

Willing To Pay New Tax To Keep Stark Open

EDITOR: Why is it that each time a community has a facility that is really of some importance and consequence, it finds itself fighting the great, grey, statistic-quoting bureaucracy in order to keep it? A case in point is the matter of the proposed closing of Stark Elementary School. This, in conformance with a so-called "economy move" on the part of the Livonia school board.

This school should be used as a model by the board for all elementary schools rather than an anachronism to be closed.

At this school there exists a unique, intangible quality of hominess, closeness, and community involvement. Once lost, in fact and in spirit, it may never be recovered again.

It has something far more valuable than potted palms, carpets, closed circuit television, and electronic gadgets for teaching kids the three R's.

It has preserved, somehow, a basic character building quality of educating youngsters. Such as must have existed in the little red school houses that produced so many of the country's great leaders.

The crying, desperate need in education is not for bigger, more mind boggling and computerized schools, turning out unstable, overwhelmed, nerve frazzled children who will turn to any-

thing, including narcotics, to escape the rigors and tensions of de-humanized and impersonal school systems. Rather, I think, the need is for something very similar to what has been preserved or captured, either consciously or unconsciously, at Stark School.

This is not a plan for regression. Special teachers, special aids, new methods, etc. have a place in the broad educational picture. However, the new math and all the fancy acronyms of modern education are lost on kids whose minds have been battered to death by egotistical schemes of economy, based on larger schools, more mechanistic designs, etc.

This is especially true at the lower or elementary school levels.

The people in the Stark district are, I am convinced, positively enamored with this little school. I know I am. At Saturday or so ago I missed the annual "Fun Fair" because of pressing business. I consider this a great personal loss. Not because I feel obligated to join my kids there, but because I genuinely enjoy the "ice cream social" atmosphere and I know the children do also.

Isn't there some way we can preserve this slow-paced delightful little school? I would be in favor of a special intra-district tax assessment to augment existing school funds if this would save the problem.

JACK WHALEN
Livonia

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READERS' FORUM

Please type (or write clearly) and limit letters to 300 words.

- Letters must be signed, with the writer's address. Names will be withheld only at the writer's request and for good cause.
- The editor reserves the right to reject unsuitable letters.

Interest groups. Among these designated groups, they include PTA.

If the term "special interest groups" means people who have an active and knowledgeable interest in the education of their children, then we are proud to be so described. There has been far too much bipartisan political activity and maneuvering associated with school board elections in past years at it is.

School board members serve the entire community. Whether they are Democrat, Republican, Catholic, Jew, white Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Oriental, man, woman, young or old should not be the criteria for their election; but their willingness to work in the interest of the children of the community, to see that well-run schools in good condition are available, to provide a modern and meaningful education for them to fit the needs of every learner.

PTA members work with and for their schools. They keep up on current proposals and problems; are in a position to evaluate the quality of the program; and are informed about candidates and issues. They have every right to see that their vote counts. Only those who have something to fear would be worried about the effect of the PTA vote.

JUNE P.L. RANKALL
President, PTA Council Livonia

Don't Belittle 'Interest' Units

EDITOR: In the recent proposals to combine Livonia school and city elections, several people have been using the argument that such an arrangement would cut down on the role and influence of "special

Did Easter Fun Lay An Egg?

EDITOR: An open letter to the month-

Area Deaths And Funerals

VERLA A. ASKEY - Services for Mrs. Askey, 73, 2131 Dunlap Ave., Farmington, were held in Taylor Funeral Home with the Rev. Howard F. Small of First United Methodist Church of Farmington officiating. Burial was in Forest Lawn Cemetery. Mrs. Askey died April 25 in a hospital.

ANNE B. ALLEN - Services for Mrs. Allen, 83, 5032 Bristol Drive, Wyandale, were held in the Henry J. Will Funeral Home with the Rev. William Smith of St. George's Episcopal Church officiating. Burial was in Grand View Cemetery. Mrs. Allen died April 23 in a hospital.

JOHN A. ST. - Services for Mr. St., 73, 2131 Dunlap Ave., Farmington, were held in Taylor Funeral Home with the Rev. Howard F. Small of First United Methodist Church of Farmington officiating. Burial was in Forest Lawn Cemetery. Mr. St. died April 25 in a hospital.

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Leaders' Err In Smith Case

EDITOR: In defense of a man highly respected in my esteem, I am requesting that the content of this letter be printed so that anyone who may recall reading the headline, "Principal Told 'Sign or Else'" and the accompanying story in the Observer, may read the following letter and recapitulate on the sentiments expressed.

(The writer's letter to her neighbor, Principal Robert L. Smith of Plymouth's West Middle School, follows):

"Although this letter comes at a lengthy interval from the article published in the Observer, I, nevertheless, would like to express my thoughts and my concern privately and perhaps openly for the public to read and consider as well.

"It is the inner strength and self belief one man has in himself, in his values and way of life that makes him distinct from his fellow man; and yet, within the flock of mankind there are those who seek out to destroy in that one man those qualities which they too, would like to discover in themselves but cannot.

"I am concerned about the newspaper article. I was saddened for those men who cast shadows over their own names by projecting their inner frustrations outwardly making you the target of their inability to cope with their personal built up aggressiveness.

"Truly, it seems quite ironic that the 'leaders' of our community system of education could not direct their responses to you personally but rather had to take the public education and luck-cabbing - that which we as educators abhor, that which we as educators would never begin to approach with any student in our classroom but which the community

leaders have chosen to do to you.

"Whether or not the article was fully valid in its content or presented in any fairness at all is of minor significance when one considers the major impact an article of this type may have on the community, more importantly on the character and reputation of you as a principal, professional leader and father of children who are in the community schools as well.

"I believe that the article was purely blasphemous. I would like to urge the person or persons responsible for writing this article as a first page, headlined splash to openly admit their mistake in this respect only.

"Mr. Smith, as a man I have known for years as a neighbor, a man I have highly respected and admired for all of these years, I yield my strength and my concern, may you carry on believing and forthrightly.

JOANN SKEBA
Plymouth

I suggest you back up your opinions with a little more research. There are three books that could help you: "Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee," "Charities of the Gods," and "Gods From Outer Space."

MRS. CRAIG A. ROWLETTE
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