

Observer Newspapers

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Serving the rich Northwest Wayne County and South Oakland County Suburban markets with a group of affiliated newspapers: Livonia Observer, Farmington Observer, Redford, Garden City, Westland and the Township of Plymouth, Farmington and Redford.

Forgive Us Our Christmas

Who's afraid of Christmas?

A lot of people seem to be. You can spot them, the anxious ones—they look puzzled. They run to the tune of canned carols, clutching their credit cards.

"I just can't get the Christmas spirit," they cry. "It's so commercial. Let's put Christ back into Christmas."

Confusion encircles their heads like a wreath.

It's no wonder. The country is caught up in something like the Roman Saturnalia. It is a socio-cultural phenomenon that creeps up in October and harasses the populace till New Year.

The festivities are marked by overeating, overdrinking, overgiving, and ill temper. The guilt that naturally follows is intensified by nostalgic shreds of religious feeling. Since confusion and guilt are unpleasant and tiresome, we need a new perspective. We should recognize the realities of our secular age, and make an honest effort to shape a constructive alternative.

The thing to do is to reorganize the whole season.

The Citizens' Committee for the Reorganization of Christmas could begin by getting the President to move Thanksgiving up to October, the logical time for a harvest festival. This would eliminate Halloween, which is perfectly useless. More importantly, it would allow the merchants to concentrate on Christmas without distraction.

Having put Thanksgiving in its proper place, we could enjoy Two Months of Christmas, eating and drinking and spending, and satisfying our generous need to give presents to people.

Good Choice

After months of screening candidates the Farmington Township Board has finally elected and named a trustee to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Thomas A. Duke last spring.

James M. Skillman, a past chairman of the Township's Planning Commission, has been named to the post.

We think that the appointment is a good one even if the Board took too long in acting.

Skillman has demonstrated an ability to cut through the chaff and get the meeting back on the track during the planning commission sessions. As chairman he didn't always have a lot to say but was forceful. At the most recent meeting of the Commission as a member he was quick to point out that he believed the residents of the northeast corner of the Township had a point in requesting that the Commission delay zoning action on the corner of 13 Mile and North-

western.

We aren't so certain that we agree with either him or the Planning Commission's action on this point. He is delighted to agree with "official Township policy."

We believe that Skillman's background on the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals will be useful at the Township Board table.

It's also interesting to note that while he is nominally a Republican he has not been the GOP's spokesman or hatch man in local politics. It's refreshing when political appointments are made not to the party workhorses, but to men of ability.

Skillman has the potential of becoming an excellent Board member. Let's hope that he uses it and serves as an effective and able representative of the people.

—SUZ SHAUGHNESSY

Lansing or the community.

The need is there and the taxpayers should meet their responsibilities.

Numerous citizens, who really want to support their schools, have raised a number of points about public school financing in the already-heavy load.

But it seems a shame to this writer that such an important institution as the public school system should suffer because of the very few points of disagreement.

The Observer feels that the school system should be supported for the many areas of agreement which prevail between the school board and administration and the general public.

All agree that quality education is essential for today's children and their future. All agree that more money is needed to finance public schools. All agree that the state legislature will have to increase its percentage of the cost of public education and relieve the local property taxpayers of the already-heavy load.

But, to vote against Monday's school millage proposal for an invalid reason compares to refusing to support our children and their future.

These points, obviously, outweigh all of the negative factors which are present in voters' minds.

The Observer urges a "yes" vote Monday for the simple reason that the need is there and the price within reason.

—LEONARD POGOR

Hillside Inn

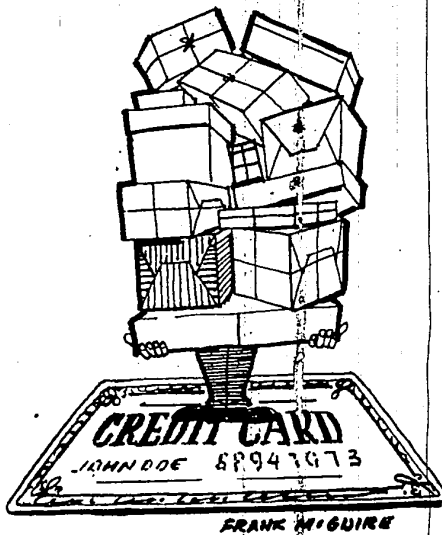
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'Tis The Season ...



Letters to the Editor:

Objects To St. John's List

Editor:

The reading list suggested by Robert St. John and printed in your Nov. 30 paper indicates a great deal about Mr. St. John. The idea that this list presents a diversity of opinion shows the narrow minded attitude of the typical "Liberal" today.

