

POINTS OF VIEW

LETTERS

He's for Enberg

Young people and education are two of the most important subjects in any community.

Farmington school board candidate Linda Enberg has demonstrated this commitment with her enthusiasm and activeness in the Farmington community.

Linda has served as representative, instructor and presently co-president of TWYKAA (Talking With Your Kids About Alcohol.)

She is president of the Parent Advisory Forum at Farmington High School. Her district-level activity includes the Schools of Choice Study Committee and the Mission 2007 Planning Team.

Linda's active community participation provides the background of knowledge and understanding of where the district has been and where it should be going.

Therefore, electing Linda Enberg to the Farmington School Board on June 12 will be an outstanding asset to the Farmington/Farmington Hills community.

Tom Edwards, Farmington Hills

Supports Enberg

I am writing to urge my fellow citizens to vote for Linda Enberg for a seat on the Farmington School Board.

After a recent debate, this paper implied that Linda's candidacy would be uninteresting because she was not controversial. I believe you have missed the point.

Rather than ranting inflammatory statements or leading a crusade in political rhetoric, Linda has been going about the quiet business of getting things done.

As the president of the Harrison Parent Forum, I have had the pleasure to work with Linda in her capacity as president of the Farmington High Parent Forum.

I have found her to be cooperative, organized, supportive and deeply concerned about the quality of education in this community.

She has a great gift of being able to accomplish change by working within the structure, but has never been shy about challenging administrators to constantly improve.

As a fellow TWYKAA teacher and school representative for Farmington Families in Action, I have seen Linda (current FFIA President) work well

with people from all areas of the community.

She has a unique ability to listen to differing points of view and work toward a consensus. She has been able to increase FFIA programming while still maintaining a modest budget and low administrative costs.

Her concerns for the health and safety of our children are expressed by her deeds as well as her words.

Vote for Linda Enberg for Farmington Board of Education. She may not be controversial, but she sure knows how to get things done.

Pat Newcombe, Farmington Hills

Vote for Enberg

The students of Farmington schools and the community of Farmington/Farmington Hills are fortunate to have Linda Enberg as a candidate for the Farmington Board of Education.

She possesses many qualities that are necessary in order to carry a successful school district, such as Farmington, into the future.

During the last several years Mrs. Enberg has dedicated her time to the welfare of our students through FFIA, Parent Advisory, and several district committees, most recently Mission 2007 whose concern was to design a blueprint of what our school will look like in the coming years.

Linda also demonstrates concern and care for our students and community through her ability to listen and truly hear what is being said.

Please join me in voting for our children's future by voting for Linda Enberg on June 12.

Debbie Cornwell, Farmington

Scared silly

I sincerely hope all residents of Farmington Hills read the quotes of Paul Sowerby that were printed in the May 15 Farmington Observer.

Sowerby's comments scare me silly. The mayor and council of Farmington Hills do not run the city. They are appointed by the people of the city to honor what the citizens want.

I take personal offense at his remark "When business people can't even address the council until 10:30 p.m. because of all the nonsense, something needs to be done."

Regardless of what side a citizen is

on in a debate, the citizens have a right to voice their opinion at council meetings. Residents should never, ever be told that they cannot speak out on an item.

A candidate who thinks a resident's opinion is nonsense is not the person to be mayor of Farmington Hills. The fact that a business person had to wait until 10:30 p.m. tells me that the council did what they are supposed to do and that was to allow the people's voice to be heard.

I will give the council credit on that account, even though they already had their minds made up, the mayor at least followed procedure and gave the people their time to speak. Although through most of it I believe Joanne Smith (our current mayor) slept.

Lastly, Mr. Sowerby's comment that current council members who are running for the office of mayor should step down, of course seems to be directed at Aldo Vagnozzi.

Vagnozzi and any other council member has a right to stay on the council while actively seeking the position of mayor. What would Mr. Sowerby say to President Bill Clinton, step down if you're going to run for office again?

Vagnozzi is terribly needed on the council and of course I cannot think of a better mayor. He would certainly be better than what we've had the last couple of years.

When you are sitting in a two mile back up on 12 Mile or Middlebelt, or Orchard Lake Road, when you can't find a fruit/vegetable stand on the roadside for all of the concrete buildings (most of which have many square feet of vacant space) you can thank our current mayor and council. Vagnozzi was the only one to ever listen to the people of this city, and I sincerely hope he becomes our next mayor.

Carol Hearrell, Farmington Hills

'Twisted excuse'

No-fault insurance was supposed to reduce our already over-inflated premiums. It did not. It seemed like a twisted excuse to raise the premiums, which it did somehow.

Now the insurance companies, through their lawmakers (are they rich and mostly Republican?), are looking to actually cut all of motorists' benefits, and increase auto insurance owners' rates.

Is this fair? The insurance companies already own most of the largest institutions in the world. What more do they want? Our cars, homes and businesses too?

I believe in free enterprise. However, to allow greedy insurance companies to control the country, a sort of dictatorial monopoly, is totally distasteful and unacceptable. And since most politicians can be easily bought off, what chance does the average citizen have? To whom can we really turn?

