

Tourism lags a world away

YOU LAND barons who sat on what used to be rural acreage for years while waiting for suburban sprawl to justify development of subdivisions, shopping centers, hotels, office buildings and recreation attractions can sympathize with my friend Eddie.

He and some others have a 15-acre site of rich farmland less than three miles from one of the greatest tourist lures in the world.

They hire others to work in the fields, while residing themselves in a four-story villa. There's a magnificent river only 12 miles away and the entire region is steeped in tradition.

When I asked why the family hadn't capitalized on the possibilities and gone into the tourist business, Eddie answered, "To be honest with you, we've been trying to do that or else sell it to someone who wants to build, which would be ideal."

"EACH YEAR the land goes up in value. We're waiting until we get an ideal price. We're probably going to sell within the next five years; I can't say when. The area has several developments, but could use more when tourist traffic is normal."

In 1986, that traffic is anything but normal. You see, the property in question is on a tributary of the Nile River, practically within walking distance of Egypt's pyramids and the Great Sphinx just outside Giza, and only 20 miles from downtown Cairo. Current unrest in the Middle East has stifled international travel.

Eddie is an Americanized nickname identifying Adnan Hegazi, who will be making his eighth trip to Egypt about the time of his 32nd birthday next month. He was born in Michigan, at Kalkaska, but his father was born and raised in Egypt. Eddie has dual citizenship in that nation and this one. He has lived as your neighbor 24 years.

Trained in psychology and physical therapy at Eastern Michigan and Wayne State universities, he switched to professional protection service. In lay language, that means bodyguard work.

IT IS NOT just to check this year's crops of beans, potatoes, corn, olives and dates that Eddie is flying back to the land of the pharaohs. If you think you've encountered some red tape in your



through
bifocals
Fred
DeLano

life, listen to this:

"In order to register the land in my name, I have to get my stamp from the Egyptian Army because of dual citizenship. I'm first generation and the only son. But they have to have evidence of that because I've been in this country all my life."

"I have to make papers saying my mother was married only to my father, who is deceased, and that my father was never married to anyone else, and that I am their only son. I started this procedure nearly four years ago, but I still have to get the stamp from the army."

"If I don't, and something should happen to me, they might accuse me of being a deserter and take my land and make me pay a \$5,000 fine. I'm not in the wrong. I haven't done anything. I come from a good family. The Hegazi name goes back some 200 years and I don't want this on the record."

"YOU START out at one place, fill out papers, and then you're told that's not enough. I've gone back to Cairo each year spending two to three months on this. They figured they would wear me down and that I'd be like most Americans, get tired, and forget it. Then they would take the land away."

Eddie is determined not to let that happen. He takes pride in his heritage but it does not replace his American patriotism. He's fighting for a principle and perpetuation of an honest name, as well as land.

There may well be a summer night when this young Hegazi descendant may stroll through the moonlight (or perhaps ride on the back of a camel) to the neighboring pyramids and in a setting thousands of years old join others as they munch fruit even as you and I in one of our community parks.

But even as he does, he'll be wondering how the business is doing back home — and home is right here.

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.

Another look at race finish

To the editor:

I am a co-captain of the Harrison High School boys track team. On Thursday, May 1, our team ran against Livonia Franklin at Livonia.

During most of the meet, our team was behind until the second from the last event, the two-mile run which Harrison (Chris Hart, 1st, Pat Runk 2nd, Jeff Barringer, 3rd) swept to put us into the lead 67-65. This left the mile relay to decide the meet.

Harrison gained a slight lead from the first two runners. In the third leg, however, we lost the lead and Livonia had a 3- to 4-yard lead: Roger Haney, the other team co-captain, is our anchor-man for the mile relay.

Roger caught the Franklin runner within the last 50 yards. They ran neck and neck until the finish line. At the line, Roger (we believe) out-leaped the Franklin anchorman. As the Harrison track team awaited the final decision, the runners rejoiced and a dejected Franklin track team packed up to go home.

The four judges met to decide the winner. One judge disqualified himself on the grounds he had an obstructed view. The other two timer-judges declared the race a dead-heat as they both clocked the same time.

