

Over at last!

A few post-election thoughts

Is it over yet? Thankfully, blissfully, finally... yes. If this is Thursday, Aug. 8, then Primary '96 must be history. We must admit, we feel as though we're peeking outside after the passage of a great blizzard. It's just been a different kind of a snow job, that's all.

Our very own paraphrased "Mikado" might express it this way:

"... for the campaigns have been long; ditto, ditto the politician's song, and thank goodness they're both of them over."

Anyway, we're dishing up some odds and ends and bits and pieces from the election just passed.

Why ask why? We'll ask anyway! No one's ever given us a satisfactory explanation as to why these important primaries are held in August. August, you understand, is a terrible time to hold a primary election. People are on vacation for planning a getaway, or they're coping with the heat and humidity. Too often they're too focused on other matters to listen to what the candidates are trying to say. In this rock-ribbed Republican land, the GOP primary often is the election. The November shows is sometimes an afterthought. Some states hold their primaries in June (before voters leave) or in September (when they're back). How about it, state Republican and Democratic leaders: Any hope for Michigan?

Sign here (there, and every-

Happy 25th, Common Ground

It's always there for those in need. Common Ground has been dispensing its elixir for coping with crisis since 1970. And we applaud the Oakland County human service agency as it celebrates its 25th birthday during 1996.

As services grew over the years, Common Ground's home base moved from Birmingham to Royal Oak to Pontiac, where it's now located at 7 S. Perry.

But the agency's mission has stood firm: helping people search for a calming affect on their personal crisis.

Common Ground's signature service is round-the-clock telephone crisis intervention. Staffers and volunteers trained in tackling mental-health concerns take 20,000 calls a year from people at the edge.

Counselors practice timeliness and compassion in the midst of hysteria and tears. They tap an information and referral library to furnish telephone numbers and facts from 4,500 community and professional resources. Walk-in counseling is available, too.

Related crisis-intervention services include a victims' assistance program, a legal clinic, and youth interaction-improvement programs. Community outreach and training deal with crisis intervention, workplace stress, suicide, parenting, self-esteem, child-abuse prevention and sexual abuse.

Common Ground also is the coordinating agency for the Oakland County Crisis Response Team, formed in the wake of the 1991 Royal Oak Post Office shootings.

OCERT recognizes that a group or community can suffer through a common bond borne from a crisis.

Common Ground volunteers don't need a

where): Can anyone recall such "vote-for" sign clutter for an election? A reader, Joan Rolick, whose letter to the editor appears on this page, says, "With a little luck, all the signs will be gone by Christmas." Well, a lot of them will stay up until the November general election, anyway. Hey, there's another good reason for a September primary. Less time between elections means less time for campaigns... and campaign signs.

Recycling Ronna: Ronna Romney's U.S. Senate campaign must have had a web-fax machine the way her press releases came spewing out at our end, one after another, day after day. Oh well, all the more for the recycling bin.

Fantastic forums: Hate off to the folks (and their organizations) who sponsored the meet-the-candidate forums and debates. It was through these events that we got to know the candidates for our 37th District State House seat and the Farmington Hills City Council. Thanks also to the cable TV people who spread their words and ideas electronically throughout the community. These people work hard. They never get enough credit.

Here's to the losers: Hey losers ("electorally disadvantaged") is the politically correct term — and, of course, we always strive to be politically correct! We enjoyed covering you and your campaigns. We hope you'll try again. We hope to see your faces on the Observer front page before some future election.

specific educational background — just a kind heart, a range of social experiences, coolheadedness and the ability to communicate.

They aren't experts, but they have on-site access to social workers, nurses and psychiatrists. They can get immediate help on suicide prevention, rape counseling, domestic violence and drug rehabilitation.

Common Ground sprang from a Birmingham-Bloomfield hotline started in 1969 mainly to help teens battle substance abuse.

Then as now, volunteers included young people dedicated to helping themselves and their peers — creating a common ground from which to turn their lives around.

Then as now, drug and alcohol problems rank among the top concerns, although the age range of typical callers has shifted from 18 to 20 to 30 to 50, a byproduct of the schools providing teen counseling services.

A relatively new Common Ground program offers round-the-clock emergency psychiatric screening, treatment and referral.

Again, the accent's on people helping people help themselves — whatever it takes, no matter what the crisis.

Common Ground is funded by the Oakland County Mental Health Board as well as public and private grants. To mark Common Ground's silver anniversary, an all-volunteer reunion will be held Saturday, Sept. 7, at The Community House of Birmingham.

That's during the 22nd annual Birmingham Art in the Park. Common Ground's main fund-raiser.

And that's a fitting way to honor people who have made a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives across Oakland County.

runnerup was Jan Sever.

Founders Festival activities for 1971 included a road rally beginning at Town and County Dodge on Grand River and ending at Dunckel Junior High, as well as a sky diving exhibition at 12 Mile and Farmington roads.

2 YEARS AGO — AUGUST 4, 1994 (OBSERVER)

Farmington-area voters returned State Rep. Jan Dolan to office for a fourth term. Dolan held off a stiff challenge from Andrew Rackowski. Voters also said yes to a ballot proposal that provided \$6 million for a multi-purpose ice arena.

