

Farmington Observer OPINION

21898 FARMINGTON RD., FARMINGTON, MI 48336

MONDAY MAY 5, 1994

18(F)

A hectic time May is merry - and busy

The merry month of May? Well, maybe. But sometimes month No. 5 is busier than merrier in our town.

School elections usually have June dates, but June 13, and there are three candidates for two seats in the Farmington district, in case anyone's forgotten, but May is the month that has the most election activity.

May is make-or-break time for folks who'd like to sit on a school board that sets policy for a district with a budget in excess of \$100 million.

We've noticed that May, especially in the Farmington area, is an important month with lots of activities for the civic-minded, in addition to candidate watchers. (What could be more important than paying attention to wannabe officeholders so that an intelligent choice may be made on June 13? So when are those candidate forums, anyway? Ah, sometime during May.)

For example, it just so happens that Farmington-area residents can march into and out of May - it begins (sort of) and ends with parades.

On Saturday, May 7, adults and youngsters involved in South Farmington Baseball will march from the Farmington City Hall to City Park on Shawansee for their season openers.

On Memorial Day, May 30 this year, the American Legion Parade will trot its way along Grand River through downtown Farmington and on to the war memorials at Oakland Street. The parade has been a community fixture for decades.

Those who need another good calf-stretch-

ing activity in May should have marked Sunday, May 1, on their calendars. That's when the ninth-annual Crop Walk took place along the streets of our community. About \$25,000 was raised to ease world hunger, we're told.

There's ever so much more going on with civic overtones during the busy month of May. A sampling:

A concert performed by the Farmington Community Chorus at Harrison High School May 13-14... the staging of "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" at the Farmington Players Barn through May 21... a juried art exhibit sponsored by the Farmington Artists Club May 13-17 at the Spicer House in Heritage Park... the Athena Award, which recognizes the achievements of business and professional women, May 17... Safe Kids Family Night May 13 at the Mercy Center... the dedication of Founders Sports Park (nee Sod Farm) at 11 a.m. May 14.

The above list, by no means inclusive, doesn't even take us through the end of the month. Read the Farmington Observer, especially the Thursday calendar page, for information on events.

Several breakfasts, luncheons and dinners of a semi-official nature are scheduled throughout the month. And of course school's still in session with spring sports and proms and other activities of all sorts.

Yes, May is an important month for people who care about their community and want to get to know it better.

All-stars thank parents, teachers

They're optimistic, energetic and so very bright. They are the 1994 Observer Newspapers Academic All-Stars.

In today's Observer, you will find a special section outlining the achievements of these students and of others nominated for the honor by their school principal.

In the next few weeks, the 16 members of this year's team will complete some very successful high school careers and then look ahead to college and studies in engineering, biology, business and political science.

All seem to relish the idea of entering a challenging competitive college somewhere, be it Harvard, Ohio Wesleyan or the University of Michigan.

This year's team includes students with diverse interests. What they all have in common is outstanding academic achievement coupled with unparalleled extracurricular involvement.

They are lettered athletes, crack debaters, musicians, student newspaper editors and club and class officers. These young men and women are active in church groups and volunteer in their communities.

And as they correctly point out, they haven't done it alone. They have many kind words for their parents who offered encouragement and support and for teachers who played a major role in shaping their young minds and helping them achieve academic success.

Kimberly Rodak of Harrison High School cited her parents as having been the great influence in her academic career.

"My father has given me a competitive edge, a desire to be the best at what I do. My mother has taught me to have pride in my work and has given me an always-try-your-hardest mentality. Together they have shown, by example, the strength and advantage of a strong family unit."

Meredith Burnett of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills selected her eighth-grade math teacher, Michael Orsagius.

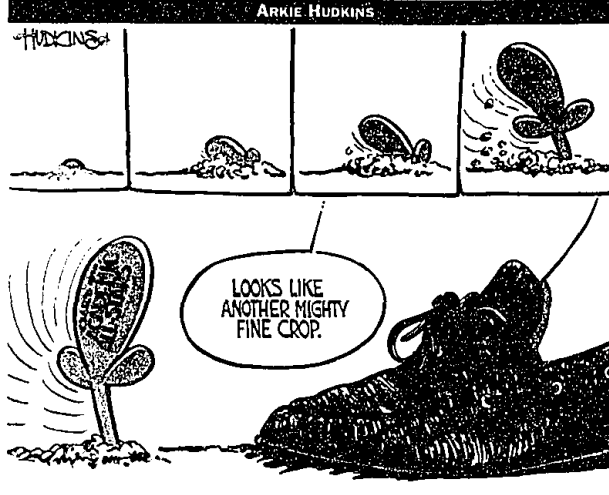
"He showed me how much fun learning could be and how much I was capable of doing," said Burnett, who lives in Redford Township.

Sara Thomas of Farmington High School singled out her calculus teacher, Paula Robb. "Mrs. Robb always inspired me to work to my fullest potential. She taught me to break down complex problems into comprehensible steps, a skill which has benefited me in all aspects of life," said Thomas.

The recurring theme the students find most helpful is a supportive home and school environment encouraging independent thinking and a belief of being able to achieve whatever they put their mind to. For these seniors, it has been the formula for success.

