

POINTS OF VIEW

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Voters chose wisely

The "thank you" banners on Andrew Raczowski's campaign signs around town was a real touch of class.

I don't remember any other candidate taking the time to publicly thank the community for their support. Now that the voters have overwhelmingly made their choice as to our next state representative, this gesture of thanks is clearly a sign of what we can expect as Andrew will represent the Farmington community in Lansing.

It looks like the voters made the right choice.

Kathy Smith,
Farmington Hills

Winner shows class

How often do we hear from an elected official immediately after an election? Almost never.

That's why it bodes well for the Farmington community when "Thank you" signs appeared over the campaign signs of Andrew Raczowski on Nov. 6 following his election as 37th District State Rep.

It shows he appreciates the trust our community has put in him and understands his responsibilities to the community. Andy will make a great State Representative and Farmington is fortunate to have someone with his drive and qualifications represent the interests of our community.

Richard I. DeVries,
Farmington Hills

Clerk says thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the precinct workers who worked the polls on Election Day, Nov. 5.

You all did a great job. Each and every one of you are so important to the success of the day and should be commended for your dedication, commitment, and enthusiasm.

The day is long and the pay is minimal but in spite of this, you put forth

your best community spirit, maintain your patience and composure, wear your smiles and perform the best job you can do.

Who could ask for more? Again, thank you for taking the time and effort to participate in this process — it couldn't be done without your help.

Kathy Norman,
city clerk,
Farmington Hills

On crooked mechanics

The most widespread and common criminal activities which affect Farmington and Farmington Hills (and perhaps the rest of the country) are auto repair businesses with crooked and incompetent mechanics.

Yet these organizations flourish in our communities, virtually untouched by law enforcement. Why?

Sure, they are mainly regulated by the Secretary of State and prosecuted by the office of Attorney General, but these departments have long been woefully undermanned and almost totally inadequate. The laws regulating auto repair facilities are hardly worth the paper they are printed on because they just are not enforced.

Once one of these lawless repair facilities gets its hands on your car you are dead meat. They can and will charge you \$50 or more per hour to do slipshod work and charge you twice the going rate for parts you could buy in any parts store or auto dealership.

You don't even know whether you really need the parts in the first place or if they damaged them and charge you for replacing the parts you may or may not need and that they may have damaged to make money off you.

Why don't our local police go after these guys? Why not operate ongoing sting operations on these places in our communities?

We pay big bucks for police protection. We are paying for law enforcement, so why shouldn't we get it?

Kenneth Kemp,
Farmington Hills

Watch '98 election

The election is over . . . and all is not well.

But a Republican House and Senate precludes and stops the Clintons from instituting a federal government health care program.

We need to see to it that the election of 1998 doesn't weaken our defense against government medicine programs.

The result of the presidential contest suggests that Al Gore may be commander-in-chief in the year 2000.

Auto sales should be brisk the next couple of years, anticipating Gore's election, knowing that the new leader will want us to walk to the beach, the forest, the glade to commune with nature.

The re-election of Newt Gingrich puts the lie to the idea that the congressman is unpopular. He is still very much respected by the people of Georgia, winning by a wide margin.

Michigan should be lucky enough to have such a representative.

Neil Goodbred,
Livonia

About those towers

Geo, it is to bad that Farmington, Farmington Hills and an endless list of other cities cannot decide what to do with cellular phone towers . . . you know, those things that are popping up all over the cities like the quills on a porcupine's back.

Where were these people of vision when they were in a position to do some good for their constituency. I am of course making reference to when one federal judge messed up the whole telephone system.

In the late 1980s our country was just getting into the telephone business. Every mom and pop entrepreneur set up a telephone company. There was such a mish-mash of service, duplicated facilities and non-compatible equipment that the decision was made for the federal govern-

ment to regulate the industry.

This resulted in only Bell or non-Bell company operating in any area. An amazing thing happened: The tangle of overlapping wires disappeared, the companies in different areas could interconnect and our cost of service was very reasonable.

As a side benefit, we had the best telephone company in the entire world.

Then came Judge Green. One lone man took the entire country his hostage and gave them a mediocre telephone service at a cost of many billions of dollars.

The ensuing litigation is still costing uncounted monies. Go into a motel and you are afraid to use the phone because of the gouging you may get. Try to get service for a sick phone.

This is all being paid for by only the telephone customer. Where were our politicians when they let this happen?

Now these same politicians don't know what to do with all of the towers. Maybe they should think about regulating the telephone business.

Sounds good to me.

Kenneth Griffin,
Farmington Hills

'A waste of money'

Have you seen the Secretary of State sign at the office at the corner of Drake and Grand River in Farmington Hills?

If you noticed, the secretary of state is Candice Miller. Actually it's hard to miss as the lettering is about the same size as Secretary of State.

Personally, I think this is a waste of taxpayer's money. I want to get in and out of the office as soon as possible. I personally don't care that Candice Miller holds the office.

Based on that, I questioned the cost of the new signage. According to the Secretary of State's office, the cost to change the signage and to update some older signs was \$250,000.

This seemed to me like a horrific waste of money. But they said this was a long standing tradition dating

back to the 1930s. I wonder how long the tradition of providing care by the Lafayette Clinic to those in need was in effect before it was closed to save money?

