

from our readers

Children are our future

To the editor:

It's a sad day when a corporation can buy an election with misinformation, and parents think more of their money than their children's future.

Many older people were protected by the Homestead Act and wouldn't need to pay more taxes.

Lots of renters still didn't support the future of our kids when they wouldn't pay any more money to stay right where they are.

Our children are the future. How easily "no" voters forget.

Tina Jensen,
Farmington Hills

Thanks for voting yes

To the editor:

We wish to thank the approximately 4,000 voters who supported the recent millage. You have given us hope and confidence rather than the fear and gloom offered by some in our community.

Thank you for putting the needs of our children before your own personal gain and financial security. Thank you for trusting our elected board members and superintendent and not falling for half-truths and out-dated gaffs.

It is good to know that many in our community not only desire excellent schools but are willing to pay for them. This many people saying "Yes" gives us hope to stay involved for our kids.

Pam and George Wright,
Farmington

Gains come from loss

To the editor:

Although the millage vote was lost, some important and long-lasting gains were made. The Friends of Farmington Schools started back in December with three people.

As of today there is a hard-working core of 400 volunteers, not to mention our hundreds of generous contributors. The diligence and passion with which the school representatives and their committees sought out the "yes" vote was due to incredible team work. We successfully achieved our goal of 4,000 plus votes due to these efforts.

The bonds of friendship between our members are worth more than any money can buy. A genuine caring and concern for the education and welfare of our children brought people from all four corners of this district together.

We commend Michael Flanagan for his honesty and integrity during the campaign. His tireless efforts to inform the community of the facts went far beyond his call of duty.

The cuts he and the school board must make in the coming months will not be pleasant, but they have been left with no alternative.

We would like to thank all of our many supporters that worked so hard the past few months. We would also like to thank the representatives of the local union and the school district that we worked so closely with. They gave us the respect, freedom and ability to create and run the campaign.

We are still and will remain the Friends of Farmington Schools — Friends for Life.

Bobbie Feldman,
Carol Luckescheiter,
Jayne Weckman
Farmington Hills

A sarcastic view of the millage vote

To the editor:

Well, we did it. We showed the state of Michigan that the people of Farmington are fed up with high taxes and we're not going to take it anymore. . . um, er — well, we at least told the kids.

Do you think they'll pass the message to Lansing for us? Other districts fell for it and voted in millage increases to make up for what the state took away.

Ha! We in the Hills are too smart for that. We have one of the highest combinations of income levels and property values in the state and we want to keep it that way.

So the school administration had better continue to provide the same level of educational services that attract people to this area to keep those property values up. They'll just have to do it with \$6-10 million less in state funding.

We know elementary enrollment has increased 29 percent in recent years and this trend is expected to continue. We know the costs of operating 23 school buildings (including two added since 1988) is expensive, as are the ever-increasing costs of

insurance, transportation, etc.

But, hey, things are tough all over. Who gave us the job of educating these kids anyway. Back in our day, two thirds of the cost of school funding was paid by the state.

Farmington schools have not asked voters for an increase in operating millage in 14 years, so why rock the boat now? Let's get our priorities straight.

At 51 cents to a dollar or two more a day, we are drawing the line. Quality education is simply a luxury that we, in Farmington, cannot afford.

Sure I heard that Richard Headlee's big buck ads were misleading, but who has the time to worry about the facts. Some of us couldn't even find the time to vote.

And those polling places with the long lines and long waits — it's tough what you have to go through to keep money out of those greedy educator's hands.

So trim the fat from the budget — teachers, art, music, science. Cut transportation. Let them walk a couple of miles like we did. And teacher's salaries? When they start getting paid as much as secretaries and letter carriers, something's wrong here.

Michael Flanagan seems to think the education of kids today will directly impact America's ability to remain competitive in the future.

Well, we're willing to take that risk, it means a few hundred bucks in our pockets, that would cover a few nice meals out for our family, or maybe the cost of gas to Florida.

Hmmmmmm, the possibilities. We even saved our friend, Richard \$44,000 a year, a small favor for his enlightenment.

