

OUR VIEWS

Akebono shows price of ranting

Farmington Hills officials learned recently there's likely a price to be paid when they force business owners to absorb their tirades against the State of Michigan.

Others have stood still and taken the brunt of council members' complaints about a state tax incentive program that forces cities to share in the tax break burden. Officials from longtime corporate resident Akebono have decided to take a look around - and frankly, we don't blame them.

What's unfortunate is that they may take their whole operation out of Farmington Hills, and with it millions in future tax revenues.

Sure, it's possible that the company's looking for more room to expand and just can't find the physical space here. We also recognize the inequities of a state system that pits local units of government against one another as they create tax packages for new and expanding businesses.

This is the real world, folks. And ranting about how much it was costing to keep a multimillion dollar business that has generated both tax dollars and goodwill in this community didn't do anybody any good.

Cities shouldn't bend over backwards and give away the store in order to keep businesses here. Akebono wasn't asking for the whole store; what's more, they were planning to add jobs to our employment base and value to an already existing building.

Company officials were willing to make a \$32 million investment in our community, an investment that shows this is a great place to do business and to make a corporate home. The local tax break amounted to \$417,000.

These are tough economic times for cities, but they're difficult for businesses, too. Unless we all work together - state and local officials, business owners and citizens - we're going to lose opportunities to make life better all the way around.

We hope the officials in other communities, such as Southfield, have discussed the notion but opted against actually committing an anti-war position to paper.

'Peace' resolutions not a local concern

Shouting for peace when the war drums are beating is an admirable, principled and meaningful form of expression. In a democratic society, such dissenting views are not only encouraged, they should be welcomed and embraced as a chance to learn and understand other points of view.

But as conflict with Iraq appears more and more likely, there's a movement afoot to have municipal governments adopt resolutions of peace. A handful of cities, including Ann Arbor and Ferndale, have already done so.

Elected officials in other communities, such as Southfield, have discussed the notion but opted against actually committing an anti-war position to paper.

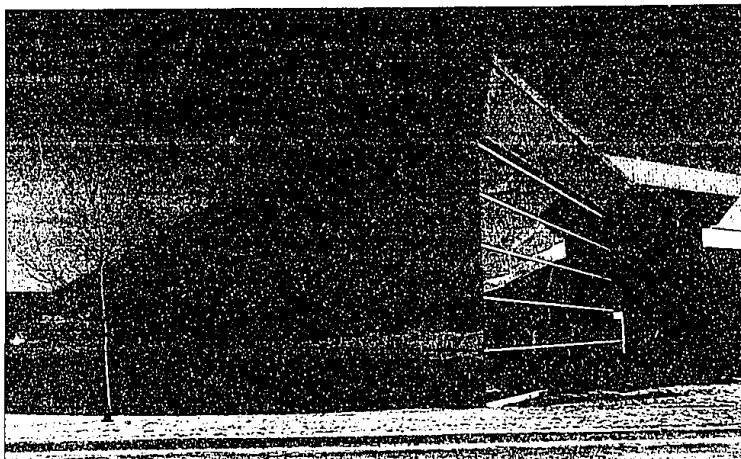
This is the appropriate thing to do and we urge other city, village and township leaders to follow suit and decline passing any such resolutions that may come their way.

Like it or not, our municipal governments simply aren't the places where stances of this nature should be made. Our mayors, council members and trustees weren't elected for their views on war and peace, and they need not delve into such weighty matters, even if it's only words on paper.

As far as we can tell, most local governments have their hands full running their own towns. Municipal officials should stick to sewers, roads, rezonings and the like - areas in which they have some sway.

Endorsing a resolution of peace - or war, for that matter - is a hollow, meaningless gesture on behalf of our local leaders. As individuals, our politicians are free to express their views on war or peace any way they want. As official bodies, they should avoid staking a position in this territory.

This is the real world, folks. And ranting about how much it was costing to keep a multimillion dollar business that has generated both tax dollars and goodwill in this community didn't do anybody any good.



Akebono Corp.'s North American headquarters is located on 12 Mile in Farmington Hills. Officials with the company are considering moving operations to Northville Township, following a tax break incentive from that community and a technology grant from the state.

LETTERS

Picking a fight

I'm going to pick a fight because I want to start an argument. Anyone who may be interested, please jump in with your opinion, because this is a very controversial subject...including lawyers and judges.

If a person buys a used car from another person and the car was advertised to be in good condition, but suffers a major costly breakdown the same day it is purchased, does the buyer have any legal recourse against the seller?

The law says, yes, but almost any judge will tell you, no. Explanation: There is a very clearly written law on the books which describes false representation which covers this subject in detail.

However, there is an unwritten law known as "as is" which almost any judge will use to override the written false representation law. All used car sales between private individuals are understood to be "as is" whether or not "as is" is written on a bill of sale.

Confusing? You bet. Unfair? I think so. But what are you going to do if you get caught in this trap? Sue the judge?

The judge will tell you, you should have had it inspected by a mechanic before you bought it. He doesn't care how unreasonable that may have been, and there is no law that says you have to do that. And even if you did have it inspected by a mechanic before you bought it you still have no legal recourse. The problem is, you can argue with the judge but you will still lose.

