

editorial opinion

Area LWV deserves support

Area businesses and residents undoubtedly are delighted with appeals for donations from many worthy groups.

One of the most active groups in the community, however, is beginning a fund-raising drive and deserves special consideration at this time.

Americans may be disillusioned with politics, but our system requires continued interest in local governmental affairs. The West Bloomfield-Farmington Area League of Women Voters helps stimulate interest in self-government by providing unbiased information on candidates and issues to the public.

Now, the group is organizing candidates' meetings and its voters guides to help residents cast an in-

telligent vote Nov. 5. Besides its work around election time, however, the League also studies other topics of interest to voters.

Members of the League invest literally hundreds of hours to its cause. The group depends on donations to help its work for good government.

Residents of the area can expect to receive flyers asking for donations to the league, and personal contact from a league member.

Residents who think participation in the community should be encouraged who—think political apathy is one of the biggest problems facing the nation—should consider giving to the League. Their work is vital and matched by no other organization.

Library concerns valid

Last year's U.S. Supreme Court ruling which broadened the definition of obscenity was like a rock thrown in the middle of a lake.

The ripples are just starting to reach shore.

Both West Bloomfield and the city of Farmington Hills adopted local ordinances early this year with wording closely following guidelines set down by the Supreme Court.

The intention was to put a tool in the hands of the local police to inhibit potential peep shows, "adult" movies and pornographic book stores from moving into the area.

While little reaction to the ordinances was heard at the time, the West Bloomfield Library Board now sees a threat to library operations in the new laws.

THE LIBRARY argues the ordinance inhibits those charged with dis-

seminating information and curtails an individual's constitutional right to information.

The Farmington Hills and Walled Lake Library boards have concurred with the West Bloomfield effort.

They support an amendment to the local ordinance which would exempt prohibited materials or performances "in the course of bona fide school, college university, museum or public library activities."

The library's position is based solely on its own materials selection policy and the "Library bill of rights" adopted by the Council of the American Library Associations.

It is obvious the library has no intention of going into the pornography business. Its main concern is the "marginal" books which some portion of the public demand, and which offend others.

The ordinance puts the library in

the position of a second-class censor, worrying not only about what offends the "prevailing community standards" but about what may offend someone in the future.

THEIR CONCERNS are valid. On the other hand, the pressure put on the library and its employees is no different than that put on grocery stores, magazine outlets and the corner movie house by the Supreme Court ruling and the local ordinance.

The library board obviously feels it is possible to change the mind of the local government, while the Supreme Court may not be open to persuasion.

THERE is a larger issue raised by this unusual request, however. Should a unit of government feel uncomfortable with a law merely ask for exemption from it?

The concerns of the library board are merely an extension of the concerns of the public.

Your ecology calendar

Ecology-minded persons who wish to save cans, bottles or newspapers for recycling may use these facilities.

To prepare glass, thoroughly wash the containers, remove all metal caps and rings from the glass and separate the glass by color.

To prepare cans, clean only. Paper need not be removed.

Newspapers should be tied in bundles with heavy string or rope or secured in heavy paper bags.

• **BIRMINGHAM** — Daily newspaper pickup with regular trash. Newspapers must be bundled separately.

• **BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP** — Behind the township offices, 1000 Telegraph Road, just south of Long Lake Road. Between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., Saturdays. Glass and clean cans are collected each week. All aluminum items accepted. Newspapers collected on the last Saturday of each month.

• **GROVES ECOLOGY CLUB** — Bundled or bagged newspapers and cardboard will be collected from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday the second week of each month at the high school's front parking lot.

• **LATHRUP VILLAGE** — At the Public Services Building, 19101

Twelve Mile Road, adjacent to the high school. Newspapers are collected 10 a.m.-2 p.m. by volunteers, the first Saturday of each month.

• **PONTIAC** — Oakland County Recycling Center, 550 S. Telegraph, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. every Saturday. Groups bringing in more than 500 lbs. of glass will receive \$10 per ton for glass.

• **SOUTHFIELD** — In the old city offices, 26000 Berg Road at Ten and One-half Mile, one block east of Telegraph.

• **TROY** — At the DPW Yard, 4695 Rochester Road, from 9 a.m. to noon on the first and third Saturday of each month.

Eccentricities



Are cities worth saving?

by HANK HOGAN

"Are Cities Worth Saving?" was the topic of a speech before the University Press Club given by Gerald E. Crane, chairman of Urban Planning in the College of Architecture at the University of Michigan. Dr. Crane was the architectural force behind the planning of the medical center around Harper and Grace Hospitals in Detroit.