The head judge who had the final decision is the Livonia Franklin athletic director, which I believe is a discredit to his impartiality — who like to see his own school lose? The head judge declared Livonia to be the victor.

After two judges had clocked the finishers at the same time, how can one runner be the winner? How can one judge override the decision of the two judges who declare the race a dead-heat?

In such a close race, wouldn't the fair and just course of action be to divide the five points to the two schools?

I know the decision cannot be changed, but one of the father's videotapes all of our track meets. He taped the mile relay as well. We looked at this tape at the meet and since then have reviewed, the finish frame by frame, many times. We strongly

believe that Roger was the victor.

Upon hearing the decision, a highly upset Harrison track team behaved with very unsportsmanlike conduct. I would like to apologize for this behavior. But I would also like to ask that the public be made aware that no matter what the decision, in reality the 1986 Harrison High School boys track team is undefeated in dual meets.

Tom Blison
Senior Co-Captain
Harrison High School
Boys Track Team

Your efforts appreciated

To the editor:

It is with great appreciation that we thank Joanne Matyszewski for your involvement with the second annual access awards ceremony.

The joint efforts of the cities of Farmington, Novi and Farmington Hills, residents and Metrovion salute the tremendous involvement of every level of participation.

We hope that this experience will have inspired your imagination and energy to challenge further use of local television within your life to enhance your community.

Lark Samouellian,
executive director
Southwestern Oakland
Cable Commission

Road activity at standstill

To the editor:

Considerable press coverage has been given to the 300-page report prepared by Oakland County Road Commission regarding roads and traffic problems in Oakland County.

After reading this report in full several times, we would have to rate it "A" for volume of paper and white space. At best, contents and format we feel would rate a "C." The data could have easily been condensed into a half or third its printed size.

To date, we have heard little more than canned rhetoric, semi-promises, an array of possible solutions, etc., many of which involve political undertones or self-interest positions and very little about objective and realistic solutions to our problems.

Other than a few verbal commitments being voiced, we see limited attempts toward addressing even the minor request of our group to arrange for up-to-date traffic counts.

Following the April 9 joint meeting of West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills officials, it was agreed a joint committee of city-township-citizens would be formed. When asked "Will GATEWAY PLUS participate?" We responded, "Set the date-time-place and we will be there." When do we get started?

We feel answers to specific questions are due the residents and taxpayers including:

• Assuming paving of Farmington Road between 14 Mile and Maple would go a long way toward relieving congestion on Orchard Lake Road and Northwestern, etc., why do roads like Napier, for example, rank higher on OCRC's list? How can a true "need" be established for Farmington Road when it is closed to traffic because it is non-driveable?

• Why won't OCRC agree in writing to perform traffic counts on Orchard Lake and Northwestern as soon as possible? We have been requesting an answer since March 8.

• Why is MDOT going ahead with turn-arounds on Northwestern at a cost of \$400,000 when it might be more

practical to consider applying these monies toward adding one lane on each side and allow a third more autos to travel this road daily with less frustration?

We are doing something definitive about addressing these problems.

Our recent 30,000-piece mailing to all West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills residents above 1-696 includes a reply card requesting residents and businesses to express their views. We will tabulate the results and offer a summary to all concerned.

We request the road commission and West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills officials as well as MDOT to set aside self-centered interests and begin working together to solve our mutual problems. Let's get started NOW!

G. Kenneth Poye,
president
GATEWAY PLUS

Benefit walk is a success

To the editor:

According to preliminary figures from the March of Dimes National Headquarters, the Southeast Michigan version of Walkamerica has recorded one of the largest dollar increases in the country.

Over 7,000 walkers raised more than \$725,000 in just one day. That figure comfortably exceeds the goal of \$650,000 set by March of Dimes officials.

Walkamerica is the largest outdoor fund-raiser in the country and is the major annual fundraiser of the Southeast Michigan chapter.

Proceeds are used for public and professional health education and to fund research into the causes and prevention of birth defects.

March of Dimes
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