

Book bound

Library millage deserves 'yes' vote

For the third time in less than a decade, a tax proposal to improve the Farmington Community Library will be decided Aug. 4. We recommend that voters cast a yes vote for the 0.6 mill in each of 16 years because it makes good, common sense for the community.

Long before library officials in 1989 first asked voters for financial help, the Hills library on 12 Mile was bursting at the seams, and the downtown branch was in need of improvements that will make it more usable for patrons and bring it up to speed as the calendar changes to a new millennium. These needs have not changed. In fact, these needs are even greater today.

The Farmington Community Library has always been an institution of pride for Farmington and Farmington Hills. The community has long looked to the libraries for excellent services, excellent staff and a comfortable environment.

The time has now come for taxpayers to give directly back to the library and to help maintain its place among top suburban library systems.

If you own a \$200,000 home the library millage will cost you \$60 a year for each of 16 years. That's a small price to pay for long-needed improvements at facilities where the world can be at your fingertips.

A service-oriented, well-equipped library system is an integral part of a healthy and progressive community.

This request for 0.6 mill for 16 years comes on the heels of plenty of study, discussion and listening to what staff, library patrons, taxpayers and the two city councils have had to say.

Library officials have responded to the fact that voters twice have said they didn't want a

new library in a new location. They have listened to you, and this proposal calls for expanding and renovating the Hills branch on property Farmington Hills bought immediately west of the library. This proposal — unlike the past two — calls for improvements at the Farmington branch.

This latest proposal also has the support of the city councils and is promoted through a grass-roots effort of citizens who support the proposed plans and the need for a successful library system in the community.

Clearly, some opposition to this effort remains. In the Thursday, July 23, Farmington Observer, an anonymous advertisement — bearing no attribution to an individual or organization — was published. It emphasized that the library board should follow the lead of the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, which is repaying a \$6 million bond issue through revenues solely generated by users at the Eight Mile Road facility.

With a pay-as-you-go system, who would go to the Farmington Community Library when other libraries in surrounding communities are free? It won't work.

Support of some institutions, such as libraries, should be spread over the entire tax base because everyone benefits, whether you use the library once a year or every day. A good library is just one of those things that improves a community, elevates its educational level and serves as a resource for a community and its population. A good library also attracts educated residents to live and successful businesses to work in a community.

The Farmington Community Library already has put Farmington and Farmington Hills on the map, and this millage proposal will keep it at the level it belongs and a level residents deserve.

Bullard bears leadership needed for Senate

Two years ago we had little doubt that Willis Bullard would be a successful state senator representing the 15th Senate District, and after observing his first term we're fairly certain he'll continue that pattern.

That is why we're again urging voters to select Willis Bullard at the polls Aug. 4.

Bullard faces current state Rep. Barbara Dobb in the Republican primary for the Senate seat. Bullard defeated Dobb in a special primary election in May 1996 to replace former state Sen. David Honigman, who resigned his post due to health problems.

As was the case two years ago Bullard has more experience than Dobb. He started out in local politics, serving as a Highland Township trustee from 1979-80. He then became township supervisor from 1980-82. He took office in the state House in 1982 and served there for seven terms.

Bullard's legislative experience is particularly noteworthy. He has served on the powerful House Taxation Committee in almost every conceivable position.

As a first term senator, Bullard served as vice-chair of the Senate Finance Committee, sponsoring several pieces of legislation to cut taxes. His House and Senate experience gives him great insight into the committee system in Lansing, which is where the real nitty-grit

crafting of state law takes place. We've also found Bullard to be responsive and accessible to constituents, which is a trait we look for in all lawmakers.

There is, however, a dark blemish on his otherwise above-average record, and it is one that causes us great concern. Since his election to the state House of Representatives, Bullard has sponsored or supported legislation that would weaken the Freedom of Information Act, thereby cutting off public access to some government records. As protectors of open and honest government this newspaper cannot, in good conscience, condone Bullard's attempts to limit the public's access to information.

We have cited that complaint in the past, and were he running against a stronger Republican candidate we might not be so quick to endorse him for that very reason.

But Bullard is not running against a strong candidate. Dobb does not display the real leadership qualities or experience voters are looking for.

Bullard, however, does possess the experience and leadership qualities the communities of the 15th District need. Voters would be best served by selecting Willis Bullard as the Republican nominee for the 15th District Senate seat Aug. 4.

Marks worthy choice for commission

The Republican race for the Oakland County Commission 19th District seat has drawn two well-known candidates in Ben Marks and Terry Sever, a Farmington Hills City Council member, and one we'll call a citizen candidate, JoAnne Molin.

Of the three candidates, we recommend Ben Marks, a former Farmington Hills City Council member and charter commissioner, who when not even involved in politics, remains committed to the community.

Marks, who is director of the Longacre Community House, has served on the city council: 1983-1992, including a term as mayor in 1987. He also served as president of the Michigan Municipal League. Prior to his election to the city council, he served on the Farmington Hills Planning Commission and charter commission.

There is no doubt that Marks is outspoken. But he says what he means and means what he says. We believe that he will indeed vote the conscience of his constituents and fiercely represent the 19th District.

