreak

Crime — its statistics are just numbers until you're victimized. Then crime becomes a very important story — yours.

In recent weeks, some area merchants have learned this cold reality. Unfortunately, they have complained. After all, the small business man and woman have a hard enough time making a buck.

The last thing they need are nitwits burglarizing them.

Increasingly, the target of merchants' ire is the local police department. Reluctant to complain publicly, the victimized are wondering why the police don't do more — aren't more successful at capturing the culprits.

On the other hand, law enforcement officials are becoming more and more sensitive to the criticism. Most believe they are doing the best job possible, considering budget and judicial restraints.

And although sympathy must be felt for crime victims, the blame is misdirected when aimed at local police departments.

Generally speaking, Farmington and Farmington Hills have fine law enforcement agencies in terms of what such departments are designed to do.

Both have qualified and experienced leaders — Bob Siefert and John Nichols. Both are staffed with well-trained professionals.

BUT RESIDENTS must realize that neither the Farmington nor Farmington Hills Police Department is equipped to deal with major crime situations — nor are they intended to fulfill that role.

Television has created the illusion for too many persons that every police department is staffed with J. Edgar Hoover, Kojak or Columbo, to each day law enforcement agency must possess the expertise

of the FBI. In real life, crimes aren't solved in 60-minute segments.

The expense to maintain a police department is enormous under the most frugal circumstances. Each one of the local police departments gobbles up 25-30 percent of the municipal budget.

In Farmington Hills that means more than \$4 million. In Farmington the price tag is more than \$900,000, which also includes fire protection. Farmington employs public safety officers who serve both as firefighters and police officers.

And in these days of economic stress, it is unlikely that taxpayers would be willing to foot the bill to substantially increase police protection.

Even if they were, they couldn't afford the police protection some persons expect.

The causes of crime go much deeper than how many police officers are on the beat. A municipality could put a patrol officer on every corner, and

stores still would be robbed and burglarized.

IF THE TRUTH were known, each of these cities could do with fewer police officers, and little difference in the crime figures would be noted.

And that isn't meant to take away from or degrade the service offered by those who serve in either one of these communities. But it takes only so many police officers to fill out the necessary reports and gather up the leads after a crime has been committed.

Residents shouldn't fool themselves with a false sense of security. These officers are here to maintain the peace we already have, to keep us from killing ourselves on the highways and residential streets and to assist in any other way they can.

What they are unable to do, and what is unfair to expect them to do is solve an epidemic crime wave which plagues the entire country.

Short summer is bad habit

Sure was warm this week. Last week, too. Just like summer. Come to think of it, it is summer — will be until next Thursday, as a matter of fact.

Most folks think summer ended when the country celebrated Labor Day. It's been that way for a lot of years. And that tradition is taking its toll on the Michigan economy.

I recall a few years back vacationing in northern Michigan during that transition weekend. The change from the day before to the day after Labor Day was almost impossible to comprehend.

In a matter of hours towns which had bustled with tourists were transformed into virtual ghost towns. The streets were empty, stores were "closed for the season," and lakes were devoid of anglers and water skiers.

The atmosphere actually was eerie.

And while the change around the metropolitan area isn't quite as noticeable, it's there. Those of us set to enjoy a nice summer weekend were disappointed to find that many facilities were closed or less than adequately staffed.

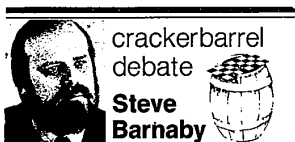
Sure, we just go back to work on Monday, complain a bit and psychologically dig in for the first winter storm which is sure to come.

BUT WAIT. It is still warm. Summer is this state's biggest item when it comes to the tourist industry — Michigan's second biggest money maker.

And we're telling folks from around the country to go home, go spend your money elsewhere.

Times have changed, and Michigan should adjust. In the old days, Labor Day marked the end of summer vacations because children went back to school. We were a children-oriented society.

Today, our population grows older, and couples either have fewer children or none at all. Not everyone has to run back to enroll Mary and John into school.



Even that could be remedied by starting school a few weeks later and adding an hour on to each day. But a lot of teachers would like an extra month to get some master's degree work done or rest in the sun.

