

# Opinion

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## No 'waste' of time Disposal day is coming up

**I**F YOU LIVE in the Farmington area, you get lucky twice a year — spring and fall — when the cities co-sponsor something called Household Hazardous Waste Days. Those are the days when technicians from Chemical Waste Management set up show and help residents dispose of their hazardous wastes properly. The first of two such days are coming 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 2, at the new Nissan Research & Development Center at 12 Mile and Halsted roads, Farmington Hills.

If you're like many suburbanites, you'll have collected the usual components of motor oil, antifreeze, car and household batteries, drain and oven cleaners, gasoline mixtures, carburetor cleaners, strippers and removers, adhesives, glues, pesticides and herbicides.

Yes, that stuff is hazardous to people and plants, so please don't put it down the drain or stuff it into garbage bags that only end up in landfills — and eventually back in the land or air.

The company's autumn showing last October was well-attended. Workers, some dressed in protective "moon suits," collected tons and tons of crud from hundreds of residents, who didn't

even have to get out of their cars.

**HAZARDOUS DISPOSAL** days are great, and we're glad they're so well-attended. To our knowledge, few communities provide such a service.

It's our thinking that there should be many more waste days — one a month would be great — but we understand it's very expensive. Anyway, expansion of the program is something both cities should consider.

And, of course, we'd like to see a longer list of things acceptable for collection. Chemical Waste Management will not accept: any commercial or industrial wastes; aerosol cans with freon 11 or 12; compressed gas cylinders; radioactive materials, including some smoke detectors; explosives; shock sensitive compounds; dioxins and all their derivatives.

Also, the program is for residents, not commercial or industrial businesses.

But, all things considered, waste days are worth the effort and expense. Give us more of a good thing.

## Volunteers deserve thanks

**V**OLUNTEERS... where would we be without them? Let's not even consider such a scary thought. Without volunteers, a lot of important work wouldn't get done.

Americans who help without pay number almost 100 million, according to press reports, and their skills and time are worth just under \$200 billion. But putting numbers and money aside, our unsung volunteers certainly do improve the quality of life in our communities.

We'd all do well to appreciate them during this National Volunteer Week.

Locally, there is plenty to appreciate. Lenore Dunsy-Weiss, a past president of the Sinai Hospital Guild and a longtime volunteer at the Detroit hospital, is an excellent example.

**THE FARMINGTON** Hills woman, a past president of the Sinai Hospital Guild, was named to the Governor's Honor Roll, which recognizes volunteers' outstanding service to Detroit-area agencies and institutions.

She currently works daily at the hospital's Berry Surgery Center, assisting in patient transportation and in various clerical duties.

Even closer to home, more than 400 volunteers were honored at ceremonies Monday at the Mercy Center in Farmington Hills. Officials were on hand to remind us that volunteers save the cities so much money.

Without volunteers, many programs wouldn't exist. Resources just don't exist to run them on a paid basis.

And the elderly volunteers say they get as good, as they give. Their service helps them feel a part of the community.

## Political bog Congress runs from its woes

**T**HOSE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES checking out of Congress aren't leaving the mire behind, as they'd like us to believe. In fact, they may be taking it with them.

Not many gave congressional redistricting much thought when it became a national agenda item a few months ago. Everyone pretty much figured things would progress as they always do, meaning the same politicians, with a few scattered exceptions here and there, would hold the same jobs in December as they do today.

Then the new redistricting maps arrived. Some representatives found themselves pitted against old friends in election runoffs to retain control of their districts.

Others found themselves with little left of their old districts, but lots of constituents in areas where they had never before campaigned. Still others viewed their newfound competition in these redrawn districts as a bit recalcitrant and unwilling to bow to their will as incumbents.

Ultimately, they all found comfort under the solution: Quit Congress and say they're doing so because the it is too bogged down to be effective.

**WELL, THEY OUGHT** to ask who bogged it down.

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**Some congressmen are running from themselves and trying to make it look as though it was the other guy — certainly not them — who wallowed in the mire of ineffectiveness that ultimately chased them out of office. Come on, now.**

David Honigman, Broomfield quit, saying scandal has taken over the Congress and paralyzed its effectiveness. However, this also is the last year he could leave office with his office holder fund, estimated at \$900,000.

To be fair, Broomfield has said the money will be used for some sort of charitable endeavor or foundation grant.

This also is the year Broomfield was faced with challenger Honigman, currently a state senator and not too long ago a state representative. More than one person in West Bloomfield has used "jobhopping" in the same sentence with Honigman.

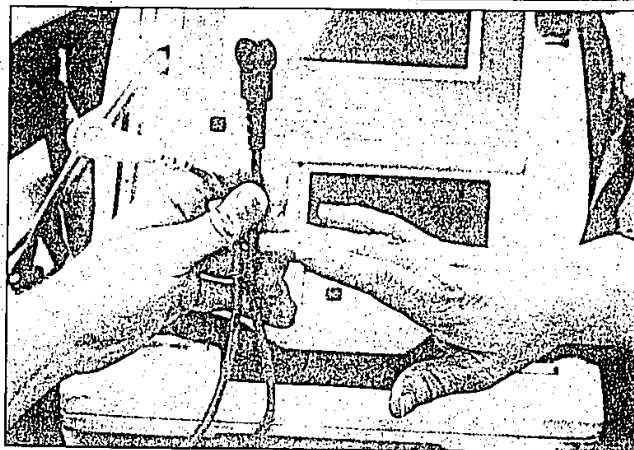
The word around the county is that Honigman always has aspired to be a congressman, and this is his chance. There is speculation he was banking on Broomfield to quit so he could make the best of the opportunity.

