

Days of Denial

The Ins and the Outs of politics

Officialdom — officials as a class — is such a cumbersome word, and we seem to be using it a lot these days. Here's a shorter substitute — the Ins. Officialdom is made up of the Ins. And non-officialdom? They're the Outs, of course.

So, following the recent Republican primary for the 37th District State House, you might say that the Outs are in and the Ins are out.

Andrew Raczowski, the darling of the Farmington-area Outs, got in (or at least closer) to the State House with a victory over three other GOP hopefuls, including scions of officialdom Cathy Webb (Public Schools Division) and Terry Sever (Hills City Council Division) in the Aug. 6 primary.

As you can imagine, the Ins are out of joint over this happening. Many Ins don't like young Andrew, who can be brash and bold.

Many also feel that he's played fast and loose with the truth concerning his background (is he 27 or 28?).

There's been desperate talk of a Cathy Webb write-in for the November general election, or even (gasp) crossing over to support the Democrat in the House race.

The Ins are in denial about Andrew, and probably will be right up to when he wins the general election.

They grouse and grumble and make excuses for Andrew's success. Oh, sure, they'll tell you, it was all those pro-lifers, and didn't most of his supporters come from Grand Rapids?

Nope. Andrew's people live (and vote) right here in Farmington and Farmington Hills. They represent a growing segment of the population that is becoming more and more out of touch with the Ins. Or is it the other way around?

They tend to be distrustful of government, especially school government. And wasn't the *heir apparent* to this House seat a Farmington Schools trustee?

What's with these Outs? In general, they feel over-taxed and under-served by the Ins. They have this notion that government serves the people, not the other way around.

Deny it if you will, Ins; after all, these are the Days of Denial. But we've listened, and that's what they're saying.

Andrew listened, too. Oh, he's a good listener. Andrew Raczowski has the makings of a very successful politician.

He pulls their strings. He pushes their buttons. He tells them what they want to hear. That game's called politics, and young Andrew's a player.

Ah, politicians. By their election-night parties shall ye know them.

Cathy Webb's party was in the Betsford Inn (appropriate, huh?), which for years has been officialdom's clubhouse. The guest list was a who's-who of the area movers and shakers.

Andrew's party? Oh, it was just a simple little get-together with pizza and pop at somebody's house on Bunker Hill. We didn't know a soul there except for Andrew.

Follow at Andrew's were a T-shirt emblazoned with the words "God Bless the NRA." We didn't catch his name, but Cathy Webb and Terry Sever should have sometime during their campaigns.

The Ins, if they're going to avoid the likes of Andrew in future elections, are going to have to do a better job of communicating with the Outs. Ignoring them doesn't work anymore. Over and out.

Oakland's a shopping experience

What started out as a dream for Bloomfield Hills real estate tycoon Sam Frankel in 1964 is now the splendor of the newly enlarged Somerset Collection. Southfield developer Nathan Forbes calls it "not only a retail destination but an architectural landmark."

To that we would add that the long-anticipated Somerset North represents an Oakland County economic spur by way of 3,500 new jobs, a \$6 million boost to the total tax base and spillover business for nearby hotels, restaurants and shopping areas, especially the downtowns in Birmingham and Rochester.

When Somerset North officially opens Friday, The Somerset Collection along Troy's Golden Corridor instantly will become a destination point for Midwest shoppers. No longer will Oakland County be so apt to lose retail dollars to Chicago's Miracle Mile or New York's Fifth Avenue. The Somerset Collection's primary market claims an average household income of \$62,000 and two of the top ten household-income ZIP codes in the country.

Somerset's lure: upscale and exclusive stores like Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Tiffany & Co., Barney's New York, Brooks Brothers and Gucci in the 69-store South, and more competitively priced stores like Hudson's, Nordstrom, The Walking Company, Pottery Barn, FAO Schwarz and Henri Bendel in the 112-store North. Nearly 50 percent of Somerset's smaller stores are unique to Michigan. Mix in the day spa, the moving skywalk, the "star-lit" skylights, the floating marble spheres, the fine sculpture and the food court's terrazzo floors, and what you have

spells excitement.

Amid the sparkle that's Somerset, let's remember the allure of Birmingham to the west, Rochester to the north and Oakland's other downtown communities, including Farmington, Clarkston, Walled Lake, Lake Orion and Oxford.

They don't offer Somerset's range of retailing, nor the grandeur, but they boast something no mall can: a sense of community amid sidewalks, trees, streetlights and changing seasons.

You'll find a cappuccino bar at Somerset North's Peacock Cafes but a mainstreet coffeehouse on a summer's night or wintry morning is a tempting sight, too. Somerset is built with Mankato stone and Cranbrook brick but historic downtown architecture also is a signpost of economic stability.

There's surely a place for suburban downtowns to thrive alongside signature centers in southeast Michigan, the nation's sixth largest retail market, and Oakland County, the nation's third wealthiest county.

Birmingham and Rochester retailers can offer Somerset shoppers specialty boutiques, art galleries, diverse dining, Jacobson's, a downtown park, a community house, outdoor cafes and nightlife (like summer-weekend carriage rides in Birmingham and dancing in the streets in Rochester). Somerset stages will feature the performing arts but the Birmingham Theatre is an entertainment jewel. Shuttles, streetscape improvements and more entertainment venues would further invite shoppers to make neighboring downtowns part of their Somerset visit.

seats were open. They were: incumbents John Allen, Fred Seibert and Ralph Yoder.