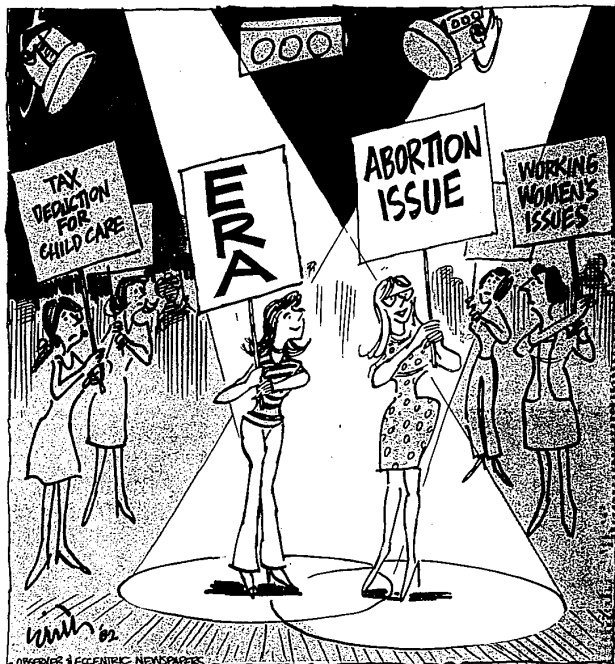
Businesses would reap an advantage also. Nothing worse than trying to cram everyone's vacation into July and August. Those extra weeks sure would even out the workload.

But, of course, in Michigan's case, the really important factor is the revenue produced for our battle-weary economy. Millions of more dollars could be reaped by small and large businesses which depend on tourism for their livelihood.

Certainly would do a lot for our state tax coffers, too. Next time you're up north or out to Greenfield Village, check out the license plates.

MANY PERSONS come from out of state to vacation here. They might as well help us pay for our highway repairs and maintenance of the state parks.

Extending summer vacation season until summer actually ends would really be a productive way to say yes to Michigan.



Headlee scares women

DICK HEADLEE has a problem with the women's vote. I have detected it myself in listening to comments women volunteer about the Republican candidate for governor. They are really scared of the Mormon father of nine who opposes the federal Equal Rights Amendment.

The Headlee campaign also perceives it has a problem, and last week state Sen. John Engler of Mt. Pleasant put together a meeting with Headlee and Republican women in state government.

State Reps. Ruth McNamee of Birmingham, Sylvia Skrel of Livonia and Shirley Johnson of Royal Oak were there.

"HE DOESN'T allude to women in the work force (in speeches)," said McNamee afterwards.

"There are women who work because they have to — heads of single-parent households, trying to put youngsters through school or college.

"Forget ERA and abortion. He has to understand there are a large group of women in the work force, recognize and have empathy with them."

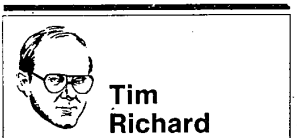
Skrel used the meeting to push an idea for a bill. It would allow working parents a partial deduction of day-care expenses from taxable income under the state income tax. Day care, she contends, should be a legitimate expense in the earning of a living, just like mileage.

ONE OF HEADLEE's problems, they found, is that he is reluctant to talk about his own record as president of Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co. They were impressed by his company's.

Female executives. Eleven women are at the assistant vice president, manager and director level, including Loretta Abrams, assistant vice president for credit administration, and Lee Zohroh, assistant vice president and associate general counsel.

Allowing "flextime," whereby women employees may modify their own schedules to accommodate their families as long as they put in their required hours.

They were also impressed by the day-care center for Headlee campaign workers and the fact that the organizational brain in his headquarters is campaign manager Mari Egbert.



Tim Richard

Said Johnson: "He took it for granted that it was good business to do those things."

Added Skrel: "Why, oh why, didn't you let us know?"

HEADLEE MADE a point of saying his party has a strong record of placing women in high positions in government: the only two women senators, the first woman Supreme Court justice, the only woman on the Michigan Supreme Court, the only major party woman candidate for the state high court in 1982.

Interesting, but it doesn't reflect on Dick Headlee, one way or the other.

Skrel pounded home the message that Headlee must talk about more than jobs; he must talk about "jobs for men and women."

