

## 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 46024.

## Host law views spur challenge

To the editor:  
This is in response to Mr. Barnaby's Crackerbarrel Debate column dated Sept. 4 entitled "Party Laws Miss the Mark." The Farmington Hills Police Department disputes the article in its entirety for several reasons.

Mr. Barnaby quoted house party supporters as intending to "nail those nasty adults who are spoon feeding our children alcohol." Mr. Barnaby indicated the law has never accomplished what it was intended to do. He felt the law was not nailed the real adults and that the kids who aren't mature enough to make sound judgments are taking the gas on this ordinance regardless if the violator is a teenage adult or "the regular old fashioned type like you and I."

We feel those violating the law should be punished according to the legal adult age prescribed by the state of Michigan. A person responsible for providing alcohol and illegal controlled substances to minors should be held accountable for his or her actions regardless of age. Who else should answer?

Ask any 17-year-old if he or she can legally possess, use or distribute drugs and alcohol at a house party. The question is rhetorical. Who else should answer to the parents of children who are allowed to consume drugs or alcohol at someone else's home? Who should answer to the neighbor who calls and reports a loud or disorderly party or has a lawn or mailbox damaged from underage consuming minors leaving a house party? Who should answer to the victim of an auto accident caused by an underage consumer who has left a house party?

Mr. Barnaby stated a more serious target would be party stores for sales to minors. During Operation Party Blitz, which covered a 10-day period in June of this year, six licensed liquor establishments were cited, five of which were party stores, for illegal sales to minors. Seven adults were also arrested for furnishing alcohol to minors. Ninety other arrests for various liquor violations were made during the same period. Since Operation Blitz, plainclothes officers on special assignment have

continued to monitor licensed liquor establishments that tend to sell alcohol to minors.

Our Farmington Hills' officers have consistently demonstrated excellent discretion when enforcing the house party statute. Each individual case involves a previous warning, serious assault or exceptional circumstance. Departmental police policy requires each officer enforcing the statute to report to the police chief by way of a memorandum the necessity for enforcement and a summary of the incident.

The Farmington Hills Police Department supports the ordinance and its faithful supporters. We do more than, as Mr. Barnaby put it, "Quietly grimace, smile at the well meaning city fathers and mothers, and dutifully go about our business."

William J. Dwyer, chief of police  
Sgt. Dennis Rochford, Vice-President, Command Officers' Association  
Officer Robert Burkart, president, Police Officers' Association  
Sgt. Charles Nebus, officer in charge, Juvenile/Crime Prevention Section

## Party ordinance does have merit

To the editor:

I would like to respond to Steve Barnaby's editorial regarding the "party laws," formally known as the host ordinance.

It is obvious, with all his years in the Farmington/Farmington Hills communities, Mr. Barnaby is not conversant with the leaders there nor the accurate reasons behind the passing of this ordinance. Had he researched more carefully, it is not possible that he could have misconstrued so woefully.

As a professional in the field of chemical dependency and a specialist in working with adolescents and their families in the Farmington Hills area for seven years, I was one of the proponents of this ordinance and appeared before the city council on its behalf.

The members of Farmington Families in Action, the police department and a large representation of church, school and community officials very carefully researched and proposed this

action not to "nail adults, real adults," as Mr. Barnaby assumes, but to prevent the deaths of drunken teen drivers or passengers annually when the graduation and prom parties often find well-meaning adults serving alcohol at them as a kind of "rite of passage."

These parents often do so out of a lack of education regarding the effect of alcohol on a young person's system or because they are pressured by their sons and daughters with the pleas that "if we don't have alcohol, nobody will come to the party."

The host ordinance helps those parents wavering between what they think is right and what they are being asked to do by their children; they are now able to say: "I can't and that's it; it's the law."

Talking with many of the high school students immediately after this law passed, they all informed me that their parents would pay attention to this law and would not serve at their parties. (The youth were none too happy about this — but then parenting does not always make us popular when we do something that is for the good of our children.)

Yes, some teens have been charged in the process of this law, but, in each case, warnings were given before tickets were written. The Hills Police Department is one that I have worked with for years and they are conscientious in their duty and, in no way, abuse their responsibilities.

Statistics show that the number of loud, out-of-control parties attended by adolescents in our area that often lead to personal or property injury has markedly decreased since this went into effect. That, alone, is worth the law.

Perhaps Mr. Barnaby and those who agree with his stance should understand the disease of alcoholism — that it is affecting one out of every five of our adolescent children — that alcohol is responsible for accidents that are the third major cause of death among our children.

(Suicide, by the way, occupies the number two spot and statistics show us that 50 percent of these teen tragedies are associated with drugs or alcohol.)

Perhaps, in light of this, the proponents of this "do away with the host ordinance" stand can see how our community sends a clear message to its

youth and their parents: "We care — and we're willing to take a stand about it."

Jane Reiser Williams  
Chemical Department  
Prevention & Education  
Specialist

## Harger House site is valuable

To the editor:

I am writing this letter in the interest of fair play and to explain some of the reasons why I and others in the Farmington Hills Hunt Club subdivision wish to see the Harger house moved or torn down.

The proposed purchase price for the house and one acre is sorely under the market value. Each of us paid quite a bit more for our lots and they are considerably less than one acre.

The property also has obvious commercial possibilities, such as a real estate office, further enhancing its value. We are afraid that some future variance could be made and we would end up with something quite different from what is envisioned.

If the Harger house is kept we will have liability, upkeep and considerable renovation costs facing us. Old the Harger house is, but it is not now nor was it ever a pretty house. This is the prime location of our common area and we are extremely reluctant to give this up.

The sale of the Harger house was originally presented to us as a fait accompli and subsequent attempts at swaying our opinion have been equally clumsy. Our sub is currently filling up fast and may be completed by the spring of '87. Most lots have deposits on them and by moving on this issue now we would be ignoring these future owners rights.

While we have gotten an abundance of advice, no money has been offered and apparently those who wish us to renovate this home expect the Hunt Club subdivision to bear the burden alone, either by selling at below market value or by huge outlay of cash. Some other solution needs to be found. Let's hope that those who wish to save the house back

up their wishes with more than rhetoric. David DeTavernier  
Farmington Hills

## Strike pre-empts further terrorism

To the editor:

In May 1986, President Reagan ordered a military strike against Libya for its pursuance of terrorist attacks on the innocent and its intimidation of the civilized world. Fear in people and governments alike was posing a serious problem and bold actions were necessary.

There were many who condemned the attacks, stating that it would lead to many reprisals on the part of Khadafy. It would be interesting to see some of these critics step forward and repeat what they had said.

No further violence has occurred against the United States in particular, and the basic reason is that Khadafy knows and understands the term "retribution." It has and will cost him much more than it's worth for any related terrorist action on his part.

It is impossible to predict future events, but for the present, we must give credit where credit is due and that is to our president — Ronald Reagan.

Aaron Goldberg  
Southfield

## Reader liked rafting story

To the editor:

Bravo! I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed reading the article by Chris McCosky entitled "City Boy Whips Rapids, Sort of." I needed a good laugh and McCosky gave me one.

I would like to see more humor in the paper in the future.

Another thing, I called the author to tell him how much I enjoyed the article, and guess what, he thanked me for finishing it because of its length.

I thought I'd let you know I for one don't mind spending more than two or three minutes reading a story, when it's well written like this one.

Linda Lee Sparkman  
Garden City

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12" x 84" 11 Way	\$273	\$127	\$158	\$178
12" x 84" 12 Way	\$273	\$127	\$158	\$178
12" x 84" 13 Way	\$273	\$127	\$158	\$178
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