What's wrong with our local leaders anyway? Next thing you know they'll be asking us to buy park land or sort our trash to preserve our world for the future.

Why is everyone so worried about the future — we're not going to be around then anyway.

Congratulations, Farmington voters. Aren't we proud of ourselves.

Mr. and Mrs. W.J. Boskey,
Farmington Hills

Fur stories anger reader

To the editor:

Can you not find anything better to fill the pages of The Observer than pictures of fur coats being made and modeled?

You devoted a full page in Street

Scene to a single picture of a man working on the remains of some innocent animal.

And then you completed the picture story with George Tunis and his gang modeling the finished products made from animals that should be permitted to roam in the wild.

"Fabulous Styles! A fabulous feel! Ah, fabulous furs!" Your headline should have read "Killers make coats for the heartless."

Cancel my subscription to your newspaper. I shall never pay for another copy of The Observer.

Deniss Leuchtenburg,
Farmington Hills

How about a hoe-down?

To the editor:

I observed that "Dolan sings the blues over state budget deficit," in Joanne Maliszewski's article of Jan. 31.

If, as the article suggests, inflation in the last 10 years had only increased 8.2 percent (or less than 1 percent annually), it seems to me Representative Dolan could switch to blue grass and afford to invite us all to a genuine country hoe-down at Heritage Park.

Joe Yurasek,
Farmington Hills

Don't protest budget cuts

To the editor:

Some protest Gov. John Engler's proposed budget cuts. Instead, protest Michigan's high cost of owning property or a business, making a living, educating our kids, raising our families, saving, investing for the future and dying.

In Michigan it is easier to sell crack on the streets than to sell flowers. Taxes and paperwork strangle small businesses. Personal income taxes are higher than most other states. Exemptions for children have not kept pace with inflation, penalizing families.

Children are penalized because

there is no meaningful competition in the delivery of a quality education. Children must be able to choose where they go to school and teachers must be unshackled to teach.

People leave Michigan to die. They take their accumulated assets with them because it is too expensive to leave them here. Other states benefit in greater wealth, greater representation in Congress and greater productivity because human capital is the most important resource of all.

Michigan needs to let people, all people, keep more of what they earn. We need to unleash the creative energies of our cities and our highly diverse and talented people — before they go elsewhere.

Agree or disagree, John Engler has begun an important debate. Join it. He leads with a bold heart and a demonstrated willingness to listen. He deserves our thanks. He begins a new era of growth and prosperity in Michigan.

Clark Durant,
Detroit

Ban inequity in taxation of benefits

To the editor:

Gross inequity and unfairness exists in the state income taxation of pension benefits. State, city, county, school district and federal retirees enjoy complete exemption from state income tax on their pension benefits.

Pensions from private industry plans, Keogh plans and IRA's are exempt up to \$7,500 per year for a single return and \$10,000 per year on a joint return.

Regardless of source, pension benefits should be treated the same across the board.

Please contact your state representative and senator and demand that parity be enacted.

Glen Meynard, CPA

Her poem is about war

"War: Something I Don't Understand"

By Katie Kay
special writer

I really don't understand why we have to fight.

You know war just isn't right.

Who does Saddam Hussein think he is anyway?

I just cannot say!

We're creating a war that's no doubt.

Now we have to try to kick Saddam out!

A lot of people are gonna die.

Yet I still don't understand why.

All this talk about war is makin' me sick.

And to think it gives some people a great big kick.

A lot of people don't like war.

I don't want to hear about it anymore.

War isn't a pretty sight,
I think that it's really quite a fright.

If you were to look at this feud,

I think you'd find both sides to be very rude!

Nice try Desert Shield,

But now there's war in the field.

Even though I love my country so,

I don't see why Saddam Hussein can't be a friend instead of a foe.

You'd think that they'd have learned in World War I,

That war isn't fun.

Now some people have to run.

Katie Kay, a sixth grader at East Middle School in Farmington Hills, wrote the above poem late one night while thinking about the "why" of war.

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