A Farmington businessman, Irving Lichtman of Fabric-Go-round, donated 20 percent of his total sales on Aug. 14 to the Farmington Community Center as a public service project.

2 YEARS AGO — AUG. 11, 1994 (OBSERVER)

What about David Honigman's health? That's what voters in the new 15th State Senate District wanted to know: Honigman, the Republican incumbent, faced a special challenge from Vicki Barnett, Farmington's Democrat.

The Farmington Hills City Council approved a 145-acre by NBD Bank at 12 Mile and Drexel roads.

ALWAYS THE ELECTIONEERING



Ballooning political hopes: Someone's supporter hands out balloons to kids during the Founders Festival Parade last month. Is the electioneering getting too intense at such events?

STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIRE

Letters to the Editor

Great story, photos

Thanks to the Farmington Observer, more specifically to Bill Coustant and Sharon LeMieux, for their wonderful picture story headlined "Fridays are Fun in Farmington" in the Aug. 1 paper.

It was such a positive story about our delightful city and was captured so well in print and picture.

Along a similar line, I would like to also thank the Downtown Development Authority for their efforts in making our city look so nice. The baskets of flowers lining the streets look magnificent.

Pam and George Wright,
Farmington

Nanci Grant was endorsed

As a reader of your paper and an Oakland county voter, I was disappointed to find an inaccuracy in your Thursday, Aug. 8, issue.

In your "O'Brien, Grant lead Circuit Court race" article, you failed to note that Nanci Grant earned the endorsements of both the Detroit Free Press and the Detroit News.

In fact, you reported that another candidate had been endorsed by these well-respected publications.

While I understand mistakes in the newsroom and elsewhere are a part of professional life, I also wish to set the record straight for the voters of Oakland County as they study the candidates for the general election.

The two largest newspapers in Michigan endorsed attorney Nanci Grant.

The Free Press noted they prefer Grant because she "knows the Oakland County court well, since it is where she primarily practices."

The News said that Ms. Grant "has the experience and temperament to be a solid addition to the Oakland Circuit bench."

I happen to agree with these assertions about Nanci Grant's abilities and character.

Elizabeth Booth,
Southfield

'Proud of Integrity'

On behalf of the Webb for Representative Committee and Cathy Webb, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all the wonderful, enthusiastic supporters in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

We are extremely proud of the integrity of the campaign.

In any democracy, true representation of the people is crucial. With eight percent of the absentee voter ballots invalidated in the city of Farmington Hills, the validity of the majority vote as reflected on Aug. 6 is in question.

The narrow margin of votes between the first and second candidates is encouraging as it reflects the presence of strong support for less extreme positions on the issues that impact our community.

The committee is in the process of evaluating its opinions and their impact on Farmington and Farmington Hills, and will release a statement soon regarding its decision for the future.

In the meantime, we wish once again to express our sincere thanks to everyone who supported the Webb for Representative campaign.

We would appreciate thoughts and suggestions. You can reach Cathy at our headquarters at 428-9739.

Nancy Bates,
Webb for Representative Committee

'Cathy's a whiner'

The Observer reports Cathy Webb as saying, "I'm not a quitter... If you stick this out for another couple of months, we're going to go for a write-in campaign."

Ms. Webb may not be a quitter but she sure is a whiner. And as the election results show, she certainly is not a winner.

During the July 10 candidates forum, when the rules regarding closing remarks had to be changed, Ms. Jolicœur and Messrs. Raczowski and Sever dealt with it, while Ms. Webb whined about it until she got her way.

While the first three candidates showed an ability to adapt or adjust for problems, Ms. Webb indicated she is unable to deal with even the smallest of problems except by whining. Hardly the type of person I would want to represent me.

At this forum, I had the misfortune of sitting in front of a row of Webb supporters. Ms. Webb's supporters were constantly talking among themselves and whispering and complaining about the other three candidates' remarks.

This made it difficult for me, and I imagine those sitting beside me, to concentrate and hear what the candidates were saying.

New Ms. Webb is in denial about her defeat. During the forum, three candidates stood out as opposed to big government, abortion, and high taxes. Ms. Webb's campaign indicated that she would continue the big government, pro-abortion stance taken by Rep. Jan Dolan.

The votes of the three pro-life, pro-free market candidates outnumbered Ms. Webb's by a 2-to-1 margin. It's time for Ms. Webb to follow Mr. Sever's and Ms. Jolicœur's examples of accepting their defeat, learning from it and moving on.

Ms. Webb may not be a quitter, but in this election she is definitely a loser. Come Nov. 5, I will proudly cast my vote for Andrew Raczowski.

David Weigel,
Farmington

MEMORY LANE

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

40 YEARS AGO — AUG. 16, 1956 (ENTERPRISE)

New 1956 Plymouths were advertised at \$1,792.21 at a new dealership, Farmington Sales and Service, 33224 Grand River.

Farmington Township's new supervisor, Albert Gain, was sworn into office by Township Clerk Floyd A. Cairns.

25 YEARS AGO — AUG. 11, 1971 (OBSERVER)

As filing deadline approached, only three people had indicated an interest in running for the Farmington City Council, where three

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