It's time to re-think school newspapers

TI'S NEWSPAPER In Education Week.
This period is designed as a time to help spread the newspaper reading habit.
Ironically, it comes at a time when many of our suburban high school newspapers are in danger.
One in particular is Southfield High School's award-winning newspaper, the Southfield Jay which is facing an uncertain future.
It seems that local merchants are turning down members of the Jay's turning down members of the Jay's try staff who solicit them for ads, it's a problem that plagues other high school hewspapers.
If revenues don't improve, the paper may have to cut in half the number of issues it puts out on regular newsprint or go to a mimeographed version.

At the same time, although circulation rarely covers a newspaper's full costs, the newspaper's sponsor acknowledges that it isn't widely read among the student body. And that there are only seven staff members.

MAYBE THAT'S its first chal-lenge — award winning or not. If the kids aren't reading it, or don't want to be a part of it, maybe it's no long-er doing the job. The corner pizza take-out (Papa Romano's has a nice stic aci in cach issue), the local driv-ing school (so does Modern Driving School, who local CD store could be school, who local coll advertise but to help out — or the properties of the cause they know that their ad will be cause they know that their ad will be read by large numbers of their tar-get audience.



Judith Doner

It would be easy to condomn the merchants and it certainly would be nice if the Southfield Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Education could lend a financial hand, but it's important that school personnel and the staff of the Southfield Jay also examine the Jay.

Are the stories of interest to their readers? And why aren't students signing up to be part of the Jay? Basinging up to be part of the Jay? Basinging up to be part of the Jay?

If the kids aren't reading it, or don't want to be a part of it, maybe it's no longer doing the job.

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It shouldn't be, because judging from the number of calls we get in-quiring about openings, the lure of the newspaper profession remains strong.

sell ads — If that newspaper is prop-erly managed and the ads are prop-erly priced.

It shouldn't be, because judging from the number of calls we get in-quiring about openings, the lure of the newspaper profession remains strong.

THERE ARE few free handouts in life. A newspaper that is read will

One particular story, I took excep-tion to. It extols the Jay over its cross-town rival, the Southfield-Lathrup Charger, and comes to the conclusion: "We have more pride in our paper and It shows." That kind of one-upsmanship is generally not published by papers of pride.

Of course, if kids are to learn by example, maybe they could combine functions with their cross-town rival — which has a staff of 17.

Stranger things have happened around metro Detroit.

Judith Doner Berne is assistant

Step right up to podium; a strange call that's true

the ad salesman and said, "The guy said he's a transvestite and wanted to know if he could come in and try on women's clothing and pantyhose." • Mark Grebner is a political leg-end, though the highest office he has held is Ingham County commission-

er.
Grebner says he's the last of the 60s hippies east of Oregon still holding office. He declines to take himself, politics and other politicians seriously.

riously.

At election time, he puts out a lit-tle paper describing, with refreshing candor, his fellow candidates. He once said the register of deeds office is uscless, the man holding it is a un-

ODDS 'N' ENDS of things that didn't get into past editions:

It was the day of one of those big

It was the day of one of those big February snowstorms. Travel was dismal, but Wayne County road crews had opened paths to Westland City Hall where state Rep. Justine Barns was chairing a hearing on municipal employees' re-trement hills.

hearing on municipal employees' re-trement bills.

"HI. Tim, you're the only one here," her staff sang out as I entered the council chambers. They ex-plained that the reps from outside our area were snowed ip.
"Do you want to make a speech?" they asked.

"Jon't have anything intelligent to say," I said.
"Well, siep right up to the micro-phone," they repiled, dusting off the podium.

• A colleague who hustles ads in one of our Main Street communities swears this story is true.

He called on a dress shop owner who was taking a telephone call.

"Yes, were on Elm Street (not the ceal name)," the owner said.

Pause

Pause. , "Right, 123 Elm, Community-ville,"

Pause.

"Are you sure this isn't a prank?"
Pause.
"I don't think I want to be part of anything like that," she said, hanging up.
The dress shop owner turned to

Richard

Tim

All of us, politicians and scribes alike, wish we could write stuff like

that.
He has a re-election bumper sticker that says:
County commissioner
GREBNER

no worse than the rest

I observed it in the State Capitol parking lot. On a pickup truck. Parked in the House clerk's space. The funniest part is that he House clerk's space is right next to the Chryster limo of Gov. Jim Blanchard. Tim Richard heads the news service of Suburban Communications Corp., parent company of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Tax bills befuddle us

as services stumble

SO ANOTHER season is upon us and the situation is more muddled, the solution dimmer than ever be-

fore. Gouldon diffiner than ever be-fore. Some folks wouldn't say it was earth shaking. But we know better. Here we sit, tax bills in hand, won-dering when this whole mess will get sorted out. Despite all of our best ef-forts, property tax assessments just keep on goling up. We grimzee, we even laugh about

sorted out. Despite all of our best efforts, property tax assessments just of the property tax assessments just we great the property tax assessments just we great the property tax assessments just to the property of the p



in the need for revenue and involving them in the campaign.

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BUT RESIDENTS, no matter what the city in Michigan, are having a tough time understanding why their property taxes keep escalating and governmental bodies keep runsing out of money.

In Redford Township, officials are trying to figure out how to keep the local dial-a-ride program afont. The program faces a \$60,000 shortfall this year.

One of their biggest problems is fallout from the Reagan years mentality which gouged the block grant programs to pay for more federal programs. The tradition continues, today.

The folks to suffer are senior citizens, who comprise 33 percent of dial-a-ride customers. Another 12 percent are the disable. So Redford residents have the unenviable choice of either cutting off public transportation to those who need it the mest or paying yet another tax, in the meantime, the feds are spending and spending and tell us the pacce dividend is already spent.

In Garden, City the sphool dis-

spent.

In Garden City , the school district's deficit is projected to be \$2.3 million by years-end. Officals already are looking at asking for a millage hike. Sure they have choices, raise the millage or cut programs for students in a district which already is hurtiles. ready is hurting.

ready is hurting.
Some choice.
Meanwhile in Canton, residents
are deliging the township switchboard with complaints about assessments which have risen anywhere
between 8 and 12 percent for 60 percent of the subdivisions. The highest
increase was 20 percent.
It makes the mind just spin.

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

know your government

Looking for information about state government? The League of formen Voters has a toll-free telephone service (1-800-292-5823)

Vomen Voters has a toll-free telephone service (1-800-292-5823) that may be nelpful. The telephone service (1-800-292-5823) that may be nelpful. The telephone's Citizen Information Center in Lansing offers to help people find out about such things as pending legislation, the state constitution, election laws, voting regulations or tax information. The, telephone is answered from 10-30 a.m. to 3-30 p.m. week-

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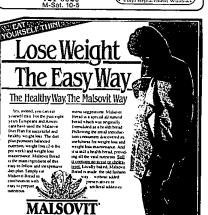


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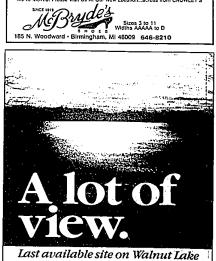
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Grand River Farmington 471-LOAF



Southfield 354-LOAF



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