

APPLIANCE DOCTOR

Budget cuts threaten consumer safety

Many of you who read this column or listen to my radio show know of my role in the world of consumerism. I specialize in the field of major home appliances and dabble in the rest of everyday life. I believe that consumers need to be treated fairly and honestly and that anything less than that is unacceptable.

The need for individuals and organi-

zations which are labeled as helpers to consumers is greater today than ever before. President Kennedy felt the same way during his time in office when he established the United States Office for Consumer Affairs which is now being threatened with elimination.

It is my opinion that if this step by Congress is permitted, appliance rip-off problems will seem small in comparison

to what will be perpetrated onto the American consumer. This agency in Washington with only 13 employees who work countless hours without compensation and care so much for others has been scheduled for a budget cut in September. The budget cut is a stinging amount of 1.8 million dollars which is only a small fraction of the country's total expenditure. The wrong of all this is the fact that it is their total budget which would in essence eliminate the agency which helps so many millions of American consumers.

We live in a world already needing more protection than we have. Take the example of Nancy Donley, who in 1993 served her son Alex a home-cooked frozen hamburger. Alex died three days later, a victim of an infection caused by E coli O157:H7 a highly toxic bacteria that this country's antiquated meat inspection system isn't set up to detect. This poor woman who made sure that Alex wore his helmet every time he rode his little bicycle and strapped on his seatbelt in the car caused this



JOE GAGNON

tragedy by feeding and loving him.

The federal Centers for Disease Control reports that at least 10,000 Americans are killed each year by food-related illnesses. Now you put this writer in charge of this subject in this country and I'll show you how to put a stop to it all. We will have a barbecue at my house and in attendance will be the food producers of these products and the elected government officials who want to cut back on consumer budgets. I'll be doing the cooking and they will be doing the eating. Maybe then they can relate to how Nancy Donley feels today.

This is just one of the many stories I could relate to you on the subject of consumerism in this big country. Since President Reagan thought it wise to cut back on everything possible, consumer agencies across this land have disappeared at alarming rates. Don't you ever doubt that no good can come from the removal of the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs. Certain elected officials who are set to vote on this subject have about as much compassion as Jack the Ripper. Why don't you write or call your senator in Washington; you'll know what to say.

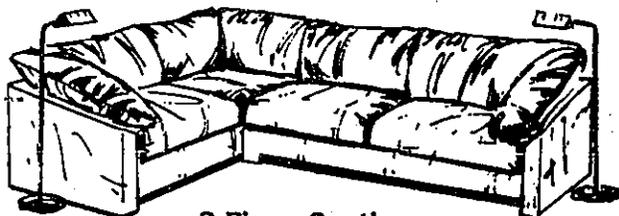
**WHO'S WHO
and
WHAT'S WHAT
in LOCAL BUSINESS?**

Check the Business section every Thursday.

Star's Summer Sale!

Carlton's "DANIA" style lounging system offers the best of all worlds...

COMFORT • DURABILITY • STYLE



2-Piece Section
\$899⁹⁵

Sale Price... **Reg. Price...\$1,799⁹⁵**

Available in modular, sectional, or sofa and love seat combinations. Sleeper sofas also available.

Choose from a selection of over 100 dynamic fabrics.

Delivered in less than 30 days!

Star Furniture Galleries 33500 West 7 Mile at Farmington • Livonia (next to Kmart) (810) 442-0120

Don't be afraid of the INTERNET!

Observer & Eccentric On-Line! and New Horizons Computer Learning Center have teamed up to get you onto the Internet, and teach you how to use it once you're there.

O&E On-Line! subscribers can enroll in New Horizons' Internet Classes at a special discounted rate. All classes are taught in LIVE, HANDS-ON INTERNET classrooms in Troy and Livonia.

In one day you'll learn:

- Internet Basics
- Newsgroups, Remote Connect and File Transfers
- Internet Surfing: Gopher and World Wide Web
- Internet Security and Internet Culture

Call O&E On-Line!

INFORMATION—(313) 953-2266

TO SUBSCRIBE—(313) 953-2297

TECH SUPPORT—(313) 953-2278



ON-LINE!



New Horizons
Computer Learning Center
(313) 525-1501 ext. 1132