Marks knows politics and he knows the county. And you'll know where he stands and what he wants. He is stubborn and committed to minding the cash register while improving life for his constituents. He is willing to listen

to fellow politicians and constituents. When he sees a problem, he looks for a solution.

The retired builder likes accountability and responsibility in government. A plan by a county commissioner to set up a countywide fund for communities affected by the 12 Towns Drain issue is too loose for him. We agree.

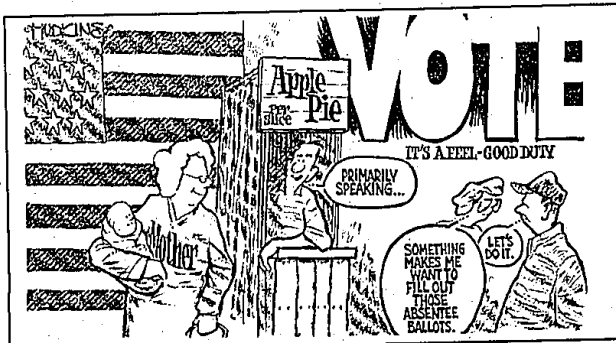
Our endorsement, however, comes with a recommendation that Marks follow the system as it is.

For example, the county cannot hold advisory votes on issues already within its powers, such as a proposed 4-percent surcharge on telephone lines to upgrade 9-1-1 service. Marks suggested finding a loophole, such as proposing a 4.001 percent surcharge and asking the voters.

Come on Ben. It's not only unrealistic, it's confusing for voters. That's not how the American system was set up. At some point, elected bodies must use the powers given them to resolve problems.

Still, we believe Marks will fairly and vociferously represent the district. He will be outspoken and he won't shy away from issues or confrontations when necessary. Cast your vote for Marks in the 19th District Oakland County Commission race.

ARKIE HUDKINS



LETTERS

Congratulations, grads

This year we hosted the 13th annual Harrison High School "Senior All-Night Party." The party was held on the same day of graduation, June 7, in order to give our seniors a chance to celebrate and enjoy each other in an alcohol- and drug-free environment.

They enjoyed such activities as making their own fun flick video, sumo wrestling, human bowling, casino, hair braiding, virtual reality ride, lots of good food and a chance to win great prizes raffled off every hour.

There were generous contributions given by many of our area businesses and parents, also the ultimate gift of time was given by many junior and senior parents in order to make our party a huge success.

We would like to give our sincere thanks to all, and to the Class of '98 we say congratulations and best wishes in all your future endeavors.

Jeann English
Senior All-Night Party Committee
Harrison High School

No surprise

I was very happy to receive a \$180 refund check from Citizens Insurance Co. instead of a credit when my automobile insurance comes due.

Had the insurance companies had their way, they would have kept the \$1.2 billion windfall and the interest it produced that rightfully belonged to the policy holder. What a bonanza.

In the same mail with my insurance check was a campaign piece from state Rep. Andrew Raczowski in the form of a very large check for \$180. His name is where the check signer writes his/her name. In small print he warns that the piece is non-negotiable and is not a check.

On the other side of the phony check, Rep. Raczowski reports that he supports the Republican plan, which would give insurance companies the option of keeping \$1.2 billion until credit is applied to its policies.

With such double talk coming from elected officials, it comes as no surprise that many American voters are turned off by politics and politicians and don't bother to go to the polls.

Marian McCracken
Farmington

Support Sever

Honesty, integrity and trust are the things that stand out the most when you compare the candidates for Oakland County Commissioner. These are the reasons myself and seven other city council members in our community support Terry Sever to replace Donn Wolf.

As a city council member, Terry has a record of achievement we are proud of. We know he will put the community's best interests first, on every issue. He respects disagreement, but challenges others when he believes strongly in something.

Farmington Hills has become one of the best-run cities in the state with a hard-working city council. Terry has played a major role in helping us achieve this level of success. He has worked directly with many residents to solve their neighborhood problems and continues to find creative solutions for them and the city.

Terry has voted more times than any other councilman, in the past 10 years, against the budget. He has recommended many spending cuts, and his creative ideas have saved the taxpayers millions of dollars. Terry works hard to better our city in ways that do not cost the taxpayers.

We are proud to say Terry Sever is a Farmington Hills Council member with a love for our community, who has earned him recognition as Citizen of the Year. He will truly make a difference for us in Oakland County. You can be certain that he will fight for better roads, lower taxes, and improved county services for our community. I hope you will join me and others supporting Terry Sever, Aug. 4 in the primary election.

Cheryl Oliverio
Farmington Hills Councilwoman

She likes Jolicoeur

I hope everyone will get out and vote for Linda Jolicoeur for county commissioner. She is truly a friend to our community. On July 8, she sponsored the Community Service Award at the Miss Farmington Pageant. I see her everywhere in this community helping out.

She is a smart business woman who believes in giving back to her community. I know her business and personal background: d covers a wide area of experience and I believe she will serve us well.

She isn't out getting a bunch of incumbent politicians to support her, she is just counting on you the voters to get out and change the system. Go Linda.

Susie Settsuda
Farmington Hills

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.

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— Philip Power