So is the judge guilty of denying your legal rights? Maybe, but he knows there is nothing you can do about it. What is your opinion?

Kenneth Kemp
Farmington Hills

You can have it

During the whole shared-time issue at Our Lady of Sorrows, I have been an impartial viewer as my own children are grown.

I have to say the leadership at OLS has lost my support. It really seems that Monsignor Hurley will win at all costs.

It is common knowledge that he has threatened some of the parents with throwing their children out of the school. For disagreeing with him? Is there no freedom of speech in the Catholic Church? He is supposed to be a man of God.

How insulting that he calls the hard work on fund-raisers and hard-earned donations of the parish as "Twinkie money". Even those who support shared-time have got to wonder about this.

It is also common knowledge that he sent letters to quite a few school parents that their donations were not what they agreed to and therefore owe him money if they want to get a special tuition rate for their children. Aren't donations optional? Otherwise they aren't donations.

If this is Catholicism you can have it!

Jay Foley
Farmington Hills

Wealthy school

Regarding the comments made by Monsignor Walter Hurley about other Catholic Schools going ahead and implementing shared-time with great success, etc.:

He left out the fact that these other schools needed this type of program in order to survive. He also forgot to tell you that Catholic schools in similar wealthy communities, schools such as St. Hugo's in West Bloomfield did not need to turn to the public schools to update their technology or science labs.

Our Lady of Sorrows is a wealthy school in an affluent community. Taking on this type of program is sheer nonsense. OLS would continue to thrive without going to the public school. There have been parishioners who offered generous sums of money and Hurley turned it down. So don't let him kid you, this is about power, not the children.

Barbara McHugh
Farmington Hills

Diversity response

I am writing in response to Ms. Koski's letter printed 1-16-03.

Ms. Koski has a right not to be interested in articles about cultural diversity, although even the non-liberal President claims to care about the subject (notwithstanding his actions). Her attached letter, however, deserves some response.

The letter creates a group that's new to me, "Euro-Judaic" (is that the same as "Celtic-Nordic-Germanic-Slavic-North Side Of the Mediterranean-Semite"?). That is credited with pretty much everything good that's ever happened. I don't know if that's supposed to be a race, a super-nation, or whatever, but history doesn't indicate that its members perceive themselves to be a group.

In any case, the letter sweeps aside the accomplishments of China, India, Egypt, the various Islamic peoples who preserved and advanced culture during Europe's dark ages, the Aztecs, the Incas ..., many of which are part of our shared American inheritance. As for the more recent accomplishments mentioned by her attached letter (household appliances, computers): Gee, pretty much every group you might want to identify has been involved in those.

Someday, I hope, we will grow up and get over this nonsense of trying to identify groups to be in or out of, for or against. Haven't recent events in Russia, the Balkans, Palestine, etc. shown that hanging on to such attitudes just perpetuates injustice and killing?

Finally, however, the letter Ms. Koski attached suggests that Africans were responsible for slavery, and Europeans or their descendants freed the slaves. Who transported the slaves? Who owned them? This is the worst example of blaming the victim I have ever encountered.

Bob Halstead
Farmington Hills

Cruel to horses

This year, approximately 75,000 mares throughout North Dakota and Canada will be impregnated and confined to cramped stalls so their estrogen-rich urine can be collected. Most of the foals will be killed before their first birthday.

To produce Prentiss, pregnant mares are tethered to the front of stalls measuring just 3 1/2 to 5 feet wide and 8 feet long. For six months, while their bodies are producing the most estrogen, these

mares are unable to take more than a step or two in any direction, turn around, or even lie down comfortably.

Lameness often develops. Mares are forced to wear cumbersome rubber urine-collection bags, which chafe their legs and cause sores, 24 hours a day to collect their urine. They are also denied free access to water so that their urine will yield more concentrated estrogens. This can lead to renal and liver problems and cause the mares to struggle and injure themselves during water-distribution times to get to the water they so desperately crave.

So that they can be put right back into production the next winter, the mares are re-impregnated within days of giving birth. A few months after giving birth, they are separated from their foals and put back on the "per line." Fertile mares may go through this same grueling cycle year after year. When the mares become old, infertile, or crippled, they are auctioned off for slaughter.

George Sarkisian
Farmington Hills

Twinkles

Twinkles indeed! It seems as if past and current donations to Our Lady of Sorrows aren't good enough. I'll take my "Twinkles" elsewhere: Monsignor Hurley, Our Lady of Sorrows - where you are only as good as the size of your last donation.

M. Young
Farmington Hills

Road woes

The amount of road construction in Michigan is unbearable! It seems that everywhere I go, either this road or that is always being fixed.

When the work on a road is finally done, the attention is immediately turned to another road. Traffic is slow, and cars are forever being forced to jam into a single lane.

Whenever I go anywhere, I have to count the amount of time it takes to get past construction as a part of the time it takes to reach my destination. With the coming of snow and freezing temperatures, it is true that construction is temporarily stopped.

However, with the icy roads, it can hardly be termed an improvement in driving conditions.

Sharon Wang
Troy

SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

We welcome your letters to the editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We ask that your letters be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content.

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QUOTABLE

"No one's going to get laid off this year. The impact will be on next year's budget."

- Farmington Supt. Bob Halstead on a \$600,000 reduction in state revenues

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