

from our readers

Candidate clarifies his position

To the editor:

In 1988 "The Farmington City Council" waived the bid process designating the Farmington Architectural firm of John Allen Associates as construction manager for renovation of the Farmington City Hall.

The above quote is from the Nov. 12, 1989, Farmington Observer, page 5C.

There were cost overruns lower estimates for furniture, carpeting, dry wall and architects fees.

I do not find my election literature in error as does Mayor Shirley Richardson.

John T. Kenney,
Farmington

Expansion of court is needed

To the editor:

We would so much appreciate an endorsement from the Observer for the bond issue for an addition to the 47th District Court in the Nov. 5 election.

The court is bursting at the seams. We need a third judge and a room to house her/him. Following are a few statistics we think are persuasive of the need for court expansion:

- Case load increased by over 15,000 cases in seven years.
- Present court case load is approximately 40,000 cases.
- Between 1980 and 1990 the population of Farmington Hills increased by 23 percent.
- Space needed for third judge — courtroom, chambers, and judicial staff.
- We are the third busiest district court in Oakland County and the 14th busiest district court out of 98 in the state of Michigan.
- Case load per judge in the 47th District Court is over 17,000; average statewide is 12,082 per judge.
- The 47th District Court has a heavier case load per judge than Pontiac, which has four judges; Livinston County, which has three; Walled Lake (52-1), which has three; Monroe County, which has three; and Ann Arbor, which has three.
- The court has had to dismiss cases because we cannot get them to trial on time. The criminal jury docket is especially crowded.

- Juror facilities are inadequate.
- New drunk driving law requires cases to be disposed of within 77 days from date of arrest.
- The speedy trial rule requires 90 percent of all traffic and criminal cases must be concluded within 43 days.
- All preliminary examinations in felony cases must be held within 12 days from arraignment.
- Proposed legislation would increase small claims jurisdiction from \$1,500 to \$2,500 and civil jurisdiction to \$20,000 from \$10,000.
- Community work program has grown from 450 to 2,000 in four years.
- Farmington Hills police department anticipates a force of 135 sworn officers within 10 years.
- Cost to the taxpayer should be minimal — if any — less than \$7 for the average household.

Justice delayed is justice denied.

Margaret G. Schaeffer,
Frederick L. Harris,
District Judges

Editor's note: The above letter contained a typographical error when it appeared in last Monday's Farmington Observer. The next-to-last paragraph should have said: "Cost to the taxpayer should be minimal — if any — less than \$7 for the average household."

Judges must work harder

To the editor:

I would like to comment on an article in the Farmington Observer on Oct. 21, "Court needs another judge." I would disagree with the city council candidates.

After serving on jury duty and seeing the judges work about three days a week, six hours a day, it seems like the gray train to me.

I would propose that there be accountability to the taxpayers. As a taxpayer and their employers, I would propose they punch a time card and show us eight hours work per day, 40 hours a week, so we can be assured of our money's worth.

Leonard Weems,
Farmington Hills

Hills write-in makes pitch

To the editor:

Many viewers of Farmington Hills cable TV on Wednesday and Friday nights commented: "Where's Andy?"

This was because both the Council of Homeowners Association and the local League of Women Voters sponsored candidates' nights and did not invite me to participate.

What puzzled me about this is that both groups try to increase voter participation, but did not recognize my campaign as a "certified candidate."

Well, I beg to differ with both groups. I'm a registered candidate under the name of "Committee to Elect Raczowski" (C-00298) on Aug. 21, with the county. Both groups were courteous with my plea, but just didn't see the facts as state law does. I feel that if a group holds a candidate's night, they should invite all "registered candidates."

I also ask that if the voters of Farmington Hills are looking for clear, complete, intelligent, and logical candidate, they should write in Andrew Raczowski.

A few people tell me that my campaign is a "long-shot" and people just don't care for sincerity and good ideas. Those things just don't win elections any more. But I still believe it's possible. Maybe that, too, is a reason to vote for me.

I ask if people want to help this important campaign, no matter how to please call Andrew at 476-5598. Or vote (write in) Andrew Raczowski, city councilman, on the green secrecy envelope.

Andrew Raczowski,
Farmington Hills

Editor's note: Raczowski, who missed the falling deadline last August, is a write-in candidate for a Farmington Hills City Council seat.

Vote no on incinerator

To the editor:

I urge all residents of Oakland County to please vote no on the Oakland County Solid Waste Bond proposal Nov. 5. If you vote yes, you will sentence those of us who live in northern Oakland County to the hazards of breathing incinerated air for the rest of our lives, or until we are forced to move.

Consider, please, what incineration at the Madison Heights SOGARA (formerly SOGARA) facility did to those families surrounding it. Consider what a county wide incinerator would spew into the air.