His idea of a political spectrum begins with the New York Times, who called Castro the George Washington of Cuba in spite of his participation in Communist affairs, and moves to the Left. No publication unfriendly to the Socialist cause appears on this list.

What Mr. St. John describes as a bold publication—"Minority of One"—mentioned in a Staff Study on the Committee on the Judiciary of the U.S. Senate as follows: "M. S. Aron, publisher of a review, Minority of One, praised by Peiping and Hanoi as the genuine voice of America and whose collaborators included among others: Bertrand Russell, Albert Schweitzer, Linus Pauling, defended China's policy in Tibet, against India, in Southeast Asia, and in the conflict with Moscow, and appealed to the American students to join up with the Vietcong as volunteers, and to fight against the U.S. Marines in Vietnam."

That is a little to the left of "bold" in my book. The Communist Party also lists "Minority of One" on their reading list for "Truth" (March 1963 issue of Political Affairs, the theoretical Organ of the Communist Party, for example).

"The National Guardian," from the same narrow spectrum of Mr. St. John's list, was described by the Committee on Un-American Activities as "a virtual official propaganda arm of Soviet Russia." (page 12 of the report dated Aug. 25, 1965).

Some of us "Birchers" read these publications, too, but I think it is important to furnish some of the background available from the House and Senate Committees along with your suggested reading list. It may interest your readers to know that there are publications to the "Right" of the New York Times. I would be happy to furnish copies to any who are interested.

RICHARD J. HECKERT
Livonia
Editor: What about the Christian Science Monitor, Mr. Heckert?

On Puppy Paradise
Editor: I am the owner of the Puppy Paradise at 28229 Ford Road, Garden City. Dennis Johnson wrote in last week's Observer/Community Column complaining about my establishment saying that the Humane Society, Anti-Cruelty Association, the Wayne County Health Department and the Garden City Police Department all have had numerous complaints about my place selling sick puppies.

In the three years open

here I must have satisfied some people or I would have had to close up by now for lack of business.

I do not raise these puppies, if they took sick I will not buy them.

Every time one of the organizations has come to my place they have never been able to find a sick puppy at this place. I am not saying that there has never been any but as soon as a puppy appears to be sick they are destroyed at once or taken to Elwood Collins at 938 Wayne Rd. Livonia and left there for treatment until well.

No one gives any better guarantee than I do. The Humane Society, denounced in the Anti-Cruelty Association will not refund any money either.

In most cases they will not even replace the puppy. Their prices and mine are about the same. I will replace the puppy up to 30 days.

Besides if my place was full of sick infected animals I would not be raising puppies in the same building. These dogs are valuable. I paid from \$200 to \$300 each from the Davison Maltese Kennel at 28229 Five Mile Road, Livonia.

Anyone is allowed to go through my place during open hours for their own inspection.

DONALD BENNETT
Garden City

Backs Homeowners
Editor:

What price must be paid in the name of "Progress"? Why must taxpayers pay homeowners continually be used as political pawns in a chess game designed to favor commercial and industrial interests?

The resident members of the North Cent. Livonia Civic Association have been waging a correct and courageous fight against the planning and administrative mis- gulis of our city government and protect the future property values of their neighborhood.

Among the homeowners affected by the irresponsible spot-zoning proposal, in the Eight Mile-Corpus area, are pioneer settlers of Livonia who have and are now making valuable contributions to the growth and progress of our city in many directions.

How can we justifiably equate the harassment and uprooting of these citizens with progress?

There is not space here to enumerate the many arguments against the petition to rezone the North Cent. area from residential to industrial. However, let us hope that tonight our City Council will consider "progress" when they give audience to progress!

The Federation of Livonia Civic Associations voted to support the North Cent. Livonia Civic Association after thorough study, meetings with all concerned, and much debate, a month ago! Two questions remain: Why has the Observer been strangely silent on this important and newsworthy issue? And, why hasn't Mayor Moelke, noted champion of the homeowner, lent his support to the North Cent. residents?

GEORGE KINDRED
Past-president and present director, Federation of Livonia Civic Assoc's

Editor's Note: As usual, we disagree with Mr. Kindred. Also, it is the Federation of Civic Associations who have been silent on the subject. News releases have come from the Federation in quantity, but not one word on this vote.

Tired of Stray Dogs
Editor:

I don't know why something can't be done about the number of stray dogs in the area to the rear of the Municipal building, in Garden City.

We try to keep our property clean and nice looking but when there is anywhere from one to six stray dogs running all over every day, what's the use of trying.

If you call the police the article we are the one breaking the law, we have to give our name and address so we just don't call and let them run. If the police do come, they just drive down the street and the dogs are barking and howling and they're back in the running again.

