

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

They talk up against furs

To the editor:

We would greatly appreciate your publishing this open letter to Liberate (from the leaders of our organization). He is performing at the Premiere Center in Sterling Heights until March 15.

Dear Liberate:

We think you should be aware that many of us from the Detroit area are no longer attending your performances. While we realize that glamour and glitter are an essential aspect of your show, we think the furs are a symbol of cruelty and suffering. Your business is to make people happy and to give them a brief, pleasant escape from the world, but the furs represent the opposite. The furs symbolize death, suffering and the inhumanity of the human species. Surely you don't want to convey these things to your audience.

Concerning your comments that mink are "dirty little animals who eat their own and deserve to be killed," you should be aware that mink are animals, such as mink, spend their entire lives in a cage which, on the average, is 10 by 12 by 24 inches. They have been bred to the point that they suffer from serious birth defects such as internal bleeding and deformed sex organs. As a result of permanent confinement, they exhibit such signs of stress as nervous jerking of their heads.

Who can blame them for being dirty when they are forced to live in their own excrement? We have never heard of them eating their young, however, it would not be impossible under these kinds of living conditions.

Please stop buying and wearing furs. You can replace these coats with, for example, long, expensive, elaborately beaded coats or some other garment which causes no harm to innocent sentient beings.

Debra C. Vackovich
Director,
Christopher Coen
Direct Action Coordinator,
Sandra L. Giardini
Communications Coordinator,
People for Animal Rights
Troy

Traffic setup is horrendous

To the editor:

If none of you get up to 12 Mile Road between Orchard Lake and Farmington roads, you may not be aware of the horrendous traffic problems caused by changes in the entry and exit to the library and

post office.

In order to accommodate a building being constructed behind the library, the city has closed the library drive and has built a crazy-quilt arrangement, which is not only inconvenient but also dangerous. The victims are all post office and library patrons as well as their employees.

The building in the rear is not even occupied yet, and there are times when it is impossible to enter either the library or the post office parking lots.

It would be interesting to know exactly who designed and OK'd the present system and why they felt it necessary to cause such difficulties for city taxpayers using the library and post office.

It is obvious that those responsible for this blunder do not have to visit either facility but one must pity the rest of us who do.

J.L. Evans
Farmington Hills

Civic Citizens praise students

To the editor:

The students at Southfield High School voted not to hold their senior prom at the Fairlane Manor in Dearborn this year.

The action by the students was taken in an effort to voice their displeasure with the decision of Dearborn officials to ban non-residents from their city parks.

The Civic Citizens Association of Southfield-Lathrup Village wishes to applaud the students on their decision. This stance will perhaps forfeit a \$500 deposit on the facility where the prom was to be held.

Eric Coleman, president,
Civic Citizens
Southfield/Lathrup Village

Library for blind extends us thanks

To the editor:

The story Susan Steinnmueller wrote about the Oakland County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped was excellent. You were careful with the facts but the story was very thoughtful and had an effective emotional impact.

The accompanying photographs taken by Randy Borst worked well with the content of the article. Thank you for using your talents to help us spread the word about this invaluable service available in Oakland County.

Carole Hunsd
Head Librarian

A resident's view

Racism — it plays role in parks law



Hugh Gallagher

THE RESIDENTS of Dearborn are no more racist than the rest of Metropolitan Detroit's population — or any less.

I live in Dearborn. I like most of my neighbors. When the subject of race comes up, I talk about the weather or Edsel Ford basketball. They have their views and I have mine.

That's usually where it ends. But last November the Dearborn voters did something stupid. They passed an ordinance restricting use of neighborhood parks to residents. It's a legitimate concern. Grosse Pointe already has an ordinance and Southfield has been considering one, but when Dearborn does it, it's different.

Dearborn has been Selma north for over 40 years. Orville Hubbard, Dearborn's longtime mayor, was as well known a segregationist as Ross Barnett.