For some women, the sun rises and sets on the issues of ERA and abortion. Others, however, are concerned about issues of civil service, moving up into management, day care, flextime and what Skrel calls "comparable worth."

The last refers to "the effort to raise wages for female-dominated jobs," said Skrel. "Unlike equal pay for equal work," it reaches wage inequities associated with occupational segregation and allows us to compare different jobs which share comparable skills, efforts and responsibilities."

High-level secretaries and registered nurses should be rubbing their hands at that one.

NOW WE COME to the bottom line. Are these Republican women convinced that Headlee is sensitive to the problems of working women? McNamee summed it up:

"He convinced me in some areas. In others, I'll have to follow up."

from our readers

Vote forecast is premature

To the editor:

Amazement. That was the feeling I had after reading Steve Barnaby's Crackerbarrel Debate last Thursday. I am amazed at how Barnaby is able to forecast the gubernatorial election here in Michigan so soon after Labor Day. With nary a sloop of facts, numbers, poll results, or anything for that matter, Barnaby has predicted Dick Headlee to win the governor's race. His only oasis for this wild and confusing assumption is by "talking to people on the street." I take it to be Farmington area streets at that.

Well, Mr. Barnaby, I'm not so sure about your forecasting. The "political insight" you speak of might be representative of the Farmington-Farmington Hills area but certainly not the entire state of Michigan.

I point to last month's post-primary poll in the Detroit News which placed both Jim Blanchard and Senator Don Reigle far ahead of their respective opponents. Their support came from both the suburbs and outstate voters.

Dick Headlee is a hometown boy who has made good. I have nothing against that, as I am also a Farmington boy who hopes to sign day too. I do not, however, see his limited experience in government as a sign that he will solve this state's economic woes.

In Jim Blanchard, voters of this state — all of them, Mr. Barnaby, not just area voters — have an individual who represents a positive change. The last 20 years of Republican leadership has left a devastating effect on our economy. I am going to vote for Jim Blanchard because I do not only expect him to

win, but I also feel he's the best for the job. I encourage all my fellow Farmington residents to do the same.

Martin J. Schwartz
Farmington

Reader urges responsibility to the editor:

The pain is severe. Millions of Americans are unemployed with no immediate relief in sight and compensation running out. Who knows how many are going hungry? Welfare rolls are growing larger with fewer working people to carry the tax load. The cost of fuel is skyrocketing. Property taxes are still going up. Where is it all going to end? How did we get into this mess? How can we get out?

Obviously, all of this didn't happen overnight. It appears to me that we need to take an analytical look at ourselves as a whole. Over the years we have been trying to get more and more for ourselves while at the same time giving less and less in return. We have gotten lazy and complacent and finally

... incompetent. Our kids are getting worse educations, our cars are worse than our competitors, our buildings fall apart and sometimes kill people, we are bombed out of our minds with drugs, our morals are rotten.

It sounds like the decline and fall of the American empire. And to top the whole thing off, we are blaming our sorry situation on foreign competition and the president. I can't see any way out of this mess until we decide to lay the blame exactly where it should be, on ourselves. It's time to face up to the truth, there really isn't any other way.

Accepting responsibility for one's

own actions is the only way of correcting any situation. There is no way to turn this situation we have gotten ourselves in around immediately. We need to get back to morality. We need to give a day's work for a day's pay. What does the Good Book say? "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Sounds like sound advice to me. It can't hurt to try it.

Kenneth A. Kemp
Farmington Hills

Lebanon's liberation

To the editor:

Each letter in "Lebanon" appears in the word "liberation." "Lebanon" is inextricably embedded in "liberation." Let's hope it stays that way.

And thanks to Israel, who is responsible for Lebanon's liberation, and who simultaneously struck a lethal blow at international terrorism throughout the world.

Herzl B. Shur
Southfield

Photographer is lauded

To the editor:

I knew Randy Borst was a great photographer after I saw the shot he took of Bill (author William Kienzle); it was my suggestion to use it on the dust jacket of "Assault." I can see he continues his top-notch work; the photo of John Magee in your Sept. 2 issue is another noteworthy shot. Let's have more Randy Borst.

Javan Kienzle
Kienzie