It seems to me it isn't a policeman's job to catch stray dogs. Why not have dogs as other places have, and they could make an effort to catch them without asking the name and address of the person calling in.

If paid good money for strays and if they are killed by dogs, as were two evergreens a year ago, I'm not even going to bother keeping up the front of my property.

I have a dog for a pet, but her license, dog rabies shots and keep her in the house and yard. She is a registered dog, but I would do the same if I had a mutt, and seeing that it is against the law to let dogs run, why isn't it enforced?

DISGUSTED RESIDENT
Garden City

Community School Issue
Editor:

This is the first letter to the Editor that I have ever written. Never before have I been more concerned about an issue so vital to our community. Never before have I heard more nonsense, more bad information, more poorly informed citizens.

The Wayne Community School District is facing a period of growth in its history that never before has presented itself. I refer to the Millage vote set for Dec. 19, 1966.

We have more students than ever before. That is an undisputed fact. More students mean a need for more classrooms, more teachers and more equipment. That is an undisputed fact.

WESTLAND

OBSERVING the Scene ...

By MYRA CHANDLER

Mr. and Mrs. Voter, having done their duty, are now going about their business of Christmas, taxes and finance juggling.

While this business of living pons on the political "in" crowd now takes over. If you are on their Christmas list likely you will be neglected for there is much to do in the maneuvering arena.

In Redford Township there is a tug of war to see who will replace the newly elected Supervisor. Al Bellare at the Trustee table. Congressman-elect Jack McDonald has said to have promised his support to Bob Anderson, defeated candidate for State Representative—and is lining up votes. This could explain (and the only one I can think of) his putting Clerk Dawn Rice's son, Ron, in charge of his office in Farmington.

Supervisor-elect Al Bellare has made no secret of wanting the veteran Republican party worker Bill Shaw on the Board. Both Anderson and Shaw are able men of integrity. Bill Shaw is no neophyte to Township government and Anderson is—If there is a stalemate there is always Jeanne Leonard who ran against Dawn Rice in the primary for Township Clerk. She is new to Township government but has proven herself to be an able legislator as a school board member. The Board could use "above board" decisiveness.

Being knowledgeable of Clerk Rice's tactics, I think the new Supervisor will need all of the support he can muster to keep intrigue at a minimum.

There is another vacancy in Redford Township created by Justice James Ryan now reaching the status of Judge. But this is less important because the J.P.'s are on the way out, anyway. So aware of this is Justice John M. Dillan, that he is extremely interested in the movement to merge Redford Township a City—and he could be judge, too. He came on the scene about 15 years too late for this maneuver. When Redford Township was young and unplanned and the school districts could have merged it would have made sense.

Maneuvering is sometimes a very tough thing for a government body to do. Often it would be easier to do nothing—when in a matter of time the problem would take care of itself.

It has become more and more apparent that absolute integrity in Government has got to be the number one criteria. Because of this I commend the Garden City Council for taking action and declaring the post of Garden City Judge vacant. Then they appointed Judge-elect Richard L. Hammer to fill the vacancy. Actually he is not due to take office until July 4 from Judge Russell L. Swarthout, who refused to resign upon request from the Council. Judge Swarthout has been on leave of absence from the bench since the summer of 1965 following his indictment by a federal grand jury on income tax evasion charges of a law client in which he was involved. The Federal Court Jury brought in a conviction. It is true the case is being reviewed—and possibly will be dismissed because of "electronic eavesdropping."

If this happens Judge Swarthout can go back to practicing law where clients may come to him of their own free will.

But the poor judgment he showed by his previous involvements should remove him from office where those who have no choice must appear before him. A judge who judges others MUST BE above reproach himself.

On the brighter side of the political scene Congressman-elect Jack McDonald has chosen an able Administrator Assistant who will be going to Washington with him. His name is A. J. Harris and he hails from Walled Lake. He is articulate, organized and full of fresh enthusiasm.

Horace Engler is assisting Congressman McDonald in organizing a Washington, D. C. party for his inauguration. The entourage will leave at 7 a.m. Jan. 10 for \$59.85 per person round trip.

The group will attend a reception at Jack McDonald's office after the inauguration and a cocktail party and luncheon for Senator Robert Griffin. Motel accommodations are being arranged by "Arranger Engler" for \$10 a person and the deposit is required by this week.

Congressman McDonald anticipates being on the Public Works or Education and Labor Committee. Either would be interesting for his district and would allow him to contribute meaningfully to solving the problems of this area.

His predecessor Billie S. Farnum, in leaving the scene had a few words of advice. At a recent appreciation dinner for him he had the following comments which if heeded, could be valuable to all freshman legislators.

(Continued on Next Page)

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