



By Philip H. Power
Publisher

OBSERVATION POINT

NRC, Legislator Team Up On Project

Government tries to do so much, and does much of that so ineptly, that a lot of what we in the mass media report is critical or negative.

So it's a real pleasure to report, for a change, that some people in government are doing a few things right. Even more cheering is that fact that in this case a legislator and an administrative department teamed up and actually cooperated.

The case in point is the newly published "Michigan Guide to Easy Canoeing" published by the state Dept. of Natural Resources with a legislative assist from Sen. Carl Pursell of Plymouth.

What's so great about a canoeing guide? Quite a bit, when you know the inside story.

Canoeing has become a big thing, with our increasing amount of leisure time and the ecology kick that young people are on. I don't have the hard facts, but I got a strong impression from recent boat shows that canoe sales are shooting up.

There's a problem, however, on four extremely popular rivers - the Au Sable, Pere Marquette,

Pine and Manistee. On weekends during May and June, in particular, they look like a naval invasion; there's a lot of careless fooling around; trout fishermen get annoyed and even hit; property owners find a lot of litter on their shores Monday morning.

The knee-jerk reaction of the Natural Resources Commission was to propose a set of restrictions on those four rivers. The NRC held hearings (one that your home town paper covered was conducted by a bored staff man with no NRC members present), and a lot of local people, from Farmington most notably, protested. The rules were modified a little and passed, and are now being tested in court.

Sen. Pursell, meanwhile, was getting a lot of mail on the subject. One idea he read about was that the state should encourage canoeists to use other rivers in the state besides the four extremely popular ones in the northern lower peninsula.

Bill Mullendore, the information man in the DNR, noted that the last statewide canoeing guide was just about out of print.

Looking at DNR records for the past few decades, Mullendore also noted that each of four successive canoeing guides was smaller, less detailed and more cheaply printed than the previous one.

Pursell, a member of the Senate appropriations committee, came through with some funds for a new set of canoe maps. A 26-page pamphlet has been published with information on no less than 44 rivers. It's available from the DNR in Lansing.

So if you don't want to fight the Zilwaukee Bridge traffic on a trip to the four most popular rivers, consider:

River Raisin in Lenawee County: "There are some wild stretches. Much of the trip is through interesting farmland."

Kalamazoo River: Either the Albion to Battle Creek stretch or from Allegan to Lake Michigan: "the trip is quite interesting from Allegan to Saugatuck... wildlife is quite plentiful... you pass beside the Swan Creek Wildlife Refuge."

St. Joseph and Paw Paw Rivers in southwestern Michigan.

Thornapple River, west of Lansing: "Some trout... smallmouth bass, pike and muskies." The congressman I once worked for made an impressive case in trying to sell the U.S. Interior Dept. on designating this scenic wild river.

Maple River, north of Lansing: "Takes you through the Maple River State Game Area with its variety of wildlife."

Flat River, between Lansing and Grand Rapids: "Runs through the Langston and Flat River State Game areas and offers excellent opportunities to see wildlife... fair to good smallmouth bass fishing."

Grand River, on either side of Grand Rapids: "A beautiful river with some outstanding scenic attractions."

Wayne Dunlap, the Plymouth Symphony musical director who is now at Grand Valley State College, now lives on the Grand's banks and testifies to its beauty.

The Chippewa River System, the Pine and Tittabawassee rivers, all around Midland; the Shiawassee, which starts around Holly; the Rifle; the Muskegon;

those upper peninsula rivers - you can have fun on any of them if you know about 'em.

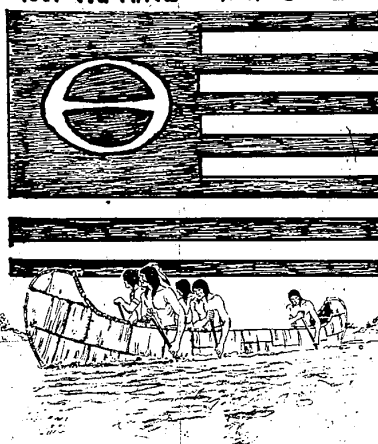
Granted, the controversy over the restrictions on the Au Sable, Pere Marquette, Manistee and Pine isn't resolved yet.

Still, we can see that a recrea-

tional interest such as canoeing can get help, even without pressure from vested interests: that the populated southern portions of the state can get some attention; and the executive and legislative branches are capable of working together.

All of that is good news.

NOW WE HAVE A NEW GUIDE...



Steve Barnaby writes

Is Huber Unfair In Tax Attack?

Once again Michigan's Don Quixote, U.S. Rep. Robert Huber (R-Troy) has mounted the crocheted steed which took him to Washington D.C., anti-busing, this time to attack Gov. Milliken's recently passed gasoline tax package.

Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority's General Manager Thomas Lipscomb has accurately described this attack as a "red herring" issue designed to distort the tax in the public eye.

Unfortunately, because of the emotionalism of the busing issue, it is a distortion that could, if it gains popular support, destroy one of the most progressive bills to come out of Lansing in years.

Huber has joined in a petition drive to repeal the tax package under the guise that funds marked for mass transportation may be used to finance cross-district busing of school children. This fear was recently kindled when Wayne Circuit Court Judge Charles S. Farmer ruled unconstitutional a section of the law which prohibited the use of tax revenues for busing.

Both Lipscomb and William Marshall, SEMTA board chairman, have pointed to sections of the bill which should dispel the busing fear.

