

points of view

More letters to the editor . . .

Don't blur real issue

To the editor: Let's stop confusing the issue! I happen to be a white man who met Derwin Success playing basketball at the Farmington YMCA about eight months ago. We didn't even know each other's names for the first five months. Then I saw your first article about what had been happening to him and his family, and I decided I have to do something. I plan on being at the Oct. 15 unity walk.

Since then, I have read a lot of things - good, bad or indifferent - in the paper. And it has gotten a bit ridiculous.

Let's stop confusing the issue here and now! The issue remains that there is a terrible injustice here that needs to be remedied. The unity walk serves that purpose.

The issue isn't whether Mr. Success is a minister or not, a Ph.D. or not, wears white socks or not. It is the fact there is injustice here, and many people would like to stand up in support of what is right.

When your paper continues to highlight non-issues, the whole issue is clouded.

Let's stop making up headlines and put support behind the real issue here - make the unity walk a real success. It is undeniable that the goal here can eventually lead to positive things.

Mr. Success, don't mislead To the editor: As a resident of Farmington who grew up here, I feel compelled to comment on Mr. Success' actions. First of all, I was totally disgusted with the vandalism done to his house and hope that the police find out who has done this and take action against these "vandals". Isn't that supposed to be the issue: vandalism to property? What the "vandals" did to Mr. Success' house was a "racist act, but you would think, according to Mr. Success' ac-

tions, that the city of Farmington and its residents were behind the delinquents, when, in fact, the city officials and residents have assured support and help all along.

I feel Mr. Success has visions of himself as the next "Reverend Jesse Jackson, fighting the universal problem of racism by attacking Farmington as one of the main cities that are dangerous to black people. Which, by the way, is not true, according to a Farmington resident who is black and stated that fact at Mr. Success' meeting.

Mr. Success' demands are: recognition of the Rev. Martin Luther King's birthday and Black History Month and hiring of more black city employees. Mr. Success should resolve his demands in a democratic fashion with petitions and let the residents vote on these issues.

I believe that Mr. Success has taken advantage of this incident with ulterior motives by turning the problem of vandalism into city racism.

Steve Atkins, Farmington

Pool repairs way too slow

To the editor: We're sorry we're not boys who play football for the Farmington Schools. Unfortunately, we're just a group of girls on the North Farmington girls swim team.

Our problem is this: We cannot use the pool at North Farmington High School because its ceiling needs repair. The district knew last spring that it needed repair.

Why couldn't these repairs have been done over the summer when school was not in session and the pool was not in use?

Our team started practicing on Aug. 14 at a different pool and the North Farmington repairs have yet to be completed.

We cannot understand why the work wasn't done in the summer and the facilities ready for use at least by now.

By the way: When was the last time a Farmington school district football field wasn't ready for the fall football season?

North Farmington girls swim team

North's pool must be open

To the editor: Our daughter is a freshman at North Farmington and a member of the swim team. We have been very disappointed with the total lack of pool availability at her school.

Swimming is a very demanding and time consuming sport. Practicing at a different pool at 5:45 a.m. as well as after school (at odd hours after the Harrison swimmers are done) is frustrating and difficult.

We have reviewed the correspondence and phone information other parents have received from Farmington Public Schools concerning this matter. Simply put, the pool should be filled and available for use immediately.

Farmington High School has the same structural problems as North. They have a full pool and are practicing. It is ridiculous to have an empty pool when there is no one working and to which no materials have been delivered.

For the North Farmington girls swim team to be without the use of their pool is not only unfair but discriminatory.

Linda Palmer, Gary Palmer, Farmington Hills

Volunteer help very plentiful

To the editor: This past spring, we sent you a drop-in ad asking for volunteers for Camp Sun Deer for the American Lung Association of Southeast Michigan, June 25-July 1.

The response we had was enormous. We had more than enough volunteers for camp this year.

Camp Sun Deer is the first free camp for asthmatic children in the country. Each year, between 50 and 75 severely asthmatic children go to camp. These children would otherwise not be able to enjoy the camp experience due to their health problems.

