

POINTS OF VIEW

More details, please

Recently, the Farmington Observer ran a review of the Grand Cafe restaurant. It sounded like a good place for dinner, but, when our party of six arrived, we found that the cafe was down a long flight of stairs. It happens that two of our group are handicapped and cannot handle many stairs. Consequently, we had to turn around and look for another place to eat.

It seems to me that your restaurant reviews would become more useful if they would indicate whether or not dining establishments are barrier-free.

Gloria Hurwitz
Farmington Hills

Whose responsibility?

The parents of all elementary Farmington Public School students need to be informed of the new health curriculum subject that is in place to begin this spring. It is titled "Respecting Myself and Others ... A positive approach for sexual harassment prevention education."

The videos which accompany the written materials deal with sexual abuse and pedophilia - not sexual harassment in the school setting, as one would infer from the curriculum title.

The video intended for first and second graders does address stranger-danger but then heads into the sensitive issue of inappropriate touch. The young actor portrayed refers to "Uncle Bob's" hugs and tickles as making him uncomfortable. There is further discussion about touch that "feels bad." This dialogue has nothing to do with sexual harassment but really sexual abuse on very young children.

The risk of irreversible damage to these young, innocent minds heavily outweighs the potential benefit. There is a very real possibility that a 6-year-old could evermore misinterpret the loving affection of her relatives. The fifth-grade video is much more graphic and focuses on the plight of an elementary-age girl being three times violently groped and sexually assaulted by her older, male cousin. Referred to in the video are also two children who have had similar experiences with a step-dad and a male adult neighbor.

Parents are absolutely nowhere to be seen in this video. Furthermore, the written material for fifth graders

does not define sexual harassment. Its best effort says that if the girl "feels badly" about it, that constitutes it being sexual harassment; if not, it could be teasing or flirting.

There is so much vagueness surely our 6- and 7-year-old children will not have the ability to verbalize their inevitable confusion. We adults will have no way to measure the effectiveness of this material.

Why does the board of education believe it to be their responsibility to teach our elementary children about sexual abuse? It is every parent's responsibility to teach this in their own home, using their parental discretion based on the emotional maturity of their young one. We cannot afford to forfeit this right to our schools. The days of sending your child off to school to learn reading, writing and arithmetic are gone.

Claudia M. Taffe
Farmington Hills

Wrong step

Reform Party candidate Eric Borregard's recent diatribes on campaign finance make for good political soundbites, but fail to address the real problems. The influx of money to the war chests of Democrats and Republicans is a symptom, not a cause, of our current political state.

This country was founded on the principles of individual liberty and limited government. Unfortunately, government's natural tendency to expand has undermined these principles. Government has infiltrated every aspect of our personal lives and pitted Americans against each other.

In response, individuals have formed their special interest groups to carve out favors; favors that the government has no right to grant. If Borregard wants to eliminate the symptom, he needs to cure the disease. Rather than join in with useless rhetoric, I recommend he outline his ideas for returning government to its constitutionally limited role. However, he should take note that restricting our right to spend money on political speech is not a very good step toward limited government.

Steve Sutton
Farmington

Mindless philosophy

I have seen sloppy and certainly not "sloppy" productions mounted in all types of space, from a church base-

ment to an abandoned barn.

So what if the Harrison High School auditorium is not able to accommodate a dramatic production because of construction woes? Create an arena (in-the-round) stage in the cafeteria. Make a thrust stage on the gym floor. Ask to share another facility; do a joint production. The possibilities are numerous.

Apparently, no one in Harrison High School, the Farmington Public School administration, or the school board has the creativity, talent, vision, or drive to see the exciting possibilities beyond the auditorium.

The school system had a real opportunity to teach students like Samantha Steckloff to see beyond traditional boundaries and learn to make lemonade out of lemons. Instead, they chose to teach her and her fellow students that problems are more easily ignored than overcome, and that the power of the school staff is absolute and unassailable.

I am opposed to anyone on the school board who endorses this irresponsible and mindless philosophy. I want students like Samantha Steckloff to know that there are community members who see the school's response to your complaints as condescending and incompetent.

Joan E. Ginsberg
Farmington Hills

Stand up

Given its history of rapacious pricing and disdain for its customers, it should come as no surprise that Time-Warner Cable wants to kick pro-consumer former Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi off the panel reviewing the cable franchise agreement.

