

Improvements

They're necessary on 12 Mile

The death of student Daniel Lee and the injuries to his sister and brother in a two-car accident in front of Harrison High School Friday morning not only breaks the heart, but serves as a continuing reminder that indeed there is a problem with that stretch of 12 Mile.



Daniel Lee

The road that intersects Rollercrest on the north side of 12 Mile and Schulman Drive, which leads into Harrison, has long been of concern for the safety of students and other motorists and pedestrians.

Too often traffic engineers and decision makers have been forced to make pronouncements on the relative safety — meaning how many people have died — on a particular road or intersection, and how much improvements will cost.

But when parents lose their children in the blink of an eye, money concerns are irrelevant.

It is difficult to determine if the Lee children would have been safe had their been a left-turn signal at 12 Mile/Rollercrest/Schulman Drive.

Daniel Lee will never know. But the time has come to toss aside worries about cost and statistics and do something with the traffic patterns in front of Harrison.

A turn lane may prevent another family from having to lose a child. A continuation of the sidewalk that only partially follows Harrison along 12 Mile might prevent students from being forced to walk on the east-west corridor or in mud alongside the road.

While we all rally behind daylight-saving time as a promise of summer, let's remember that these students will now drive into Harrison or walk across 12 Mile or along 12 Mile in the dark, further adding to an already tenuous situation.

Traffic engineers and statisticians can say there's not enough left-turn traffic to warrant a signal or there's not enough traffic or money to widen the roadway to include a left-turn lane.

Statistics don't say everything. And let's be clear what kind of traffic is turning into Harrison: kids driving themselves, parents dropping off their kids, or, as in the case of the Lee children, an older brother dropping off his siblings for another day of school.

Farmington Hills officials, with loud sup-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DRESLER

Fix: Concern continues about 12 Mile Road in front of Harrison High School, especially in light of Friday's fatal accident that took the life of a student.

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port from the school district, must ask the county to conduct a traffic study and do everything in their power to ensure that something is done with the roadway in front of the high school.

One child's death beats a statistic.

New memories will be made

(Editor's note: We asked Observer sports editor C.J. Risak to comment on the new home of the Detroit Tigers.)

Well, what the heck. It is a new millennium, after all. This new den for the Tigers is proof enough.

Comerica Park is everything Tiger Stadium wasn't. And it can never be what the park at The Corner was.

For anyone who's been a Tiger fan their entire life — as I have been — there will be a period of adjustment.

I can still remember coming out of the bright sunshine on a warm summer day and going into this dark, damp, dungeon-like structure. It took a few minutes for my eyes to adjust, and once they did my dad was hauling me up this ramp back toward the sunshine.

But coming out of that ramp into the upper deck and seeing the field for the first time — the bright green grass, the brown basepaths, the little men in white uniforms and blue hats hitting grounders and fielding them while others tossed balls around in the outfield — is a memory of Tiger Stadium that can never be forgotten.

For the most part, the seats were atrocious. I sat in the lower deck center field bleachers at Tiger Stadium during arguably the most memorable game in team history: Game Five of the '68 World Series, when Lou Brock was thrown out at the plate.

Couldn't see a thing, but I was there.

I did love that ol' stadium. Had to park quite a distance, but didn't you just savor telling the guy sitting next to you in the stands you paid \$5 less to park just a few stops farther away.

But that was then — past history. Time to move ahead.

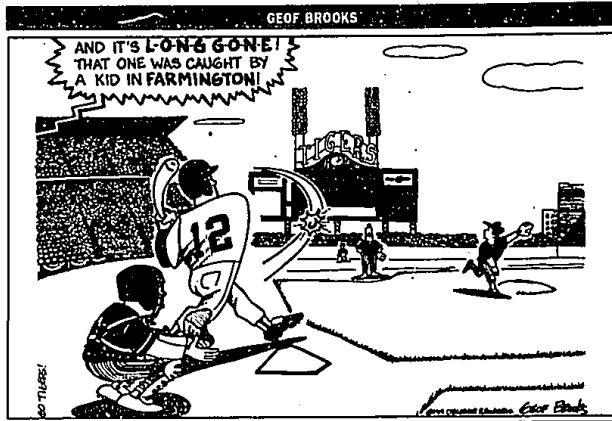
■ I did love that ol' stadium. Had to park quite a distance, but didn't you just savor telling the guy sitting next to you in the stands you paid \$5 less to park just a few stops farther away.

Credit the folks at Comerica Park (CoPa for short) with trying to sustain some of that sense of history. Statues of Tiger greats in the outfield, pillars featuring great moments and players through the concourse ... and they still have those hot dogs, although it's doubtful the new park can retain that delicious odor that lingered in Tiger Stadium's cramped, enclosed aisles.