Even before Hubbard's time, Henry Ford hired blacks as strikebreakers only because he disliked unions more. Ford, as well as being the world's best-known industrialist, was the publisher of the Dearborn Independent, famous for running an anti-Semitic diatribe called "The Conventions of Zion." Bigotry has long been a part of the city's fabric.

Remember as a kid being told that Dearborn was a town where black people didn't stay around when the sun went down.

Times have changed a bit. Dearborn has some black residents. And, ironically, while real estate agents and an unfriendly government worked together to keep blacks out, a large Arab population moved in.

They settled first in the poor south end that hugs the giant Rouge plant and then moved out into East Dearborn.

DEARBORN has been forced to respond and take positive action for a group of people whose language, religion and social customs are considerably more alien to middle-class whites than those of blacks.

The park ordinance caused the expected reaction in the Detroit black community. It was a natural reflex to what seemed like a slap in the face. A boycott was called and everybody and his brother joined in to show how liberal they were.

Dearborn administrators began talks with black leaders to defuse the situation. The new, young mayor was on record as opposing the ordinance, a position he still holds.

Then the talks broke off, and the young mayor showed his true roots and gave a classic lesson in how not to handle a sensitive situation. Mayor Michael Guido has opted to play the race card, to take the low road.

GUIDO HAS decided to let the courts decide. I agree with that. The demands being made on the city and Ford Land Development are reportedly outlandish and unrelated to the matter at hand.

The mayor has an obligation to enforce ordinances, and when an ordinance is this controversial, the courts are the best place to decide the matter legally, if not morally.

But Guido abused the situation. He signaled to his constituents that he has picked up Orville's banner. He said he was tired of being "blackmailed" and "blackjacked." He said Dearborn had been picked on as bad guys when they were the good guys defending "home rule."

Does he really have such historical amnesia that he doesn't know that echoes George Wallace standing in the school house door defending "state rights"?

NO, GUIDO doesn't suffer from amnesia, just bad advice. He played the race card during his campaign for mayor as well, and for that reason didn't get my vote.

He put out a flyer to talk "Frankly" about the "Arab problem." It was a carefully worded piece of rhetorical garbage, but the mes-

sage was as clear as his use of "blackmail" and "blackjack." Mike Guido was going to lead the fight of "us" against "them."

Guido last week repeated his opposition to the park ordinance and said it's not a race issue. Of course it's a race issue. The only two parks where the ordinance has any meaning get some use by residents of Detroit and Inkster.

The mayor of Dearborn should show the way for the rest of the suburbs. No, Dearborn should not have to pay reparations for its past sins, but it should take positive steps to stop being a Johannesburg in America. Through Guido, it should move toward a greater sensitivity to racial issues.

THE PEOPLE of Dearborn have legitimate fears and concerns, but they should not be played on for cheap political gain.

Black leaders are not innocents, either. The mayor of Detroit, who plays the race card as well, albeit with more sophistication than the neophyte Guido.

If there is to be any dialogue between the races, then black leaders need to understand that all concern about crime and the effects of poverty on a neighborhood are not unjustified or just racially motivated.

And while leaders like Guido have to have the courage to say enough is enough.

Egg hunt has new twist

Crowley's and Sanders, two Detroit businesses with long traditions of their own, are sponsoring a contest for children in the communities they serve, including the Farmington area.

Instead of an Easter Egg Hunt, Crowley's and Sanders are conducting an Easter Bunny Hunt. Children under 12 years of age are eligible to enter the contest and will be asked to find 10 bunnies in a picture that can be picked up at any Crowley's store.

The pictures must be returned to any of Crowley's 10 locations where they will be checked for accuracy. All correct entries will be put in a container from which the winners will be randomly drawn. The deadline is Sunday, March 23. Winners will be announced the next day.

All participants will receive a free chocolate treat from Sanders. Prizes will be awarded at each Crowley's: first prize is a stuffed bunny standing four feet tall, valued at \$60; second prize is a \$25 gift certificate that can be used in any Crowley's children's department; third prize is a \$15 gift certificate.

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