Time-Warner has consistently exploited its monopoly power to raise rates without a corresponding improvement in service, leading to obscene profits at the public's expense. Vagnozzi has been an outspoken advocate on behalf of exploited cable customers as a former mayor and as a former member of the Southwest Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC).

Now Time-Warner is complaining that Vagnozzi shouldn't be on the panel reviewing its proposed franchise agreement, which SWOCC has already denied, because Vagnozzi has a record of standing up to the cable monopoly giant. This is like King George III demanding that Washington, Jefferson and Adams be thrown

out of the Continental Congress because they had a history of rebelling against the King's authority. Time-Warner's attack on Vagnozzi demonstrates the kind of arrogance that unrestrained monopoly power brings. As cable consumers, we need to support Vagnozzi and stand up to "King Cable."

Andrew Nickelhoff
Farmington Hills

Think again

Aldo Vagnozzi needs to think about what he said in the March 16 issue of the Farmington Observer. Do the Democrats really want to build on the Clinton/Gore record? A record of lies, scandal, murder, adultery, rape, bombing of innocent people in a sovereign country? The highest tax hike in the history of the United States? Do they really want to continue this legacy? Or should I say, larceny!

Think about it, Mr. Vagnozzi, you are aligning yourself with the most diabolical administration that has ever soiled the White House. It does not make sense to continue the trend of left-wing liberal thinking that stands by and allows thousands of babies to be slaughtered every year at the hands of greedy abortionists and in the same breath exhale lies of how much the president cares for the children. Build on that record? Is that what you really want?

Al Gore claims to be a friend of the earth, yet when he wanted to have his picture made canoeing down a stream, he opened the flood gates to allow badly needed water to flow away downriver just because the river was not deep enough to canoe on. Is that what it takes to be a friend of the earth? Billions of gallons of precious water for a photo opportunity?

Think about it, Mr. Vagnozzi, do you really want to do more damage to the great Democratic Party by endorsing a man with the same immoral degrading standards as Bill Clinton? Have you folks not suffered enough? How much more shame is required before your conscience aches? Or is it seared with a hot iron and scarred so badly that it no longer feels any pain, the pain of truth!

Think about it, Mr. Vagnozzi.

Rev. Brian Brewer
Farmington

Where will it end?

The "Police and Fire News" of March 6 had some items of considerable interest.

First, the tobacco police responses were outstanding. Three teenage girl criminals, brazenly driving down the street, smoking (!), got nabbed by an alert officer. Naturally, their contraband property was confiscated.

Further, another 17-year-old menace to society was heroically apprehended for having the blatant nerve to smoke in an alley. Good police work!

Meanwhile, two upstanding teenage citizens were noted beating each other up in the Ram's Horn and again at school. As a tribute to fairness, however, no charges were filed, of course.

We can't knock Farmington's finest for enforcing senseless laws. We pay them to do that, and they're highly professional.

We can wonder, though, about the mindset of people who create laws in the belief that it's proper to criminalize victimless acts, further eroding our personal freedom. (Contrary to popular belief, teenagers are people.)

If all people are not at liberty to make unwise choices, then our liberty is limited indeed. If we are too apathetic to protest, then where will it all end?

Don Smith
Farmington Hills

Light needed

Bloomfield Hills and Farmington Hills can save a life and avoid some major accidents if they could decide who is responsible for repainting those "new" yellow lines in the center lanes on 14 Mile Road going west of Orchard Lake Road in front of the new mall and opposite Hunters Ridge Apartments.

They have faded and can't be seen at night due to the lighting. Cars turning into the mall and cars turning into Hunters Ridge Apartments face each other head on.

Of course a traffic light would do the job but that costs money.

Milton Rose
Farmington Hills

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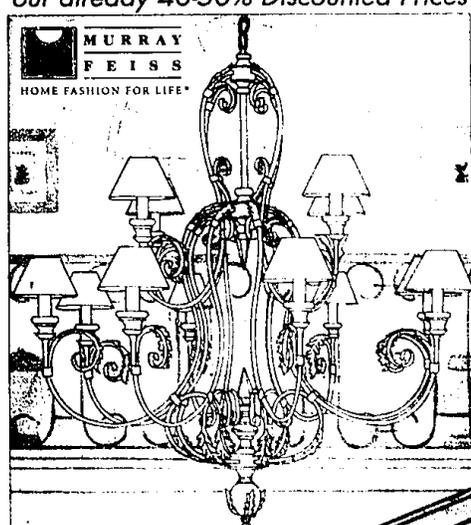
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