

Survive and enjoy Founders Festival turns 30

We're still waiting for our favorite bumper sticker - I SURVIVED THE FARMINGTON FOUNDERS FESTIVAL! - to appear on the backsides of motor vehicles around here.

Oh, well, one of these years. Some sharp business person really should have that message printed up on stickers and sell them at this year's Founders Festival.

We're sure they'd be showing up on the bumpers of hundreds of area cars and pickup trucks that carried folks to the big event of the Farmington summer - the Founders Festival.

The 1994 edition of the Founders Festival, that old standby of small-town merrymaking, begins Sunday, July 10. For the better part of one frantic week, the festival will rage through the streets and parking lots of downtown Farmington and environs.

From parades to pageants, from craft shows to coney dogs, the Farmington Founders Festival has just about everything a small-town shindig should have - except perhaps an excess of parking spaces.

Now, let us emphasize that we're not being facetious about our festival.

The event was a good idea when it was inaugurated in 1964. It's still a good idea in 1994. It was (and is) an attempt to graft an economic event on a strong sense of community.

Let us not forget the founders in the festival.

After all, the original intent was to honor the community's past as Michigan's first Quaker settlement. But, with encroaching commercialism, it's easy for the historical flavor to fade. Of course, the big event of the festival is the parade, scheduled for the morning of Saturday, July 16, on Grand River Avenue. On that day - as on every day during the festival, really - people will be packed tightly into downtown. To make the event fun for everyone, here is some advice from veteran parade-goers:

■ Don't get into a tussle over what appears to be a choice spot on the parade route. You can be sure there are many more good sites from which to see the parade.

■ Arrive at the parade early enough to find a safe and legal parking spot. If you're parking in a neighborhood, be considerate of people who live there. Don't block driveways or park in no-parking zones.

■ Small children should be kept out of the parade route and in sight at all times. If you're taking small children to the parade, talk to them about what they should do if they become separated. Tell them to find a police officer. Make sure they know their addresses and parents' full names.

If a bit of common sense is followed during that hectic week, you'll survive - and enjoy - the 30th annual Farmington Founders Festival.

Police take aim, miss justice

In another attempt to make the streets safer, a number of police departments are taking advantage of a new state drunken-driving law that allows municipalities to pass on costs of making arrests, performing investigations and all related staff time.

Many area communities are considering joining this group to allow police to come down hard on people arrested for drunken driving or involved in accidents while under the influence.

At first glance, it doesn't seem such a bad thing. No one wants to see irresponsible drinking and driving.

After mulling the issue, though, people should begin to wonder whether such philosophies as equal treatment under law and checks and balances on potential abuses are being practiced. For instance, why are drunk drivers targeted and not spouse abusers?

The concern is that enforcement and judgment come from a single level of government - the police officer. Having penalties imposed before a court date is set just smacks of guilty until proven innocent, which used to be a foreign thought in this country.

The issues of fairness are enough to make one dizzy.

As is the case with taking away drivers' licenses from people arrested for drunken driving, the bills for the alleged offenses are mailed out before the person arrested even sees a judge.

Who is going to check potential abuses? Few politicians or individuals would want to go against the stream and, heaven forbid, protect the rights of such lowlife as those accused - not convicted - of drunken driving.

That leads to other scenarios. Suppose there's a budget crisis; who's to say that sending three police cars instead of one isn't more

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a vehicle for raising money for the coffers as opposed to a need to arrest a dangerous person weaving down the road?

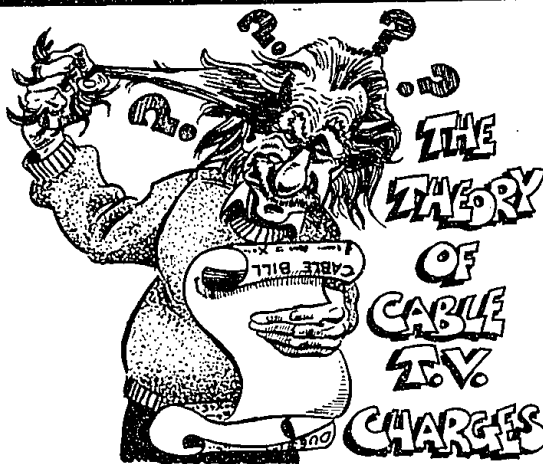
It's difficult for any student of municipal budgets to understand why police departments need the extra revenue stream, as they call it. Public safety generally accounts for about 50 percent of the total budget. Everyone pays to ensure that they're in a safe community. Creating a new way to raise funds seems excessive, especially since the same departments rake in bucks from other arrests, such as the drug forfeiture cases.