In another interesting race, Democrat Vicki Barnett and Republican David Honigman won their respective primaries. They were to face off in the November general election.

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

Could you suggest a good movie?

We asked this question at the Downtown Branch of the Farmington Community Library.



It's been a good couple of years since I've seen a movie. I'm a student and I spend a lot of time studying.
David Wojner
Farmington Hills



My favorite is "Casablanca." I like the old movies better.
Todd Hoag
Farmington Hills



"Toy Story." The characters looked neat... the real thing.
Tammy Grove
Farmington



"The Lion King." It made me roar.
Nicky Hanson
Farmington Hills

Letters to the Editor

Recycling is needed

Recent published commentary has questioned the efficacy of recycling. Such notions, often of dubious motivation, are generally misguided and short-sighted.

Critics of recycling typically fail to acknowledge the abundance of data which show that recycling conserves natural resources, energy, and landfill space while reducing air, water, and land pollution.

Critics also fail to recognize the thousands of meaningful, value-added jobs created by the industry.

Granted the cost of landfilling has stabilized and, in some areas, declined. However, neglecting to acknowledge that the preservation of existing landfill capacity through recycling has contributed to that reduction in cost is spurious.

Of course there is a great deal of vacant land in the U.S. on which we can build new landfills. Does that mean we ought to?

Certainly we don't want to engage in practices which offer the cheapest short-term cost regardless of long-term consequences.

If we were to adopt such a philosophy, it would appear that we are obligated to dump all of our waste in the Great Lakes. After all, that would be cheaper than using sanitary landfills.

Of course, we won't do that because most people support taking a long-term comprehensive approach to dealing with such issues. Recycling is merely one component of a broad-based solid waste management strategy adopted by thousands of municipalities and practiced in millions of homes across the country.

One recent study shows that more than 96 percent of industry, government, and advocacy group representatives support recycling and waste reduction as part of integrated environmental management.

Moreover, the general public has overwhelmingly shown support for recycling through their actions which have translated into millions of tons of material being remade into usable products instead of being buried forever.

People have done this, not because they have been sold a "bill of goods" as some would assert, but rather because they understand the intrinsic and practical value of recycling.

Michael J. Caspe,
RRRASOC general manager

Control those signs

Will some citizens of Oakland County (more specifically, Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and some of the townships) join me in protesting the blight on the landscape caused by the deluge of political signs displayed here, there and everywhere? The early arrivals appeared at the begin-

ning of June. If the past is any indicator, the winners in the primaries will try to leave some in place until after the November election.

With a little luck, all the signs will be gone by Christmas.

Not only is there a need to control the number of these eyesores, but their size. Is it just a matter of time before we will be assaulted by billboards on every available corner?

Some communities in Oakland County have had the foresight to apply rules to the display of political signs. Since municipalities cannot deny the right to political hopefuls to tout their candidacies, we could, at the very least, limit the time that we have to endure this practice.

I would suggest that signs be illegal until two or three weeks prior to any election and that they must be removed within 72 hours of the election or the candidate be fined for each violation.

There should be also a restriction regarding the number and size of signs that can be placed in any one given area.

Many of us suffer the winter months, anticipating the joys of summer. Spare us this ugliness.

Joan Rolick,
Farmington Hills

Thanks to Jan Dolan

Now that the hoopla about the state representative campaign has quieted down, I would like to say a huge thank you to the lady who has served us very well at that post: Rep. Jan Dolan.

Her bill to help senior citizens out of a lease if they become ill has helped many a senior across the state, and the "potty parity" bill makes life much more comfortable for many as well.

Thanks to Jan for her careful, conservative leadership on budget bills which has earned her respect on both sides of the aisle in Lansing.

Her tight hold on my tax money is something I truly appreciate.

Rep. Dolan has a reputation and list of accomplishments that makes me proud.

Her footprints will be a challenge for anyone to fill. Thank you for your service, Jan.

Linda Enberg,
Farmington

Opinions are to be shared: We welcome your ideas, as do your neighbors. That's why we offer this space on a weekly basis for opinions in your own words. We will help by editing for clarity. To assure authenticity, we ask that you sign your letter and provide a contact telephone number.

Letters should be mailed to: Editor, The Farmington Observer, 33411 Grand River, Farmington Michigan 48335. Or they can be faxed to 810-477-9722.

MEMORY LANE

This week in history as reported in past editions of the Farmington Observer and the Farmington Enterprise.

40 YEARS AGO — AUGUST 9, 1956 (ENTERPRISE)

Citing "personal reasons," Ward Eagle submitted his resignation as Farmington Township supervisor to the township board. Eagle had been a member of the township board since 1926.

Men's suits were on sale for \$22.50 to \$59.75 at Davis & Lent, 39306 Grand River, Farmington.

25 YEARS AGO — AUGUST 1, 1971 (OBSERVER)

Ruth Bowles was crowned Miss Farmington for 1971 in a ceremony at the Downtown Center. First runner-up was Julie Rundell, and a second

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— Philip Power