Leon I. Scholchit, Farmington Hills

'Fan the embers'

I was appalled when I saw the headline story about Larry Lichtman in the May 19 edition of the Farmington Observer.

Evidently you feel the injury caused to our community by the meretricious efforts of a few individuals who did not get their way (and therefore chose to mount a recall campaign against those chosen by our residents to lead our city) was not sufficient.

Rather, you choose to fan the embers by taking an innocuous event such as Mr. Lichtman's change in employers, adding to it insinuation, innuendo and veiled accusations, then plaster it across the front page of our community's paper, in headline size type.

I do hope you are not suggesting that the mere change in employers is that newsworthy.

But, if that is not the story, then what exactly are you suggesting is so newsworthy? Mr. Lichtman did not represent the Jonna Companies, nor was he employed by the law firm that did so at the time of the vote (although he did work for another first-class law firm which does a substantial land use law).

In fact, months after the entire issue was put to rest, Mr. Lichtman made the difficult decision to change law firms.

Upon making that decision, Mr. Lichtman did the cautious and prudent thing, he notified the City Council of the change to demonstrate his sensitivity to the potential perception of a conflict of interest and informed them that he would abstain from any vote regarding this developer.

I am an attorney, and I can tell you that making the decision to change law firms like Mr. Lichtman has done is not an easy decision. If he was guilty of any of the things you insinuate in your article, he would not be changing firms; rather, he would have brought the Jonna Companies to his former firm as a client and remained there, further developing his "book of business."

I can say these things with some knowledge on the subject since I am in the process of changing law firms also. In closing, I am distressed that you would choose to besmirch the character of someone who has so willingly served our community for so long. But even more so, that you would use the headline article space to do so, when I am sure there are truly newsworthy stories more deserving of such prominence.

And in the event you really were unable to find a more newsworthy story, it seems to me you could have found a positive, community-building story that deserved that spot, rather than one that could only serve to fuel those who would seek to divide and destroy our community instead.

Clark G. Doughty, Farmington Hills

Groundhogs got revenge on country club members

Memorial Day weekend is coming up, to my mind the most beautiful and most poignant holiday in the calendar.

Despite the long, cold spring, it looks like the lilacs and peonies will be in bloom for the holiday. Some things never change.

And my wife, Kathy, and I will go to Nielsen's Florists in Ann Arbor, where our family has been buying flowers for nearly 60 years, and get some geraniums. On Memorial Day we'll tuck them in by the polished black granite POWER family marker in Forest Hills Cemetery, next to the headstones of my father and my mother.

My parents celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary six months before my mother died. My father passed away just a couple of years afterward, in 1993. Like most people who discover that middle age really begins when your parents have died and there is nobody left but you to take the high, hard ones, I miss my parents very much, especially around Memorial Day.

In these days when the right wing has made ethics and morality four-letter words of common political discourse, I like to remember how solid they were when confronted with instances of unfairness or, as my mother would put it, "bad manners." Here's a sample that I've been musing about as Memorial Day approaches:

My parents used to be members of a rather grand country club just outside Ann Arbor. Many of their friends were, too, including a certain couple. The wife was a full-blown WASP blueblood; the husband was a distinguished physician and psychiatrist. He was half Jewish.

World War II came, and everybody went off to fight the war. For most, including my parents and their friends, this involved resigning their memberships in the country club, on the grounds that they wouldn't be needing them while fighting Nazis.

The war ended. People came home and reapplied for their old memberships. My parents were quickly readmitted. Not so for their friends. Being half Jewish after the war was, apparently, more of a bar to membership than it was before the war.



PHILIP POWER

My father was outraged. He went to the board of directors meeting of the club and argued the point — to no avail.

Finally, his sense of fairness provoked beyond breaking, he got up. "You guys," he exclaimed, "are nothing better than a bunch of fanny-slapping shoe clerks. I quit!"

Out he walked, never again to play golf or eat at that club.

There was an Old Testamentary quality to my father in situations like this. For him, it wasn't enough to speak out against an injustice. He wanted revenge.

He found it, wonderfully, in live-trapping gophers at his house. He'd put them in a cardboard box when he went out for his regular evening walk. As the club was only minutes away from his house, he would release them as he walked by the first too.

"Hi, Tony," he'd say to the greenskeeper.

"How's it going?"

"Just great, Mr. Power," came the reply. "But we keep having the darnedest trouble with gophers digging up the greens."

My father would just walk on, a little grin on his mouth. He never said anything, but he kept up the vendetta for years and years.

Remembrance. That's what Memorial Day is for. Preserve me, please, from yet another political speech about public morality.

Phil Power is chairman of the company that owns this newspaper. His Touch-Tone voice mailbox number is (313) 853-2047, Ext. 1681.

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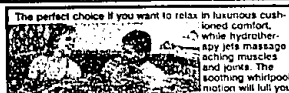
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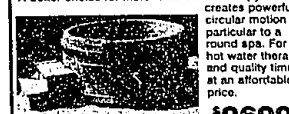
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