Darlene M. Zuby, Southfield

We're our own worst enemies

METROPOLITAN Detroit should sell its mystique instead of being victimized by its mistakes. That's the thought rolling around in my head since lifting off from the airport which services the St. Paul/Minneapolis metro area in Minnesota.

Exploring different metro areas is exciting business. It gives the traveler a chance to see how the national perception compares with the local outlook. Usually, the wary traveler finds that the reality differs somewhat from the perception.

We, in this metro area, certainly understand that. For year's we all, suburbanites and city-dwellers alike, have been taking it on the chin because of a shabby national image.

Some of it is justly deserved. Most of it is bunk. But in many ways we are our own worst enemies. Instead of a unified confederation of communities, revealing in our differences but feeling proud of our unity, we have become a set of nearly bitter rivals. We are communities, one pitted against the other.

MINNESOTANS HAVE taken a different tact. Minneapolis/St. Paul residents brag about the Minnesota Mystique almost to a person.

Politicians and street-vendors alike talk about the progressive attitudes toward community staples like the arts and education.



Steve Barnaby

Business leaders chime in with their own version of the mystique which dictates that private enterprise and the public sector ally to make for a better world - in this case, the better metropolitan area.

It's tough finding anyone at all who doesn't believe the mystique exists and, indeed, works its wonderful magic.

Actually, the Minneapolis/St. Paul area is pretty nice. You know, a decent place to live, for most folks. But even the most casual observers can easily notice the war.

St. Paul has developed a skywalk system hooking most of its downtown buildings on the second floor level.

Obviously, the skywalk was built to help folks live with the harsh winters. Good enough.

But what has been created is a virtual two-tiered society, literally and figuratively. On the skywalk level the middle class works, shops, eats and plays. The street level, with its bleak facades and empty storefronts,

is populated mostly by the less-fortunate of the metro area.

THE METRO area preens over its educational system which allows students to move from one district to another under certain circumstances. But officials admit that it does little for the Southeast Asians, that area's largest minority in an otherwise primarily white community.

A reading of its newspapers shows the area has its full share of crime. But Minneapolis/St. Paul sells Metro Detroit doesn't.

In a lot of respects metro Detroit, its beautiful suburban housing, its wonderful lakes and spectacular riverfront, far outclasses Minneapolis/St. Paul.

But we've got to believe it and talk about it with pride. It's not good enough for just a few of our communities to have a mystique, whether it be Birmingham, Farmington Hills or Bloomfield.

We must stand together. Most of the communities with such diverse populations as ours are unable to prosper both spiritually and economically. We've faced a lot of very dramatic challenges and continue to survive.

In such a cynical world as ours, that is no small brag.

Steve Barnaby is managing editor of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Weighted grading: no benefit

Q: Some districts use a grading process which gives extra honor points for advanced placement or honors classes. Our district is presently reviewing that type of system. How does this system work? Are there advantages or disadvantages to this type of program? Does this extra honor point system help a student get into the better universities?

What you are referring to is a weighted grading system. In most grading systems, an A equals four honor points. In a weight system, an A is an honors or advanced placement course. For example, advanced placement chemistry can equal five honor points. Hypothetically, if a student took all advanced placement courses in high school, earned all As in a weighted grading system, he/she would graduate with a 5.0 average instead of a 4.0 found in the traditional system.



Doc Doyle

Are there any advantages or disadvantages? Probably not. It is simply a district's choice of a system and although graduating with a 4.43 is impressive, almost all university admissions offices recalculate grade point averages based on their own system. Another type of weighted system is the differential grading system which grants four honor points for an A, 3.7 points for an A-, 3.3 points for a B+, three points for a B, 2.7 for a B- etc. (for both regular and honor classes). In this case, a student who

received all As in high school would graduate with a 4.0 average and a student who received all A- grades with a 3.7 grade point average. Consider the fact that the student who received all A- for a 3.7 average in the differential system would not be valedictorian in this system but would be valedictorian with a 4.0 average in the traditional grading system. It should also be noted that many colleges and universities don't consider the pluses and minuses, i.e. B+, B-, when they recalculate a student's high school grade point average.

Will the weighted system for advanced placement and honor classes help a student into a prestigious university? Not really. If you accept the above premise that most colleges and universities recalculate grades and utilize their own system for entry.

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