My personal opinion is that this long standing tradition should come to a quick end. If you feel the same way, drive by the closest Secretary of State office and you will know who to write to.

Tom DeWard,
Farmington Hills

'Extremist agenda'

Readers may not be aware of the U.N.'s extremist agenda or Secretary General Boutros-Ghali's recent outrageous attempt to influence the outcome of our national elections by criticizing the Republican Party platform.

He said it is "really worrying that a party seeking to lead America can be so ill-informed about how the United Nations actually functions."

Boutros-Ghali has absolutely no right to interject himself into the electoral process of a sovereign nation.

In fact, some Americans are quite well informed about how the United Nations functions. That is why we strongly oppose the U.N. and its radical plans, which most Americans would find deeply offensive if only they were properly informed.

For instance, do your readers know that the U.N. wants our government to impose China-style "family planning" on all U.S. citizens, including abortion on demand, infanticide, and forced sterilization?

The U.N. is also behind a massive push to force Americans to accept homosexuality as normal.

And through its Treaty on Children, the U.N. wants to deny parents the right to raise their children as they see fit.

I strongly oppose the aims of the United Nations.

Joan Polus,
Farmington

Ideology hurts otherwise solid, sensible argument

There must be a fair-sized industry out there that concerns itself with finding the names and addresses of media folks like me, and then selling the resulting mailing list to various groups with an ax to grind and handouts to duplicate.

I'm sure that's why I get inundated with mail every week. Some of it is boring; some interesting, despite itself; some offensive; some kind of nutty.

Among the better-financed (judging from the frequency of mailing, the quality of paper in each mailing and the fancy-colored letterhead stock on which the material is printed) is an outfit calling itself the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. Most moderately-informed news folks recognize the Mackinac Center as a generally very right-wing think tank, located in Midland.

So it was with only limited expectations that I opened up a mailing a couple of weeks ago that contained a handout headed: "Study: Michigan Universities Not Adequately Preparing Graduates for Teaching and Business."

The "study" turned out to be an extended essay by a Dr. Thomas F. Bertonneau, who is billed as a "Mackinac Center adjunct scholar" (meaning somebody who is right wing enough for the center to engage him to conduct studies) whose credentials to opine on universities consist in being an English instructor in Central Michigan University's extended degree program.

The conclusion that Michigan university graduates are not adequately prepared for business comes from a real study on recruiting trends by Michigan State University Professor L. Patrick Scheetz, who found, "Employers believe college graduates are receiving degrees in academic majors with low market value."

Dr. Bertonneau's contribution to the piece consisted of reading through 300 course catalogues. He issued a blanket indictment of "Michigan universities" in general which consisted of many assertions, some sensible and some merely ideological.

Sensibly, he decries the "general demise" of the core curriculum, "once common on Michigan campuses — a set of courses that all students took to become generally educated, including history, literature, language and the sciences."

He's right there. A lot of universities have phased out a lot of required subjects and allowed their students to graze on a menagerie of courses, some serious and some not. Graduates with such training, however, will find it hard to get good jobs and harder still to excel in them. Isn't that



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precisely the working of the free market that the Mackinac Center so stridently favors?

Dr. Bertonneau also attacks "indoctrination in the classroom" and thinks "rules and regulations against political indoctrination should be vigorously enforced." Although it isn't said explicitly in the stuff mailed me, the fact that it comes from the Mackinac Center leads me to conclude that what Dr. Bertonneau opposes is left wing political indoctrination in the classroom.

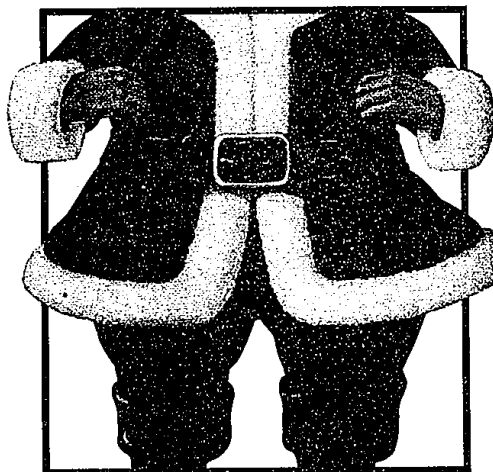
I don't know a university in Michigan that doesn't disapprove of and monitor against political indoctrination in the classroom. That said, however, it's hard to understand just how even the Mackinac Center is going to sheer each individual professor in Michigan universities of their particular political point of view when teaching courses. Most teachers make no secret of their preferences, and then work very hard to show students how best to achieve their own through study of the material.

Dr. Bertonneau also wants more great books courses (he's right), more required foreign language instruction (right again), less multicultural rubbish and more solid emphasis on grammar and syntax (mostly right but probably self-defeating).

What was said about reading through this stuff was that much of Dr. Bertonneau's handout was solid and sensible, but inextricably mixed in with right-wing ideology.

That hurt the usefulness of his conclusions because it made me, at least, suspicious they were based more on politics and less on fact.

Phil Power is chairman of the company that owns this newspaper. His Touch-Tone voice mail number is (313) 953-2047 ext. 1880.



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Twelve Oaks

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