More than any other sport, baseball is history. How many guys 40 to 45 years old can tell you last year's starting lineup for the Detroit Lions? And how many can tell you the starting lineup for those '68 Tigers?

How often did you stay through the ninth inning of a game the Tigers were losing by eight because Cecil Fielder, that is) was going to bat and, well, what the heck, you just never knew when he might pop one over that left-field roof.

That kind of history CoPa can't recreate. But it might be able to spawn some new memories — not for me, but for my children, who someday soon will walk through a wide concourse to see a wide expanse of bright green, with dirt basepaths that have little men in white uniforms and blue hats fielding grounders, awaiting the start of a new game.



LETTERS

Opinions are to be shared: We welcome your ideas, that's why we offer this space for your opinions. We will help by editing for clarity. To assure authenticity we ask that you provide a contact telephone number and if mailing or faxing a letter, please sign it. Letters can be mailed to: Joanne Maliszewski, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335, faxed to Joanne at (734) 459-2700 or emailed to jmaliszewski@oe.hometown.com.

Still a friend

I was sympathetic to the recent article about the volunteers being told their services were no longer needed. Mrs. Eunice Lubinski stated "Imagine that, volunteers being fired."

Mrs. Lubinski, you are not alone. Since 1972 I would "guesstimate" I have been "fired" three times. A group of us were re-organized at the Farmington Community Center and another group of us were re-organized at the Longacre House. My most recent resignation, termination or job elimination was from the Friends of the Library Board.

Don't allow being "fired" as a final say to your dedication as a volunteer. There are so many organizations that simply cannot survive without volunteers. If one door closes and the team disintegrates just simply look for another door and team. You can always find a way to help in your community directly or indirectly. I certainly am not ready to allow one person to change my mind, dedication or efforts to support the Friends of the Library.

The Friends are a much needed vehicle that develop and supply the extra monies that an organization can't receive through state and city funding. I can still be a "friend" Mrs. Lubinski and so can you.

Judy Antishin
Farmington Hills

You get the idea

Thanks to Gloria Hurwitz for writing about the inaccessibility of the Grand Cafe in Farmington. Unfortunately, this is one of many establishments in Farmington which are difficult to access for some, and completely inaccessible for others.

Mrs. Lovell's Tea Cozy is an establishment I actively boycott. Not only is it inaccessible to my son in a wheelchair, but when that establishment opened it seemed that the proprietor was much more concerned about the historical "appearance" of her facility — I remember reading in the Observer that a ramp was basically viewed as an eyesore — than in making her establishment accessible to potential customers.

Baskin Robbins in downtown Farmington is another business that is difficult, if not impossible, for a wheelchair user to enter. While the Corner Barber does have a back entrance, a wheelchair user has to navigate through parked cars (note that none of the close spots in back is a handicapped spot). Parking at the (former) Founder's Festival office is impossi-

ble. The handicapped spots do not allow room for a van's wheelchair lift. My husband and son were blocked in there one year. We have learned to just find a distant parking area where two spots are available and park across both of them.

I could go on but you get the idea.

Carolyn Das
Farmington

Special memories

Soon my family will move to Indiana. We're excited about entering a new chapter of our lives, but we will miss the friendship and sense of community we have felt in Farmington. I would like to thank just a few of the people who have made our 15 years here so special.

Mike and Kathy Baker and family have been the best neighbors anyone could ask for. Our subdivision, Farmington Square, has the positive attributes of a small town — where neighbors look out for each other.

Thanks to Wayne Large and the congregation of Farmington First United Methodist Church, and especially John Washburn, who mentored both of our sons through Confirmation.

Special thanks to Sister Mary Innocent and the caring staff of MaryCrest Manor, who have lovingly cared for my mom for the past two years, and will continue to provide TLC.

We also hold in high esteem the Farmington public schools our sons have attended: Hillsdale Elementary, Power Middle School, and Farmington High School. Just a few of the staff at FHS who have given above and beyond the call of duty are assistant principal Catherine Cost, counselor Michele Schneider, and teachers Leanne Young, John Kienzner, Kathy Steudle and Jennifer Savage. Thanks also to coach Bridges and the track coaches, and the many football coaches who tirelessly devote their time and enthusiasm to building character in young people.

Thanks to the fire department and EMS who have responded within minutes of being called. Thanks, too, to the many volunteers who add richness — people like Dick Carvell, Tina Jensen and Linda Enberg.

Our family will always have special memories of the Farmington community.

Debbie Read, Rick, Will and Jon
Farmington Hills

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— Philip Power