

Farmington readers' forum

Letters must be signed, original copies and include the address and telephone number of the writer. None can be returned. Names will be withheld from publication only for sufficient reason. Letters should be limited to 300 words in most cases. We reserve the

right to edit them. Send letters to Readers' Forum, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River Ave., Farmington 48024.

Fund developed in teacher's memory

To the editor:

On Jan. 28, the nation mourned the death of the seven Challenger crew members.

For the National Education Association and teachers throughout the country, there was a special sadness for Christa McAuliffe, one of our colleagues. Christa symbolized what is best in our profession: dedication to students, love for education, and courage.

To commemorate Christa's pioneering spirit, NEA has developed a fund — the Christa McAuliffe American Education Fund — to enable practicing teachers to explore their subject matter in new and innovative ways. The fund will also help high school and college students fulfill their dreams of becoming teachers.

By reaching teachers, we will be reaching out to our children — our students — to help each of them develop a better understanding of the world around them.

As teachers, we want to honor Christa, who gave so much to all of us. It is our hope that others will join in giving generously to the fund for a future full of Christa McAuliffes.

Contributions can be made to the Christa McAuliffe American Education Fund, American Security Bank, P.O. Box 9149, Washington, D.C. 20055.

Mary Hatwood Furell, President
National Education Association

Smoking: it's non-survival

To the editor:

We are writing to you today about a matter which concerns our society's health and future environment. We adults are responsible for creating and maintaining a healthy and drug-free environment for everyone.

If we do not become fully aware of the health problems in our environment due to smoking, we are being stubborn and ignorant. We are fighting a positive change when this change is the only way to gain a healthier environment for our children as well as ourselves.

We understand how these bad habits became so popular. Television, radio and newspapers, who are our most powerful communicators, were responsible for allowing these non-survival acts to proliferate. Our society has suffered because we did not stand up for what we knew to be a better way. As children, we could not see the future effects that smoking caused. As adults, we now know that smoking is truly non-survival.

Society is now in the process of changing this bad habit. Change is slow and sometimes it appears we have not made progress. It just takes time to effectively communicate the real facts about smoking. Our television and radio stations, newspapers and the general public have already made a positive change by not supporting smoking.

Our questions to you is this: What can you do to help make this change continue to grow? By not allowing smoking in our schools and public places would be a giant step in securing a healthier environment for everyone. Go to your schools and public places and ask how they can help our cause. If you need our support please call us, we will support you all we can. (471-0836)

Please stand up for what you know is a better way to survive. It takes courage and our society needs your personal power. With everyone's best interest at heart.

Yvonne and Michael Trapani
Farmington Hills

Leaders distort Blues efforts

To the editor:

The rhetoric by some senior citizen leaders over Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan's efforts to become a non-profit mutual insurance company has gotten out of hand. Their letters to the editor are inaccurate and give a distorted view of what mutualization would mean to seniors.

The reasons the Blues are seeking to become a non-profit mutual are so they can meet the intense competition in the health care industry in the years ahead, provide better service, better health care programs and give seniors the chance to get affordable, non-group health coverage from any health insurer in the state.

TO SUGGEST the Blues are seeking to abandon the seniors is false. We will continue to cover all seniors who apply for coverage no matter what happens to our bill in Lansing. And let's not forget that, unlike the competition, the Blues have always had a concern for the elderly.

BCBSM was the first carrier to offer senior non-group coverage back in 1959. Today, BCBSM is proposing as part of a law to convert to a non-profit mutual the best coverage seniors have ever had.

The Senior Bill of Rights, which is part of the proposed law, guarantees coverage for the elderly

at affordable rates for life, regardless of age or condition of health. There is no six-month waiting period for pre-existing conditions. There are no gimmicks or strings attached.

Another provision of this Senior Bill of Rights calls for establishment of an \$18 million fund by all insurance companies doing business in Michigan, including the Blues. This money would be used solely for the benefit of the elderly.