This is an easy fee to get past the general public. It's politically acceptable to treat those suspected of drunken driving differently than others, and municipalities are taking advantage of that sentiment.

If there is such a strong feeling that drunk driving convictions don't carry enough of a penalty, the appropriate method of dealing with that is asking state legislators to increase the fine structure currently in place. That legislation would set a standard penalty (unlike the bill-what-you-will ability now in place) and the end would be the same.

It's the means that would change, and they should. Just because something is politically acceptable shouldn't mean that civil liberties are abandoned, with people looking the other way to something that becomes a potential source of abuse.

ARKIE HUDKINS



LETTERS

Thanks for coverage

On behalf of conductor Paul Barber and the 60-plus members of the Farmington Community Band, we would like to thank the Observer for your coverage of our events during the 1993-94 season.

Your coverage and listing of our concerts helped to communicate to the community the support and cultural enjoyment the FCB brings to the Farmington and surrounding areas.

Thank you again for your support. We look forward to working with you for the 1994-95 season, which will be the 29th concert season for the FCB.

Robert V. Whaley, vice president, publicity

case of its citizens.

Thank you Cheryl Oliverio, Terry Sever and Aldo Vegnozzi for listening and hearing our concerns.

Soon we will have a new development on the southeast corner of 12 Mile and Middlebelt. One that four council members and one builder want.

What happens to all the wildlife? Will anyone see it that the animals are removed or will we see their dead bodies on the road?

Once the building begins what will all the construction vehicles do to traffic flow? Making a left turn on to 12 Mile during peak hours is difficult. When traffic accidents increase, who do we thank?

School buses pass this intersection bringing students to Harrison, Warner, Woodcreek and Highmeadow. Will this present a problem for our children? What happens to those students who walk to school or leave the building during lunch time?

The safety of our children was never discussed at the meeting. Safety belongs to another committee and isn't the responsibility of the city council. When will we put an end to this? No one can see beyond his own nose. Why can't we work together?

One hundred eighty new homes - some will have four bedrooms. Where will these children go to school? Does the school board know about this new development? Will the builder build us a new school or the city council out of the new revenue? Will we be compensated?

We will have a new mall, supermarket and restaurant. The council didn't want the area used for office space or family activities such as roller blading. Offices close but malls stay open longer.

What can I say? Thank you Farmington Hills Council for listening to the voice of one person, the builder, and ignoring the voices of many.

This is an example of our elected offices in action and democracy in action here in Farmington Hills.

T. Swartz, Farmington Hills

Keep us informed

Who is this Mike Breshgold, candidate for U.S. Congress, 11th District? Senseless ranting is no way to gain credibility in hope of being elected.

I, and others I am sure, were perplexed to note that this is exactly the technique employed by Mr. Breshgold in his June 23 letter to the editor regarding Rep. Joe Knollenberg's taxpayer-paid newsletter.

I and other taxpayers appreciate lawmakers' efforts to inform us of both what is happening in Congress and what their views on important issues are.

If a lawmaker's views are not representative of my views, I probably will not vote to reelect that man or woman.

Of course, the converse is true. It seems Mr. Breshgold does not want voters in the 11th U.S. Congressional District to know about Rep. Knollenberg's views on important issues.

Douglas Watkins, Farmington Hills

So many questions

Help! Where does a citizen from Farmington Hills go to be heard? It isn't the planning commission or city council. Can anyone tell me where you can be heard?

After sitting through numerous meetings of the planning commission and realizing this group doesn't listen to its citizens, I was hoping city council would. My hopes were dashed on June 20, when the voice of one builder outnumbered the voices of many interested citizens.

How can one person outweigh many? When council voted the majority ruled, but not in the

City well served

I understand that sometimes residents will be in disagreement with a council decision, but to resort to slander against a good and honest council person is more than unjust.

To suggest that Mr. Lichtman was bribed with a \$150 campaign contribution is insulting and a deceitful attack on his integrity.

The real dishonesty in the matter lies at the feet of those making such false accusations.

Our city is well served by Mr. Lichtman and his fellow council persons.

Jeri VanHouten, Farmington Hills

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

Have you been following the World Cup soccer tournament?

We asked this question at the A&W restaurant in the Crossroads Shopping Center in Farmington.



"No, I'm not really interested in soccer."
Annie Sullivan
Farmington Hills



"No... I see it on TV, but I don't pay attention."
Kelley Robinson
Farmington Hills



"Yes, it's a shame that the U.S. team lost to Brazil on Monday."
Stephen Wright
Farmington Hills



"Just a little bit, I'm not that interested."
Tom Aschewitz
Westland

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