

# Farmington Observer OPINION

21898 FARMINGTON RD., FARMINGTON, MI 48336

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 1994

18(F)

## School picks Let's stay with Inch, Webb

**S**mile, R. Jack Inch and Cathleen Webb; you've earned our endorsements for additional terms on the Farmington Board of Education.

On Monday, June 13, voters in the Farmington School District will settle the annual school election. There are three candidates - incumbents Inch and Webb, and challenger Kenneth Stein - and the top two vote-getters will serve four-year terms.

All three hopefuls seem to care deeply about the quality of education in the 10,000-student district, but we believe Inch and Webb deserve to be re-elected.

In this particular election, we feel that experience is to the candidates what location is to real estate - everything. Inch and Webb have truly made the most of their combined 20 years on the board.

Inch, a Farmington resident, will become a 20-year man on his own if he wins Monday. Webb is finishing her first term.

As school trustees, they seem to have no glaring deficiencies. Both are as popular as it's possible for a school trustee to be in these days of Proposal A, tight-fisted voters, and failed millages.

Webb, who lives in southwest Farmington Hills, gets high marks from us for leading the board through the superintendent search that ended with the hiring of C. Robert Maxfield from the Berkeley district to replace Michael Flanagan as school chief.

The board could have hired an outside search firm (and saved trustees from eating

any number of late, cold dinners), but trustees decided to do the majority of the search themselves. The district is better off for their hard work, we believe.

And Webb, who always seems to be out and about at some community function, has become the No. 1 ambassador for public education in the Farmington area. Her work with Farmington Youth Assistance has not escaped our notice.

Jack Inch? Well, one school board observer correctly noted that the Oakland Community College economics professor can "boil down complicated educational issues into common sense." Inch is a handy tool for anyone trying to understand education these days.

Inch knows the community and its constituents. He doesn't duck controversy, and he's not afraid to tell someone they're wrong when they are wrong.

We remember his open discussion with some angry Beechview parents who thought their concept of the neighborhood school was being trampled upon. Look, replied Inch, the neighborhood school is outmoded in the new reality of state funding.

Over the last four years, the Farmington Schools have survived: state recapture of funds, a millage failure, the whole Proposal A mess, a teacher negotiation, a superintendent search and the resultant transition from one school chief to another, and overall increased scrutiny and criticism from the public.

Trustees like Inch and Webb have helped the district endure. They should be retained.

## On the road to transportation

**I**t's critical that the Big Four give more than lip service to the delicate connection of Detroit with its suburbs.

Several times in the last few weeks, area leaders went on the road together over mutual concerns.

Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, Oakland and Wayne county execs L. Brooks Patterson and Edward McNamara, and Macomb County Commission chairman Mark Steenberg all addressed the first annual meeting of the Eight Mile Boulevard Association.

Each admired the association's goals - to improve both the image and actuality of the border that spans Detroit and 12 of its suburbs.

Three days later, they were in Southfield for the first joint meeting of Leadership Oakland and Leadership Detroit. Both groups were finishing up a year-long program designed to educate them on community assets and problems.

The Big Four talked about a new spirit of trust and cooperation between Detroit and its suburbs - an attitude that is crucial to a thriving southeast Michigan.

But soon will come the time to put money and mouth together.

And it will happen over the issue of mass transportation.

Archer brought it up. McNamara repeated it. Patterson didn't dispute it.

Most major cities have subway systems. We don't. We don't even have a metropolitan bus system.

In fact, we have two separate bus systems, one based in the city and one in the suburbs, mirroring what have been two separate societies.

And SMART, the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation - although cutting costs and improving efficiency by listening to its customers and metro area businesses - continues to operate close to bankruptcy.

**■ Soon will come the time to put money and mouth together. And it will happen over the issue of mass transportation.**

Currently dependent on a survival grant from the state, SMART is desperately in need of a more permanent subsidy. For, in fact, no transit system can make it on turnstile sales alone.

Merging SMART with the Detroit Department of Transportation is what's needed, keeping a rejuvenated system on track through an areawide funding plan and utilizing both public and private resources.

Michael Duggan, an executive deputy for Wayne County and the interim director of SMART for more than two years, has done an excellent job of helping put the agency back on track. Cost-cutting measures, recent route consolidations, and a renewed spirit of teamwork which allows unions and management to work together has benefited the agency and its customers.