The key point of his speech was that American cities, unlike those elsewhere in the world, are not what he called "recycling" their buildings.

IN OTHER COUNTRIES, because of the shortage of land, as a part of a city deteriorates, people come in and restore the old buildings, giving the area new life. In America we just go out and look for a new place to build in the suburbs and abandon the old buildings. Eventually they deteriorate beyond the point of restoration and are ripped down under urban renewal, to become parking lots — and the city slowly dies.

Possibly it is the inclination of the American people to abandon and rebuild that has led to the growth of the suburbs.

ON THE OTHER hand, you cannot have suburbs if a core city dies. Hence, there must be a commitment on somebody's part to restore the cities.

Observation Point

by PHILIP H. POWER

During the past week, I had the exciting experience of sitting in with this newspaper's editorial board interviews with the two major candidates for governor in November's election.

Incumbent William Milliken was thoughtful, quiet, persuasively defending his record; challenger Sanders Levin was equally thoughtful, probing, eloquently on the attack.

Coming out of these meetings, I had the overwhelming feeling that for 1974 at least the process of politics have thrown up to the judgement of the electorate two remarkably qualified men.

MUCH OF our conversations centered on the issue of teacher strikes, which are of particular interest to the suburbs, since the majority of teacher strikes this fall occurred in suburban districts. Both candidates had illuminating views on the subject.

Both agreed that teacher strikes hurt everybody involved. Both felt that the present collective bargaining method of resolving teacher-school board differences was at best sound.

But both felt there was room for much improvement. GOV. MILLIKEN approached the issue from an economic standpoint. In the case of labor-management conflict in private business, both sides have an incentive to settle. Labor does not want to give up weekly paychecks; management does not want to halt profitable operations.

But in the case of school strikes, failure to settle does not reduce the property tax millage or state aid that the school board uses to run the system (although it might reduce the chances of voter approval of millage increases at a later date.)

Nor does a strike reduce teacher income.



School strikes: 2 ways out

since state law requires 180 days of education for each student (although a strike might cut a teacher's moonlighting additional income.) He wouldn't rule out compulsory, binding arbitration.

The Governor urged attention be given to trying to construct disincentives against strikes. What these might be is vague, although some kind of reduction in teacher income after a strike of a certain duration is one approach, just as is a cut in state aid for the school board after a certain period might be another.

LEVIN CAME at the issue from another direction. He argued that it would be useful to arrange the collective bargaining situation so that the pressure of "third force" the public at large — could usefully be brought to bear in strike threat situations.

He proposed establishing a timetable for school bargaining, with the entry of a fact-finder into the process if it were running behind schedule.

To this suggestion, I would add that once injected into the bargaining process, the fact-finder should make his findings — as well as various bargaining proposals — available to the news media. Reports of the fact-finder's findings would tend to keep the public informed about the situation, and newspaper stories about various bargaining proposals would tend to reduce both sides' wildness at the table.

COMING AT the same issue — school strikes — from two different directions, our two candidates for governor have made useful and interesting proposals.

I hope that when the votes are finally counted, the occupant of the governor's chair gives them careful attention.

A side-bar

Do it yourself

If you can't find a bumper sticker that expresses your sentiment, just do it yourself.

The driver of a station wagon around Birmingham not only has an "I Brake for Animals" on a back window bumper sticker but a couple more that look homemade.

Littered in black ink on crooked white paper "Justice Is Dead" and "Shame on Nixon."

'Favor, returned

Cider time can try the patience of Franklin Villagers. One resident decided he had enough when he stepped out on his front porch and saw a family of strangers sitting on his front lawn munching donuts and sipping cider.

He jotted down the license number of the offending group and traced it. The next weekend, gathering with children and assorted relatives, he drove into Southfield, spread blankets and picnic baskets on the interloper's front lawn, and returned the favor.

Woodchuck eviction

Three West Bloomfield "residents" were more or less issued an eviction notice recently. It seems the township Library Board's decision to repair the exterior stairway and drain of the public library will force a mother and two children to seek a new homestead.

The family trio of woodchucks has been comfortably enjoying the hospitality of the library surroundings beneath the stairway.

A dubious debut

Bloomfield Township policeman Mike Apeauch has been taking speech classes at Oakland University. His unerring debut over the airwaves might have put a damper on his broadcasting aspirations.

Taping a segment on Miracle Mile Shopping Center's low crime rate with WPON's Dave Stone, Apeauch scarcely uttered his first sentence when the disc jockey keeled over in a faint. "I know I'm no professional," Apeauch said after reviving the woozy DJ, "but I wasn't that bad."

