

from our readers

Good job on Turner story

To the editor:

The Farmington Observer does a very nice job in covering many of the controversial issues of the city.

One of the stories for example, the Turner family trying to adopt a black baby boy. You had many informative articles of this story.

The readers were kept informed of everything that went on, from the family's feelings to the trial itself. Thank you so much for your dedication to the community.

Rachel Leckenby,
Farmington Hills

Thanks for the support

To the editor:

On behalf of the Farmington High School Music Patrons (parent's group), band/orchestra students, and Norm Logan (FHS music director), we would like to extend a warm thanks for the strong community support extended during the FHS Returnable Bottle & Can Drive.

The community support and fine cooperation extended by the Downtown A&P enabled our students and parents to add \$4,000 towards our fund-raising efforts, proceeds of which go towards music scholarships, band/orchestra enrichment programs, festival and competition fees, extra equipment and spring trip to the Smokey Mountain Music Festival.

Remember to continue saving your returnable bottles and cans as we will collect again in the spring. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Barbara Speranza,
president,
FHS Music Patrons

Anti-abuse efforts aimed at adults, too

To the editor:

I wanted to comment on the Oct. 11 editorial, "Tie One On!"

Many good points were brought out — that awareness and education is the key to fighting the drug abuse problem; that we can't expect our youth to stay drug free if we are personally abusing alcohol and other drugs; that "substance abuse is the same problem, no matter the age of the abuser."

However, the writer was misleading in stating that his efforts during the Farmington/Farmington Hills October Substance Abuse Awareness Month have been aimed solely at young people.

Quite the contrary, our efforts this past month have been aimed — to make everyone aware of the scope of the problem and stimulate all to further educate themselves and re-examine their own use, attitudes, etc.

True, endeavors like this take a tremendous amount of commitment and work. But I truly believe that together we can make a difference.

Sue Doleish,
chairwoman,
Substance Abuse Awareness Month Committee

Ethics laws are needed

To the editor:

I often feel like our state has the best legislature money can buy. The money I'm speaking of is from special interest political action committees.

In the last election, PACs gave House incumbents eight times the money received by their challengers. The result was that 98 percent of incumbents stayed in office, and "stayed the course" set before them by the PACs that helped finance their re-election.

So it's not surprising that so many Legislators opposed consumer-benefiting bills, such as the Medicare Mandatory Assignment proposals, considering that the American Medical Association is the second-largest PAC in the nation.

Arts stories were slanted

To the editor:

Bob Sklar's recent articles on NEA funding of the so-called "arts" incensed me.

Why must your reading audience be subjected to this kind of slanted reporting twice in two weeks (Sept. 27 and Oct. 11)? I disagree with his view that denying government funding of the arts would constitute censorship. Why should our legislators not be held accountable for the way they spend public funds?

The issue is not freedom of expression versus censorship, as Sklar purports it to be, but whether legislators have the right to spend our tax dollars on pornography.

Freedom of the press entitles your readers to such unadorned facts as NEA giving a photo of Christ submerged in urine.

Another example of flagrant misuse of tax monies is the \$60,000 government grant to the Kitchen Theatre in New York.

This grant, used to support the theater's stage artists, included Annie Sprinkle's live performance in which she invited her audience to view her vagina on stage, then told them, "usually I get paid a lot of money for this, but tonight it's government funded."

The above are but two of many examples of how NEA uses our money to fund obscene art. I resent being insulted in this way then forced to pay for it.

Frederick Hart, sculptor for Washington's National Cathedral, summarized the issue succinctly when, in his words, he stated, "The flaw is not with a public that refuses to nourish the arts. Rather it is with a practice of art that refuses to nourish the public."

Please, Bob Sklar, provide your readers with unbiased information that they might form their opinions based on all the facts.

Joyce Sterling,
Farmington Hills

points of view

Fun's gone from today's scare scene

THIS COULD BE the spookiest Halloween ever.

There's some real weirdos out there. I'm not talking about the 6- and 7-year-olds dressed up like Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or the 30-year-old dork father in the yellow Dick Tracy raincoat.

They're harmless revelers. I'm talking about the heavy duty space cases — the ones who want to cancel Halloween because... you got it... it's Satanism!

So far we haven't heard too much from the Outer Limits People here in Observer & Eccentric Land, but elsewhere... oooh, it's scary.

IN ALBUQUERQUE, the principal of an elementary school told parents she was canceling this year's Halloween parade and carnival "in order to ensure the safety of the children."

Her concern was based on a comment made last year by a parent, who was also a police officer, who told her that a Satanist cult had threatened "to abduct a blond-haired, blue-eyed child" for a human sacrifice.

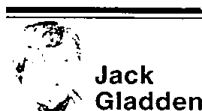
Sheriff's officials said at the time there was no evidence to back up the rumor, and no abduction (or sacrifice) occurred. Still, you can't be too careful.

In Nashville, Tenn., just a few days ago, the manager of a supermarket said he had decided to cancel plans to set up a haunted house in the store's produce section after about 150 people signed a petition complaining that the display was a form of devil worship.

The manager called the charge nonsense, but said the display wasn't worth offending customers. Whatever happened to caveat emptor?

IN ROCKY MOUNT, Va., the county board of supervisors turned down a proposal by the county administrator to banish occult-related symbols from county-sponsored events.

The supervisors maintained that Halloween celebrations are just "harmless diversions," rejecting the administrator's claim that it is a "double standard" to counsel 17-year-olds on the dan-



Jack Gladden

gers of Satanism while entertaining 7-year-olds with witches.

Somewhat closer to home, in Sparta, Mich., some people got upset when one resident moved her elaborate Halloween display from her yard to public property (with the assistance of the local Rotary, Lions and Jaycees).

"The display glorifies and glamorizes death," one of the protesters said. "We would rather not be known as the death capital of America." Another resident, who disagreed, said he couldn't understand the controversy. "What's happened to all the fun we used to have as kids?" he asked.

It's the Nineties, my friend. "Fun" is a relic of the past.

AND IT HAD to happen. It just had to.

In Beckley, W.Va., some coal miners got irate over a television commercial for a haunted coal mine tour for Halloween. The 30-second spot shows a werewolf in miners' garb holding a body, and the protesters claim it makes fun of coal miners.

In Washington Terrace, Utah, a resident's Halloween display has been accused of...

... racism. The display features a dummy wearing a ski mask hanging from a tree, but a representative of the local NAACP claims that it looks like a lynching — a lynching of a black man, of course.

So the owner of the display, who said she's used the same dummy for the past three years and no one has complained, covered the ski mask with a blue-highlighted clear plastic Halloween mask. The police, who had checked the display out twice after the complaints, said they were satisfied.

Jack Gladden is a copy editor at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. He lives in Canton.



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