Do you keep your batteries out of your trash? Consider how you would feel if you lived only a few miles

downwind of an incinerator burning all the trash collected daily in Oakland County.

There are viable alternatives to incineration. Control of our solid waste stream and reduction of our need for landfill space starts at home and office with each of us.

When you go to vote, don't be misled by references in the bond proposal to recycling or composting. While these are helpful in reducing our solid waste stream, this bond issue will allow the incinerator, too.

We can recycle without incineration. We can vote no on the Oakland County Solid Waste Bond Proposal and still make progress on our solid waste problems.

Douglas A. Taill,
Rochester Hills

Attack was uncalled for

To the editor:

Tim Richard's column attacking our company in last Thursday's Observer was a stream of illogic, nonsense and basic ignorance of business matters.

He writes as if there's something sinister about a well-managed company and business success. He then ludicrously suggests that selling second lines to homes with teenagers accounts for the growth in customer lines over the last four years.

He's correct that we've reduced the number of jobs in the last three years, and we did it by providing early retirement incentives, not through layoffs. A key reason the action had to be taken is because competitive losses were cutting into our revenues. The cutbacks helped us achieve the kind of earnings our shareholders expect.

Despite Richard's criticism of the new Ameritech Complete Card, this new credit card represents a new line of business and the prospect of new revenues for our company. And its interest rate is competitive. It's been very well received by our customers.

Richard plays the role of judge and jury — arguing that Michigan Bell "might misuse its current position" and "could" undercut the competition. It's as if he's decided we're guilty until proven innocent.

What is this nonsense? I'd expect more responsibility from the Observer.

K.E. Millard,
president,
Michigan Bell

Prague-nosis: life's good here

"LOOK UP, not down, if you visit Prague," a Dutch tour guide advised us some years ago.

Prague, he said, is the most beautiful city in Europe. Much of that beauty is in facades, decorations, rooftops, statuary.

Last month we learned he was right. Vienna's beauty is really only a century old, but Prague's is far older. Charles University was founded in 1388 in the old town on the Moldau. An opera house where Mozart worked still stands. Much of "Amadeus" was filmed around Prague's 18th century buildings. We visited a rich, old culture.

But sadly, Czechoslovakia is 200 years behind the good ol' U.S. of A. in dealing with a key problem of civilization.

CZECHS AND Slovaks, grappling with freedom after the 1989 "velvet revolution" which toppled the Communists, can't handle federal-state relations.

This I gleaned from a local English-language paper, Prognosis (Vol. 1, No. 7).

"What began as a soberly euphoric effort to create a new set of constitutions last June — one federal and two republic (state) — has become a political catfight which threatens the 73-year-old union of the Czech and Slovak nations," said an editor's introduction to an interview with the prime minister.

"The nut of the dispute concerns the respective powers and responsibilities of the federation versus the republics, especially in the economic area," the editor continued.

Czechoslovakia was born after World War I in the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Czechs and Slovaks are tribal groups that moved into the region as the Roman Empire disintegrated. The notion of state-federal relations is new stuff.

PRIME MINISTER Marian Calfa, a Slovak, said (translated): "All the key people from Slovakia were nominated and elected to the Federal Parliament" rather than to the Slovak Republic government.

These other (Slovak) politicians didn't have their own sphere of economic development to use to advance their own politics," he said.



Tim Richard

Result: Slovaks are pushing separate nationhood.

The idea is crazy, of course. A balkanized series of tribal governments — Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs — will tempt another Napoleon, Hitler or Stalin to weld them into a respectable nation. Eastern Europe isn't out of the woods yet.

Meanwhile, the Prague Town Assembly bounced Jaroslav Koran as mayor. Prognosis reporter Matt Welch wrote: "There were multiple reasons, but a key problem was 'confusion at the top of foreign investment policy in City Hall.' No one knows who's to do what, it seems.

Why a city is dabbling in foreign investment policy is beyond me. In the good ol' U.S. of A., the federal government handles interstate and foreign commerce.

THE TRICK is for politicians to assign certain jobs to the nationwide government and leave others to the state-local units.

Americans haven't solved the problem totally, but we have essentially a correct grasp of it. James Madison, in No. 9 of The Federalist Papers, said 204 years ago:

"The proposed Constitution, so far from implying an abolition of the State governments, makes them constituent parts of the national sovereignty, . . . and leaves in their possession certain exclusive and very important portions of sovereign power."

In No. 10 Madison added: "The federal Constitution forms a happy combination in this respect: The great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State legislatures."

A trip to Prague makes a guy appreciate the good ol' American system.

Tim Richard reports regularly on the local implications of state and regional events.

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