•Public transportation, as defined in the bill, means transportation service to the general public by transit vehicles.

•"Transit vehicles" provide a service designed to serve the general public paying fares individually.

Lipscomb has also shown that public buses cost three to four times as much as school buses because they must travel 350,000 miles in a 10-year life span while school buses travel only 60,000 miles in the same period.

To seal the argument, Lipscomb says that public buses could hardly be used to transport school children because students must travel during the same peak hours as working parents.

An inventory of Huber's side-kicks in the attack on this progressive windmill, which would give SEMTA \$8.2 million a year to help subsidize bus companies in the metropolitan area, should bring suspicion to the mind of anyone who wants to see improved transportation become a reality.

A leading squire is State Sen. James Fleming (R-Jackson) who opposed the gas tax bill when it originally was voted on in the State Senate. It is obvious he is

using the busing issue as a ploy to destroy the tax.

Added to this entourage is Russell Gould, "Michigan Americanism Council" chairman, who organized the petition drive which must acquire 133,000 signatures before the end of the month if the repeal question is to appear on the November 1974 ballot.

The council is just another weird organization, the likes of which have plagued the American political scene for decades by distorting issues through exploitation of hatreds and simple-minded emotional appeals.

It's time for suburbanites to stop reacting irrationally every time the mention of busing is thrust before them. Efficient transportation is a "must" for southeastern Michigan, and one of the ways of achieving that goal is through support of the gas tax package.

Huber and his gang have used the busing issue more than enough to benefit their own political careers. It is suggested, if approached by someone to sign this petition, kindly point out the nearest windmill and keep walking.

Tim Richard writes

Women's Lib Can Make Life Interesting And Different

When Margaret Schaeffer, the popular Farmington Township trustee, was appointed to the Workman's Compensation Commission, a friend asked her: "Are you going to get them to change the name to 'Work-PERSON's Compensation'?"

The friend was probably being facetious that time, but Observerland ladies, under the influence of women's liberation, are taking long, hard looks at "Sexism" in our culture.

As chief honcho on this newspaper's copy desk, I'm being forced to take new looks at the American language.

A disciplinarian who put up with me in a high school English class insisted "it's a man's world." Therefore, we always spoke of the "chairman," and on

second reference to a hypothetical pupil, we always spoke of "he." (The teacher, by the way, was single and female.)

So I never saw anything wrong with referring to a leader as "chairman" or a presumed future president as "he." Until lately.

Some of the political groups trying to make a hit with the voters will send in news articles referring to a female leader as "chairperson." A family announcing a girl's engagement listed her as "concertmistress" of an orchestra.

Reporters start referring to Southfield's Jean McDonnell and Westland's Justine Barns as "councilwomen." You get the idea?

My conservative instincts

rebel. As a lover of history, I think newspapers should be written in standard English that scrapbook keepers and historians can understand a century or five centuries from now.

Moreover, I see nothing "sexist" about "chairman" and "concertmaster." Finally, it's hard as heck to fit "chairperson" and "concertmistress" into a one column headline.

In a Great Books discussion recently, a friend, under the influence of lib, got annoyed at the way Plato referred to the chief god and the ideal philosopher as "he." The lady in question re-read a particularly offensive passage, substituting "she" for the pronoun referring to the chief god and the ideal philosopher. It sounded kinda funny. Actually, it sounded extremely funny.

It reminded me of the story about Zeke, a Bible Belt seminary who had a serious operation and at one point was pronounced dead. Somehow, he revived, exciting the interest of the seminary's theologians, who reasoned: "If Zeke was dead; then he saw God. He is the only person to see God face to face in a thousand years!"

So they pressured Zeke and pressured him to tell them about God. "What's He like? What did He say to you?" they chattered. "Tell us."

Zeke resisted but finally agreed to tell them. His hands quivering and his face an ashen grey, he began:

"In the first place - She - is a nigger."

Perhaps I had better take this stuff about "chairperson" and "concertmistress" under advisement.

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Fred DeLano writes

Tip Of Topper To Observerland Cagers

Schoolboy basketball has come far in Michigan since the years when cage addicts would point to Indiana, Ohio and Illinois as the true hot-beds and incubators of champions.

Nothing, of course, brings the sport into focus quite as much as the state tournaments every March, and in town after town across the nation's mid-section folks become frenzied as their youngsters strive for survival.

Competition in Michigan will feature both the quarterfinals and semifinals in all four classes this week. Then there will be an unfortunate week's delay before this so-called "March madness" culminates in the quartet of title games at Ann Arbor.

This is one of the years when all of our Observerland quintets are on the outside looking in now that the quarter-final stage has been reached, but this does not mean there has been any less enthusiasm, determination, effort or spirit from players, coaches, students and fans.

It was a good season, in fact a very good one. This was true not only for the local level championships that were gained, but for the over-all conduct of the sport and the sparkling ability of the individual standouts who helped make it a fascinating season.

All-Observerland selections appear in today's sports pages and to all of these boys we extend congratulations. Their lesser publicized teammates deserve a

share of the spotlight as well, for no one does it all alone.

All of these are youngsters who have learned, at least to some degree, to live with pressure. There are times when one wonders whether it is unfairly inflicted, but it is part of the sport and is accepted as such. However, it is true that they are only boys - not adult, professional athletes.

Win or lose, champions or cellar dwellers, if basketball has been fun to them then they have gained from the association. The defeat they tasted in tournament elimination will not prove fatal despite the disappointment of the moment. In fact, it may pay off more than having won them all.