

editorial opinion

Dan McCosh's Column



An annual adventure

Some of the great adventures on our time are small journeys taken on a bicycle.

It takes the courage of a bullfighter to ride a 10-speed close to the horns of a tandem trailer truck in traffic, the strength of a mountain climber to buck a headwind uphill.

The story of a 58-year-old who peddles to work every day, fair weather and foul, has ceased to become news. The thought is still tempting, however, particularly when signing credit card slips in a gas station.

Since I commute about 15 miles, the temptation isn't particularly strong. But warm weather and a couple of turns around the block got my mind working in that direction recently, and one sunny morning I tried it.

BICYCLING DROPS you into another kind of time scheme anyway, and going to work in the morning it is easier to relate to kids walking to school than to the rushing cars on their way to the office.

A piece of glass punctured the romantic notions about four miles away, something

I remembered happening to me when I was a kid about three miles away from home, and I had to call my mother.

The indignity when I was forced to call my wife was considerable in light of the memory and even my son laughed a lot.

But the conviction it was worth doing was strengthened, and a couple of days later I stuffed the bike in the car, drove to work, and committed myself to the trip home.

Once again, peddling down 12 Mile, one became conscious of this crazy sense of being in another world of speed.

With a tailwind, and the bike hurtling along nearly as fast as the cars, the blocks, even the tar strips on the pavement, seemed to go slowly.

Later the wind shifted, the traffic became heavy, and it became work.

I arrived home with sore legs, which lasted a week, the tires intact, and a funny "click" in the chain which I hadn't noticed before.

Maybe I'll try it again, once a year or so, until I get in shape.

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From our readers

Runs on record

To the Editor:
The political candidate runs for office on his record of past performance and on what he tells the voters he will do, if elected. I hope the co-publisher of the "Observer & Eccentric" is not suggesting that we ignore the record and concentrate on just promises.

This would surely suit two of the candidates in the 17th District Congressional race who have records they might like the people of the district to ignore.

Mr. Power criticized Pat McDonald for telling voters that Rep. William Brodhead's name was on a legal brief asking the State Supreme Court to "Strike down Michigan's Marijuana Statute," so defendant-appellant John Sinclair, leader of this radical Rainbow People's Party, could be released from prison.

Mr. Power makes light of being "soft on grass." I hope Mr. Power never has to deal with a child who is "high" on grass. The use of marijuana produces a breakdown of restraints that leads children out of school and to theft, so that it can be purchased.

MARIJUANA leads to experimentation with sex, hallucinogens, drugs and narcotics.

The unspecified socially unacceptable practices referred to were those of John Sinclair, not the members of the Legislature. They include urging children to use marijuana, disregard for the law and contempt for the courts.

Brodhead's rebuttal that the brief urged reducing criminal penalties rather than legalization was strange, coming from a man who first denied knowledge of the brief, and then denied being associated with it. Only when the brief was produced, Brodhead admitted he knew his name was on it. He said he didn't fulfill his obligation as an attorney and officer of the court to have his name removed because, he "didn't think anyone would find out about it."

igan's Marijuana Statute" not to amend it or reduce penalties. Representative Brodhead was not being accused of being "soft on grass" as much as he was being accused of exercising plain bad judgment.

John Sinclair was hardly a charity case as far as getting help was concerned. Beatie, John Lennon, was only one pop culture superstar working in his behalf. If Bill Brodhead's views are those contained in the legal brief, the voters of the 17th District have every right to know about them.

Unless we are to assume that the attorney who filed the brief phoned Representative Brodhead at random from the phone book, the voters of the 17th District are entitled to know how his name got on the brief and why. William Brodhead was listed not as an individual but as a state representative. In the absence of meaningful consumer protection, campaign reform legislation; a method of preventing school strikes; help for senior citizens; welfare reform; progress in the care of the mentally ill and retarded; curtailment of constant utility and health insurance increases, the voter may wonder how Bill Brodhead had time for John Sinclair.

Patrick McDonald

June 11, 1974

McDonald defended

To the Editor:
Come election time one can most often expect to find editorial pages of newspapers flowing with political counsel which, if not always complete and factual, nonetheless can be very persuasive.

Your recent Observation Point column remark took 17th Congressional District Democratic primary candidate Patrick McDonald to task was an example of this uniquely democratic activity. However, I was particularly troubled by this endeavor as it was presented in the guise of a "responsibility to the public" and under the presumption that we would take heart in your commentary as—"an active watchdog for the public interest."

Active indeed-but will it be unbiased? This was the question I asked myself as I read through your pre-

amble. Alas, as I read further, I was to be disappointed.

YOUR MAJOR dissatisfaction with Mr. McDonald stems from his charge, made at a recent Meet the Candidate Night, that Mr. Faxon and Mr. Brodhead had established a record as favoring the legalization of marijuana. To support his statement, Mr. McDonald presented a legal brief filed with the Supreme Court of Michigan indicating such a position and carrying the names of Mr. Faxon and Mr. Brodhead.

As you indicated by now Mr. Faxon had left the meeting. Mr. Brodhead's position was that he had not authorized the use of his name on the brief. At this point you failed to complete the scenario.

Mr. Brodhead subsequently allowed that he did not learn of the brief until five months after its filing, but took no action to refute or otherwise alter the unauthorized use of his name. A strange response indeed considering it dealt not only with the marijuana question, but also petitioned for the release of John Sinclair.

Going on, Mr. McDonald was taken to task for devoting only three graphs of his remarks to the important issues of foreign policy, inflation, unemployment, etc. You neglected to advise your readers that each candidate's formal presentation was limited to only five minutes—hardly long enough to do these issues justice.

While you mention only Mr. McDonald's remarks, your readers might be interested in the paragon issues which other candidates discussed in the same time frame.

TWO REVIEWED their backgrounds and experiences and generally presented a litany of the issues; one talked of the anticipated reverse impact of the generic drug bill considered in Lansing (he quoted his neighborhood druggist as a source for his data) and lastly Mr. Brodhead spent a good portion of his time attacking Mr. McDonald (who had not arrived yet) for making unsubstantiated charges.

Mr. Power, I would like to suggest that your commentary on the particular meeting and issue in question hardly supports your avowed position as "watchdog for the public interest."

R.B. Driscoll
Bloomfield Hills

June 11, 1974

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