Survey under way

A group of bicycle enthusiasts is conducting a survey of Bloomfield Township residents to determine attitudes toward the people-powered vehicles.

The bicycle committee, an arm of the Traffic and Safety Board and the Parks and Recreation Board, is contacting 400 residents by telephone in a survey prepared through the Survey Research Center at University of Michigan.

The committee hopes to determine the volume of bicycle use in the city and some of the bikers' needs such as designated routes or paths.

A federal grant for construction of bike paths is available and the study results are expected to be used to determine whether the city will apply for the grant.

Not Southfield

Members of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) from Ferndale are soliciting Southfield residents and businesses for funds for their pet projects.

Southfield police are in no way involved with the organization nor do they benefit from any donations, says Chief Milton Sackett. In fact, department rules and regulations prohibit Southfield police officers from soliciting, period, Sackett asserts.

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League opposes 'C'

To the Editor:

The League of Women Voters of Michigan opposes Proposal C, which will appear on the November ballot. One very important standard under the League's tax position is — The legislature should have broad and fundamental taxing power, free of constitutional restrictions.

The constitution says the legislature shall impose taxes sufficient with other resources to pay the expenses of state government. By eroding the power of the legislature to tax, the benefits of a sound tax program are jeopardized. As regressive as a sales tax on necessities is, we believe it should be banned constitutionally. It should be dealt with by law.

INNOVATIVE TAX MEASURES are important and necessary to a changing economy. For example, the now-popular "circuit-breaker" taxes are hailed by all authorities as an excellent method of giving relief to taxpayers whose property taxes are an excessive burden. This past summer, our state legislature passed legislation giving sales tax on food and drugs relief to low income people. The LWV supported this act, and believe this to be an excellent step toward removing the regressive nature of the sales tax on food.

In supporting a moderately progressive tax system, the League displays its belief in the concept of a system based on the ability to pay. The sales tax on food fundamentally does not recognize or differentially does not attempt to pay. It imposes the same tax on the same food regardless of what percentage of a person's income it costs. This proves to be an excessive burden on low income people, and the League believes this is unreasonable and unwise. However, by introducing the rebate concept, progressivity is introduced, and we believe this is a sound procedure.

Many instances can be cited in the Michigan taxation system where progressivity has been introduced in an otherwise regressive or proportional tax. Exemptions, rebates, or credits are methods we have traditionally sought to alleviate conditions where ability to pay has been disregarded. We continue to support these methods of achieving what we and many tax authorities believe to be a good tax structure.

Constitutional bans and restrictions are a very serious detriment to a good tax system. The league will continue to oppose all efforts to increase such inflexibility, and will continue to support efforts to remove present constitutional bans and restrictions.

JoAnn Hubbard
President, League of Women Voters of Troy

Youths' efforts ignored

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter not only as a concerned parent but also as a citizen of West Bloomfield Township.

I know that in this day and age we must all be mindful of the steady "onward and upward" attitude in a growing township, especially one with "growing pains" such as ours. But I also feel we should not overlook the youth of our community who will one day be the backbone of our growing township.

I was greatly disturbed to learn that our township, in complete disregard for the youth and their feelings, denied a parade permit for West Bloomfield High School to have their homecoming parade on Friday night.

I understand the traffic problems are not the best at that time and that there is construction going on beyond the parade route, but in a time when it is so easy for our teens to go as

tray, it is an encouraging sight to see the enthusiasm, interest and hard work with which these children have dedicated themselves to making the floats and preparing for this event. The marching band alone has practiced for hours.

I am sure that everyone would rather see his energy and interests directed in this worthwhile project than running the streets and using drugs.

I KNOW WE have issued permits in the past to visiting dignitaries and also for Michigan Week, all for various reasons I'm sure. So I really can't see why we can't give the youth of our community some worthwhile encouragement with a parade permit for them. The work and dedication that has gone into this project is really rewarding to see, both at the middle school and high school levels, and one which I am sure, would make you proud and happy these students are associated with our township.

Please see how disappointed they were when all their hard work had been in vain just on the say so of the township and then you'll understand why they were so distressed and discouraged. Maybe when you need their spirit to come forth for you in the future it may not be there just as yours wasn't there for them.

Mrs. R. LeRoy
West Bloomfield

Oct. 11

Open Forum

Letters to the "From our readers" column should be limited to between 100 and 200 words and be signed with name, address and telephone number. Letters of a longer length will be considered in terms of content and availability of space. The Observer & Eccentric reserves the right to edit letters for length and good taste. Names of letter writers may be withheld under exceptional circumstances.