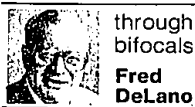


Merry Christmas — in 30 languages

THIS COLUMN actually had its origin 18 years ago when I was editor of the Plymouth Mail & Observer and to my desk came a release from World Book Encyclopedia's news service offering nine translations of the English language phrase "Merry Christmas." It's in front of me now.

So, too, is the handwritten note that came from a delightful fellow employee of those days named Mary Dowdette with a 10th translation (Hungarian) after I had used the World Book information as the basis for what I hoped was a happy holiday greeting to our community.

Mary still is part of this company's clan and is one of the few of us who haven't aged. For whatever reason, I have added to those first two sheets of paper as the years have dwindled down their precious few and now can spell "Merry Christmas" in at least 30



through
bifocals
**Fred
DeLano**

tongues, plus "Happy New Year" in most.

So, bless ye, lads and lassies, and greetings of the season to you all. Call it Happy Hanukkah if it fits, and I'm only sorry I can't recite the Arabic words for the love and peace we need so much on this planet.

Somewhere among this readership is a grandmother, or a teacher, or maybe even a youngster who is going to clip this column just to save the following for possible use. The other major source was the Wayne-Oakland Library Fed-

eration and what every one of these paragraphs says is Merry Christmas, Happy New Year to you and yours.

Albania: Gezuar K ristlindjen Gezuar Motin e-El.

Austria: Froeliche Weihnachten und ein glueckliches Neues Jahr.

Brazil: Boas Festas do Natal e Feliz Ano Novo.

Bulgaria: Vessela keleda i tchestita nova Godina.

China: Kung Hei Shing Taan.

Czechoslovakia: Vesele vianoe a stastny Novy rok/Prejeme Vam vesele Vianoe a Stastny novy rok.

Danish: De bedste Onsker om en Glaedelig Jul og et godt.

Dutch (Netherlands): Prettig Kerstdagen en Gluekkig Nieuwjaar.

Ethiopia: Melkam Ledetna Yedesta Amet Yihounachouh.

Finnish: Houskaa Joulua ja Onnellista Uutta Vuotta (social): Hyv Joulua ja

Menesty Kselliista Uutta Vuotta (business).

French: Joyeux Noel et Bonne Anne.

German: Froehliche Weihnachten und ein glueckliches Neujahr.

Greek: Efthimenos kala Hristonghena ke Efthines Neon Etos.

Hawai: Mele Kalikimaka Hauoli Makahiki Hou.

Hungarian: Szeretetteljes Karacsnyj Unnpoket es Szerencses/Kellemes karacsnyj es boldog ujeveto/or, a la Doweditte, "Boldog Karacsnyj."

Irish Republic: Nodlaig Go Sona Duit Agus Bliadian Nua Gan Snail Agat.

Italian: Buon Natale e Felice Capo d'Anno/Buon Natale e buon Anno.

Japanese: Tenochii Christmas to Shin Nen wo oiwai mooshimaimai.

Latvian: Priecigus Ziemsvetkus un laimigu Jauno gadu.

Lithuanian: Linksmu Kaledu svenciu ir laimingu Naujuju Metu.

Norwegian: Gledelig jul, Godt Nyttaaar/Guds rike velsignelse over eders julefest.

Polish: Wesolych Swiat Szczesliwego Nowego Roku/Wesolych Swiat i pomyslingo Nowego Roku.

Portuguese: Boas Festas do Natal e Feliz Ano Novo/Feliz Natal e Boas Festas.

Rumanian: Sarbatori Periclite, Si La Muirzi Ani Craclum, si an nou fericit.

Russian: S'elastvenom Christovim i Novim Godem/Veselyja Svjatki i scaslivij Novy j Hod.

Slovak: Vesele Vianoe a staslivy Novy Rok.

Slovenian: Sretan Bo i Vesela Nova Godina.

Spanish: Feliz Navidad y Ano Nuevo.

Swedish: God Jul ock Gott Nytt Ar.

In any language, 'tis time to raise a glass and wish good cheer, Happy Holidays, peace and good health for all.

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.

Let's control Novi growth

To the editor:

There seems to be serious controversy brewing on this side of Haggerty concerning the future development of the city of Novi.

The "no-growth" concept is being pushed by homeowners and by some on the city council who contend that the elitist lifestyle of Novi must be maintained at the expense of future growth.

The "no-growth" concept contends that the future construction of apartments and condominiums leads to the development of the "slums of the future." It slams the single populace by decrying apartment living full within the environs of the city and promotes the idea that affordable condominiums for the young and retired are something to be abhorred.

I feel that the "no-growth" concept is socially irresponsible. In the future, is Novi going to continue to depend on the city services that Farmington Hills lets trickle to the west of Haggerty?

Is the city going to pass the buck to Northville when it comes to low-income housing, senior housing and the development of water treatment facilities? Currently, they're trying to do just that — pass the buck.

THE CONCEPT was an irritating one. In response to those who would promote this debacle, I wrote a letter to the editor of the Novi News. It was printed on Nov. 26. Along with that letter, there were others that bear a response.

There were two articles in the Dec. 3

issue of the Novi News: "Homeowner's Council Aims Concerns" and "Home Ownership Facing Threats." The first article contains the essence of the slam towards renters who live in the city, as well as slams towards developments such as those found around Our Lady of Sorrows Church at Shawwassee and Power. The second acknowledges that changes in the housing market make home ownership an impossibility for 50 percent of the under 30.