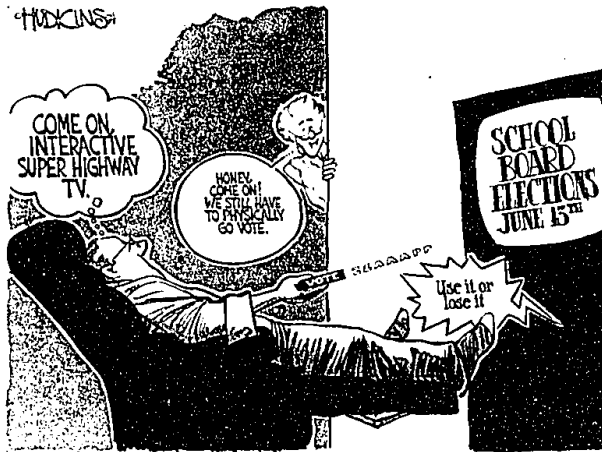
The agency has a plan to service the area and from the little bit we've seen, it appears to be a solid approach recognizing job and education centers throughout the metro region.

The southeastern Michigan economy is way ahead of many other regions of the country. Help-wanted signs and ads abound, but the jobs behind them often go unfilled because those who most need the work lack the means to get there. This hurts both the city of Detroit's economy and that of the suburbs.

It's a welcome change to see the heads of our region appearing around and about together, and something concrete will come out of it all down the road.

And that something must be a regionally organized and funded transportation system that will benefit us all.

ARKIE HUDKINS



## LETTERS

### Thanks so much

**A** brief note to say thank you for the article about The Farmington Artists Club and our exhibit.

It was beautifully written. You were able to bring together all those little tidbits we discussed so very well. A photo in color was frosting on the cake.

Your efforts are much appreciated by our membership.

Annetta L. Lind, president,  
Farmington Artist Club

### You helped us

**T**hank you for your recent publicity for our garage sale at which we sold items we collected from curbsides as they were discarded by their owners.

Twenty-five percent of the sales were donated to the American Cancer Society. We were able to send a check for \$100 to the Cancer Society.

I am pleased to report that about 95 percent of our recycled items found new owners who were glad to pick them up at bargain prices.

Thank you for your help.  
Nancy Garcia, Ann Peterson,  
Farmington Hills

### Any '59ers here?

**I**would like to make contact with anyone who graduated from Farmington High School in 1959 to set up a class reunion in the fall of this year.

Please write to: Sibyl (Lange) Ballantine, P.O. Box 282, 329 S. Main, Camden, Mich. 49232-0282.

Sibyl Ballantine, Camden, Mich.

### He's for Webb

**M**y fellow Republicans in the Farmington-Farmington Hills area are fortunate to have Cathleen Webb as a candidate for school board. Cathleen has served with distinction on the board. She deserves re-election.

I was particularly pleased that she led the board in fighting the imposition of the costly

"MESSA" insurance. The subsequent revelations by the state's insurance commissioner have proven her and the Farmington board correct - taxpayers should not be forced to foot the bill for an insurance operation more concerned about providing cash and control to the MEA than value for the dollar.

She also took responsibility for finding a new superintendent, at a time when the state's school finance system was in turmoil. To her credit, and to the credit of the rest of the school board, Farmington schools have maintained reserve funds to allow a continued high-quality program.

In addition to her service on the school board, Cathleen served as president of the Farmington Area Republican Club. She cares about this community. I urge others to support her in Monday's election.

Patrick L. Anderson, chairman,  
11th Congressional District  
Republican Committee

### A great story

**T**he Farmington Neighbors' Club thanks the Farmington Observer for the article about our club and our fund-raiser to benefit the Rainbow Connection.

It helped make the event very successful. We have donated a little over \$4,000 to the Rainbow Connection.

Next year, 1994-95, the Farmington Neighbors' Club will be celebrating its 40th anniversary. The club began as a small offshoot of Welcome Wagon and now has 225 members from the Farmington, Farmington Hills, Livonia, West Bloomfield, Novi and Troy.

Our historian, Connie Blazek, is compiling a special history for our anniversary. If anyone would like more information about the Farmington Neighbors' Club, call me at 477-1795 or Blazek at 553-2658.

Jean Kallmeier, president,  
Farmington Neighbors' Club

## COMMUNITY VOICE

### QUESTION:

Should the death penalty be imposed in Michigan?



'Generally speaking, yes, as long as the evidence is there to support it.'  
Bert Raamessen  
Farmington Hills



'I believe it should be carried out for certain terrible crimes.'  
Michelle Garland  
Farmington Hills



'It's late coming. We should have it.'  
Hank Gaudoni  
Northville



'I'm for it. I work in the public safety field, and I see some things.'  
Keith Lampcar  
Farmington Hills

We asked this question at Joe's Feed Store in Farmington Hills.

## The Farmington Observer

TOM BAEZ, COMMUNITY EDITOR, 477-5450

SUBAN ROBERT, MANAGING EDITOR, OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, 953-2149

PEO KROESPEL, ADVERTISING MANAGER, OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, 953-2177

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

STEVE BARBARO, 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

RURURAN COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION

PHILIP POWER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

RICHARD ARNHEIM, PRESIDENT