**WHAT WE'RE** left with is a Congress that, for the first time in a long time, is going to have a high percentage of turnover. Prior to this, it accurately could be stated that Parliament turned over faster than Congress.

There is one multi-part point to remember, among all the reasons we as a public are likely to hear until the August primary is over:

Congress has always been mired in something, so saying nothing could be accomplished is an excuse. It's at a time like this that effective leadership needs to redouble its efforts and break through logjams — that's part of the reason the public sends these people to Washington.

The other reason is one we haven't heard yet from a candidate. They'll all tell you about their personal ambition and dreams to be U.S. representatives. That's fine, but the first reason a candidate should run is to serve the constituents. If in the course of doing so one finds personal satisfaction, then we can truly say all our needs will have been met.



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Sick at heart

**It's a heart-rending issue:** Modern technology and our well-trained emergency medical service technicians literally hold the power

to defibrillate an aching heart that the sick and elderly may rather have the power to control. It's enough to make you heartsick.

## State sidesteps role in business growth

**HAVE YOU** heard about the latest dance craze? It's called the Politician's Polka. You take one step forward, two steps back — and sidestep the issue.

We have Novi Rotarian Gary Keller to thank for that.

And we have Gov. John Engler to thank for the most current demonstration of the truth to the story.

**WE ARE** facing hard times in Michigan. The auto industry is downsizing, idling factories, blue-collar workers and previously sacrosanct managers.

So what is the governor doing about it?

His one step forward is to focus tightly on our state's limited resources on education, as the stock of human skill and talent of our citizens is our greatest long-term competitive asset.

Facing nearly a billion-dollar deficit for the coming fiscal year, the governor has imposed drastic spending cuts on all state government. But under great pressure and very much to his credit, Engler has exempted Michigan's K-12 schools and universities from his cuts.

**THE TWO** steps back stem from Engler's stubborn philosophy of governmental non-intervention. He really believes that government has no business getting involved in the economic life of the state.

First step back: The governor's budget for fiscal 1993 slashes economic development to the bone. Whereas former Gov. James Blaine-

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hard's last budget included \$58 million and a staff of 304 for economic development, Engler's spending plan calls for \$26.4 million and 195 employees.

I'm not aware what his economic development strategy is," said GOP Rep. Mickey Knight. "All I know is what I see in the budget. And in terms of his budget containing initiatives, I don't see any."

Second step back: One of Blainehard's most effective innovations was the Michigan Strategic Fund, a small pile of seed capital to be loaned to promising new business initiatives. Engler's state Senate allies are trying to kill off this remnant of the prior administration, proposing to move MSF funds to sewer construction.

According to Engler's own sensible economic development chief, deputy Commerce director Marge Dyming, if MSF (ahem) goes down



Philip Power

the drain, "there's not going to be any economic development."

**THE SIDESTEP** is the saddest of all. Some of the least noticed consequences of auto industry downsizing are the terrific entrepreneurial opportunities it opens up.

Idle plants can be leased out cheaply to new companies in need of manufacturing space. Blue-collar workers, anxious for jobs and willing to be retrained, make up a pool of experienced, highly-motivated labor. Laid-off managers with talent, brains and roots in Michigan will feel no need to move out if they can get new businesses going right here.

Here is an enormous opportunity for new and diversified business development in Michigan.

But if you listen to the governor, state government should sidestep entirely any role in assisting this process.

On the merits, that's just plain wrong. And as to the politics, it's just as short-sighted. Gov. Engler ought to listen to folks in his own party and shape up.

Philip Power is chairman of the company that owns this newspaper.

## from our readers

### We have enough laws on obscenity

To the editor:

A Livonia resident recently commented the fine citizens of Farmington Hills and police Chief Dwyer for the quick response to obscenity being sold and rented at a local video store.

While I do consider the residents of our fine city the most respectable in the country and Chief Dwyer the most responsive police official in the state, I do not feel it is time to waste tax dollars "strengthening the obscenity laws here in Michigan."

There are enough laws, statutes, and ordinances coming from the federal, state, county, and city governments modifying and amending freedom of speech conveyed by just about any medium.

President Bush recently vowed to a moratorium on federal regulations that hamper economic growth. The trend toward downsizing government is a valid and wise response to the times we now live in.

**THERE ARE** so many valid and worthy responses to our social prob-

lems that desperately need funding, than to spend public money on polling video stores or distributors.

I know, you say pornography causes criminals like Ted Bundy to act out, as he said from his death row cell. I believe most rational individuals have considered the source of that argument prior to jumping blindfolded onto some moral bandwagon.

I would hope that the citizens of our state could be expected to be responsible enough to live and work within the laws that are already on the books, rather than wasting one tax dollar on new laws.

If someone chooses to violate the laws on the books, but then, however, it would be a sad day in Michigan to waste time and money, as a Florida community recently has, writing up a 136-word definition for the buttocks, in order to strengthen the law.

Jeffrey J. Thompson,  
Farmington Hills

### Her thoughts on recycling

To the editor:

Thank God, we have people in

Farmington Hills like Patrick Anderson who recognizes the inequity of the so-called user fee for recycling.

With an estimated 20,000 households in Farmington Hills, at \$54 per year, we're paying a cool million dollars more per year than we paid before to have all of our waste picked up. What for? How many shiny new trucks and added staff will that money support? Why?

Did anyone take a sober look at the cost-benefit picture before jumping on this recycling bandwagon? Some curbside garbage-recycling programs consume more resources than they save. More collection trucks mean more fuel consumption and more air pollution.

Some recycling programs use large amounts of energy and produce high volumes of water waste. Remote recycling facilities call for considerable resources just to transport the materials.

Some level of recycling is essential, but it should be done in the most economical way. And we should have a chance to vote on the alternatives.

Mary K. Hurd,  
Farmington Hills

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