I would also like to allude to the decision by the Farmington Hills City Council to close Wildwood, which your paper reported on Dec. 1. One thing I liked about Farmington Hills was that you could easily move from one sub to another.

I feel that cutting off the street will promote the creation of ivory towers within Farmington Hills, that it will give hot air to the balloon of haughtiness, and that it will subtract from that community spirit that is the biggest plus going for the city.

T. James Zanotti
Novi

Poetry lesson was wonderful

To the editor:

I have subscribed to the Farmington Observer for years now and have always enjoyed it. Now, even more than ever, I have become a fan.

I am the mother of three young boys and your poetry column by writer Victoria Day Najjar has been a wonderful, fun addition to our household regimen. Thank you for printing something so useful.

Rita Adams
Farmington

ACLU column prompts debate

To the editor:

The recent article "Freedom Counts: ACLU is Bullish on Civil Liberties" (Nov. 27) was most informative, but failed to address several questions, which I would pose to the writer, Rich Perlberg.

First, do all the various "rights" and "liberties" trumpeted by the ACLU have any ground in legal or ethical prescription or tradition, or do they simply exist by themselves, becoming discovered at whim by the aggrieved of our Republic?

Mr. Perlberg finds it encouraging that a Nativity scene won't be displayed in front of Birmingham City Hall this year. "Actually the ACLU didn't prevent anything; the U.S. Constitution did," he writes. "That's a small but essential point that is often overlooked."

Well, not quite. There is nothing in the U.S. Constitution about Nativity scenes. There is, though, a clause in the First Amendment which states that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or restricting the free exercise thereof. The meaning of this has been hotly debated in recent years, and it's no use for Mr. Perlberg to blithely imply that the Birmingham case was of the open-and-shut variety.

In Birmingham, the ACLU — forgetting that Thomas Jefferson himself authorized the funding of Catholic missionaries working on the frontier during his administration — convinced a judge that such "favoritism" of one religion over another does constitute an establishment of religion. One person's com-

plaint convinced a judge that a dog in a manger must take precedence over the Child in the manger. Interestingly, a Chicago judge, ruling in a similar case at roughly the same time, found otherwise, and a Chicago creche can stay. (No doubt they have a different Constitution out there in Chicago.)

As for Mr. Perlberg's likening of the ACLU's critics to the sullen racists of the '60s, this is simply a cheap shot — a ploy designed to close off all debate.

One final question: Why does the ACLU almost always take the side of those who perceive religious intrusion into the state? What about state intrusion into religion? I offer as evidence the fact that there are some communities in our fair land where it is against local ordinances for interested persons to hold Bible studies in the privacy of their own homes.

Interestingly, the ACLU hasn't entered the lists in cases such as this. Why? Because it makes for so much more notoriety to block the display of creches and keep those kill-joy Christians from dragging religion into Santa Claus Day?

By the time this letter sees the light of day, "the ACLU will be back in court defending some other civil liberty," as Mr. Perlberg writes. "That's the way it should be." Yes, indeed. Back in court defending the rights of the village crank to blight the joy of entire communities. Back in court to secure the removal of those awful Nativity scenes, whose existence threaten the rights of us all. Back in court reminiscing about the good old days of the '70s, when the "folks" secured the right of avowed Nazis to verbally torment Jews.

Break out the party hats and blowers.

Chester Belloc
Canton Township

Seniors thank center Scouts

To the editor:

On Dec. 12, Scouts of Farmington Training Center Troop 175, directed by Marge Ridgewood, delivered three wreaths to Farmington Place.

They were made by the scouts and will be used to decorate the halls. Thanks were expressed to the Beavers, Bobcats, and Eagles and their director.

There has been a long, neighborly relationship between the seniors and the center. Mutual participation in each other's endeavors has always contributed to this feeling and it is hoped this will continue in the future.

Many of the students call the seniors "Grandma" — and that is more than appreciated.

Farmington Place
Residents Association

The coverage was valuable

To the editor:

As usual, the Farmington Observer has given the Farmington Artists Club terrific coverage for our November exhibit at Mercy Center.

On behalf of all our members, we thank you! It's very important to have the community behind a fine arts organization, and our community has supported us very well.

Thanks again.

Gwen Tomkow, president
Farmington Artists Club

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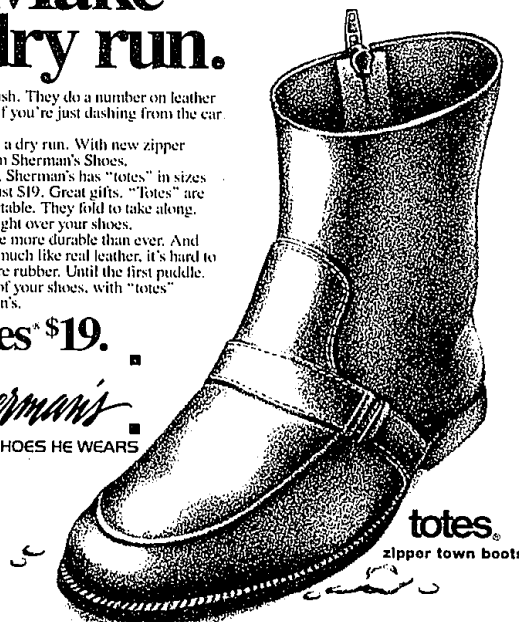
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