The 1994 all-stars in order of ranking are: Bradley Malestein of Plymouth Canton High School, Adam Borchert of Catholic Central High School, Samantha Lavery of Stevenson High School, Harry Lee of Plymouth Salem High School, James Hakkim of Stevenson High School, Matthew Abbott of Plymouth Salem High School, Avi Drissman of Harrison High School, David Mitzel of Catholic Central High School, Kristin Clawson of Plymouth Canton High School, Meredith Burnett of Mercy High School, Alicia Crossland of North Farmington High School, Kimberly Rodak of Harrison High School, Pamela Clancy of Ladywood High School, Amy Watroba of Mercy High School, Sara Thomas of Farmington High School and Laura McWilliam of Farmington High School.

Join us in congratulating this year's team - our ninth annual - some of the best and brightest students of the Class of 1994.



LETTERS

Story 'fact-driven'

Thank you for your recent coverage (April 28) of the disappearance of Michigan's Article 1, section 6, which is happening before our eyes.

Your Mr. Coutant was obviously quite diligent and clearly attempted to provide a fact-driven article - something your competitors were less able to do. I have received calls from numerous supporters since it appeared.

I hope you will continue to cover the story. It would seem to be appropriate, from your article, that you interview Charles Spiekerman, executive staff attorney, Oakland County Prosecutor's Office; Dale LeBaer, Oakland County Sheriff's deputy; Les Hasler, detective lieutenant, Michigan State Police, Romeo Post; and Jim Ahearn, chief investigator, Oakland County Prosecutor's Office.

They are apparently the ones who put Farmington Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer and City Manager William Costick in harm's way.

Joseph A. Ditzhazy, Wixom

tions, in their pay based on qualifications and value to the community, and in their relationship to the principal.

To do so, they will have to learn to flatter, to fawn, to bow, to scrape, and above all, to compete. After all, in this reform package, the buzz word has been competition as an outcome of choice, charter, vouchers, and empowerment.

Frankly, I don't think our teachers can make the readjustment. They have become used to asserting themselves for their students and for their own families. They have gained confidence by standing together with others in pursuit of goals.

They know the importance of spelled-out responsibilities and rights, as in a union contract. As a former union teacher and administrator, I suggest that Michigan teachers do the following:

- Study, but don't dwell on the hesitancy their own unions showed regarding Proposal A.

- Review carefully the votes cast and leadership shown by both parties in Lansing.

- Activate a comprehensive program through education, elections, and continued competent teaching, to restore rights lost by recent legislation. I wish them well.

Lawrence Niblett, Farmington Hills

Thanks for trying

To the gentleman who tried to save our dog in the Pines of Farmington Hills on Sunday, April 24:

We thank you. She didn't make it. She was old and disoriented, but we loved her. We appreciate the effort you made on her behalf.

It's nice to know people like you are still around. I think we sometimes forget. Ironically, our son saved a dog from drowning in our pool last fall - maybe he was yours.

The Swartz family, Farmington Hills

Thanks, Larry

To Larry O'Connor: A thousand thanks for your article (April 14) on me. Perhaps you were a soothsayer in another life, because you have been so helpful for flattery.

The article made me out to be some special human or something, which surprised me because I thought I stammered and was incoherent in an interview.

I don't know quite how to say thanks, because if I praise the article, I end up praising me, and there's been enough of that.

I read some of your other articles, and I wonder why such a journalist like yourself would be interested in me.

I like your balance of sentence length and paragraph structure, and the neat, short sentences that grab the reader's attention.

Thanks for being friendly and not haughty toward me in the interview and for understanding I didn't want to emphasize that scholarship thing.

I knew you were cool when you asked if my band name had an ampersand in it: I never met anyone who is sensitive to the little things that make rock 'n' roll magnificent.

Again thanks, and if my band ever makes it big, you got the exclusive interview.

Amir Baghdadchi, Farmington Hills

Now what, teachers?

Now let's hear one for the governor, who put Michigan teachers in their place.

They can still belong to unions, but these have been emasculated and disarmed. From now on, employees will have to accept the school board's last best offer or face a heavy salary penalty for withholding service in a contract dispute.

Dutifully, the teacher must now accept a return to the status of 40 to 50 years ago: go to your classroom, do the job, and shut up.

It remains to be seen if teachers will roll over and accept their fate graciously.

To do so, they will have to swallow earned pride in their status as full-fledged professionals who had a voice in their working condi-

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

What's bothering you these days?



"Money... I never have enough."
Mary Beth Oliveira
Farmington



"The crime... so much of it is done by teens... parents don't know where their kids are."
Mary Lou Sessall
Farmington



"The sales tax going up. When I buy things, they're going to cost more."
Molly Sessall
Farmington



"I don't have enough time for homework."
Mary Akine
Farmington

We asked this question at the downtown branch of the Farmington Community Library.

The Farmington Observer

TONI BLAIR, COMMUNITY EDITOR, 477-5450

SUSAN ROBERTS, MANAGING EDITOR, OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, 953-2149

PAUL KINGSBERG, ADVERTISING MANAGER, OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, 953-2177

LARRY DOWSE, MANAGER OF CIRCULATION, OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, 953-2234

STEVE BARNARD, PUBLISHER, OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, 953-2100

MARK LEWIS, GROUP MANAGER, REGIONAL ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL, OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC NEWSPAPERS, 953-2150

DICK BRADY, VICE-PRESIDENT, GENERAL MANAGER, OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC NEWSPAPERS, 953-2252

SUBURBAN COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION
PHILIP POWER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
RODOLPH ASHMAN, PRESIDENT