

# School Taxes Stir Readers-Pro And Con

## High Praise For Farmington Schools

EDITOR:

May I enter an affirmative vote for the four-mill proposal for the Farmington Public Schools?

In my travels in Ohio and Michigan I have heard many good comments regarding the quality of the Farmington schools. Of special interest to me were the comments on the excellent quality of Farmington's art department. It is regarded as one of the Midwest's finest public school art departments.

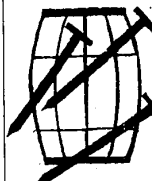
Recently, the entire art staff of the Toledo Public Schools visited the Farmington Schools to observe their art program. We were impressed by the art work we saw, the fine rapport between teachers and the Farmington art staff--and the creative job being done with the children in their art work. I'm sure the citizens of Farmington will vote "yes" for their schools' four-mill proposal, thus retaining a fine art department in an excellent school system.

MARY RYAN  
Director of Art  
Toledo Public Schools

## Answers Critic

EDITOR:

After glancing at "Your servant in education's" letter, in the May 22 issue of The Observer, I suddenly became aware of one reason why our country is in the sad state it is.



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## Feels There's Waste In School System

EDITOR:

Well, I've completed another season with the kids at the Farmington schools. It has been like a sea voyage. It has been a good one and our ship was a stout one, thanks to the fine community in which we live and to the fine families living hereabouts. We have weathered some storms, but all seems calm now. The forecast is for fine sailing in the future.

But, let pirates appear on the horizon. As I look about our community and share the final hours of their most important part of life with our young people I shudder. I am alarmed. Our children are being held for ransom. Yep, ransom.

Our school officials are holding them and demanding a yes vote on June 10 on a millage increase. They tell the kids to warn us that they must have an increase. They threaten to cut out all their goodies if we don't come across. The kiddies return home, moist eyed, bearing printed sheets in their little hands telling us to vote yes. Athletes (who have put their very hearts into their efforts are warned that all will fail unless we come across. They are warned that the auditorium, the pool, tennis, gymnastics, music, work day, dances, driver's education will all suffer.

They are threatening us. Our little kids are the pawns. Well, let me tell you, Pirates of Farmington, we fear you NOT. Good citizens, standing up in the face of oppressors, made this country great. We will do it again. It's about time we stood up and told you NO. You can't buildtude us.

I attended a school play the other night. The scenery was made by the students and their fine teachers. So were the costumes. The players in the band performed free. The actors were unpaid. All the work was done free. And we paid to get in. We did not holler. I understand the money taken in paid for the materials and expenses. Any surplus went for scholarships. Your expenses were paid for. Now, what in heaven's name, do you need any more for?

I attended most of the sporting events this past year. I paid to get in at each event. The players were not paid and except perhaps for a shower, they didn't cost you a heck of a lot. And where did the money paid for the event go? It should certainly have paid the expenses for the event. I understand one event brought in over \$600.

Man, that's a lot of dough for a one night stand at the local gym. But your expenses were not \$600. Don't threaten me, and don't threaten our children, unless you want to see a real yac about pondaze. Our ship is a sturdy one, and we support our command, but I firmly believe that it is about time you started to display a little efficiency in your operation, and refrained from continually asking us for the last drop of whatever we have left. Let's see what you have done in the past with our dollars.

You have built a number of schools. Fine. But each one has been on a different plan. Each one was different. Each one seems to cost more than the last one. Each one has had different problems. You don't even let the problems of one school solved, but you build another one with different problems.

Several years ago, as is usual each year, members of our school board spoke to our PTA group and told us how they needed more money that time. We never did hear the other side of the discussion.

At that meeting, I asked the members present, why they had those yellow porcelain panels on the outside of East Junior High. These, I was told, were to protect an air intake inside from damage. But they will, themselves, break when hit. Why something breakable, to protect something breakable? None could answer.

I then asked why they had

THE COLOR CORNER  
BY MARTHA BRANDT  
It's no coincidence that this year's men are leaping into view in their new clothes, courtesy of the Texile Dye Institute.

1. Shirts: Turtleneck, button-down or no collar at all, shirts are more colorful than ever. If the man on your list is slim and trim, he can get away with horizontal stripes on turtlenecks. If he's not trim, better rule this style out anyway. Most any man of any size appreciates the change in price of more colorful shirts in his everyday wardrobe. Colors are now more subtle as well as more varied—thank to the work of the dye-dye industry.

2. Tents: blue? That doesn't mean that you're lost. It just means that you can now play up some of the best colors in the world. Blue, in various shades, from light blues and yellows with striped trim are being seen at all levels of dress. Blue, of course, shorts and shirts more models.

Color is part of the most colorful scene in sports is, of all places, the color corner. Championship golfers have made color-painting clothes famous and now even those who think "color" means a few more run wear my color. Red, bright yellows and other bright shades are the most popular. They are also the most visible, which has a protection for us, as well as an aesthetic one: no expense for hitting a golfer dressed in bright red.

those dark windows, (which cost to heat the band on some of the schools). I was told that this kept the sun out of the eyes of students and avoided drapes or curtains or shades. But when I asked why they had them in the furnace room at one school, on the north side of the building where no students operated, none could answer. When questions were asked in the past about why a school was built in a swamp, where cows refused to venture, none knew the answer. But you built it.

When the place flooded, you needed extra money for pumps. When the pumps failed because of a power failure, you wanted money for an auxiliary power system.

And when the septic system failed (as you were told it would) you have to spend more for connection to a sewer. You were warned, but you did it anyway.

Many years ago an effort was made to get flashing, portable lights for each school that would inform motorists that a school was ahead and walkers on the roads. These are the kind of units we had for a while. At that time an offer was made to provide these flashing units free of charge for our entire system. I was told that these units were against the law and the State Police would not allow them on the road.

Well, they were being used in other communities in Michigan and I made a tour, submitted the information and opinions to your board along with prices and a concrete offer to provide them free of charge. The offer was refused.

This time you told me that the custodians did not like to bother putting them out there on the road. The free offer was rejected. But, the following year, you bought them with our money. Then you let them deteriorate for lack of care. Some remained out for weeks and were buried in snow banks.

Now I ask you, is that being efficient? You refuse the free ones, spend our money for the same things the next year, and then let them fall apart. Don't misunderstand me, I'm

for our wonderful school system. I believe we have a fine bunch of teachers and I personally know that they are doing an exceptional job. They are producing an exceptional product and they are loved by the students. These teachers are putting their very lives into their jobs.

But you guys are not getting another cent, until I see that you stop the extravagances and foolishness so evident in past years. Tighten up the loose ends.

I frankly don't think you really need any more tax money. I think you already get enough. But you don't use it wisely. You toss a lot of it away. Shape up. Keep our ship

afloat. You gotta show you mean it. Otherwise you're gonna get a broadside from one of our subboats. We might even elect a different set of pirates.

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