MORE THAN 30,000 non-group citizens have taken the time to indicate they support the Senior Bill of Rights, as have 39,000 of our subscribers under age 65, and 3,000 businesses in the state.

As the facts become known, we believe more non-group citizens, more subscribers under age 65 and more business men and women will join us in our campaign.

That's why we are continuing our efforts to win legislative endorsement of our need — and the well-being of all our subscribers — to become a non-profit mutual insurance company.

There are no "takeaways" from senior citizens in the mutualization bill.

We encourage seniors to know the facts about the Blues and mutualization because the health care industry is in the most volatile period of its history. The Blues must adjust to the changing marketplace if they are to continue to meet the needs of their members, particularly senior citizens.

There is a toll-free number (1-800-572-1280) to answer telephone inquiries or have our "Senior Health Care Bill of Rights" brochure mailed to callers.

Rude Difazio,
Media Relations Director
Blue Cross Blue Shield

Sports article spurs interest

To the editor:

I was very happy to see two particular articles in the Observer: "Kulick quits Falcon post," Monday, Jan. 20, and "His time has come: 21-year wait ends,

Catherman gets grid job," Monday, Jan. 27, both by Chris McCosky.

I am a 1984 graduate of Farmington High School, and now attending Adrian College. My mother sent these two articles to me, knowing they would spark my interest.

I was still attending Farmington High, and playing varsity sports when Mr. Kulick came as an English teacher and the varsity football coach. After 13 years of losing, Kulick renewed much spirit in Farmington High School. He even led us to the Western Lakes title his second year, which made students and alumni proud. We had lost games for so long, we didn't even think it was possible.

Kulick has only been at Farmington for three years, and he is the first that I've heard stand up and mention the "lack of personal drive by the administration."

Mr. Catherman, although he's been around longer, mentioned the need of parents to get involved and a commitment needed from the school. He also went on to express the need to improve the school's image, eliminate negative press, and build up the character of the kids; in other words, to "get them to take pride in both their school and the program."

These things have been hidden for so long. Students and faculty, especially, have been saying these things for years, but never admitted to it when questioned, unless in confidence. Now that this is in the open, maybe someone will do something about it.

Change does not come easy, especially to institutions. Students, faculty, or parents cannot make all the needed changes alone. A group effort is needed by all to improve the school. With this effort, maybe some day Farmington High School will be an institution everyone can be proud of.

Of course, it's too late for me, but if students were able to have a more positive attitude toward both academics and athletics the effect would be phenomenal.

In closing, I would like to thank Mr. Kulick for everything he has done for the school. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Catherman on his well-deserved, new position.

Kristine Rogers,
Farmington High School,
Class of '84

Blood donors sought

Four American Red Cross bloodmobiles will visit the Farmington area in March.

Donating blood is a simple, risk-free process requiring less than an hour. Red Cross officials say, Anyone who is in good health, weighs at least 110 pounds and is between 17 and 70 is eligible to donate blood.

A new, sterile needle is used for each donor, then discarded. Bloodmobiles will be at:

• Saturday, March 5 — Finnish Cultural Center, 33203 Eight Mile, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For an appointment, call Shirley Kempainen, 478-6939.

• Saturday, March 6 — St. Fabian Catholic Church, 32265 Red Clover, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For an appointment, call Gerry Kerrigan, 626-5194.

• Saturday, March 7 — N.W. Christian Mission Church, 28111 Ten Mile, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For an appointment, call Carol Berner, 478-7673.

• Friday, March 14 — Antioch Lutheran Church, 33101 W. 13 Mile, 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For an appointment, call Ginny Jesse, 522-1311.

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HOURS: Monday thru Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. • Sunday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BEGIN LEARNING FIRST AID.

Not knowing first aid is an awful risk. Don't take it. Take a Red Cross first aid course instead. Then you'll know how to keep emergencies from becoming tragedies.



American Red Cross