

editorial opinion

Registration important

Preserving the heritage of the City of Farmington will be easier if officials at the local, state and national level press for inclusion of the historic district on the national registry of historic places.

A visit from the deputy director of the Michigan division of the department of state encouraged those residents who have done a service to their community by supporting the historic district. City officials and those residents, however, must continue to watch the application for inclusion on the registry so that it can become a reality.

The area involved includes 21 properties bounded by Shiawassee, Warner, Oak-

land and Grand River. The city is said to have been a crossroads of three important Indian trails in the state.

Supporters of the move must be careful that special interest groups do not try to use the historic district to further their own ends. This has happened in other communities despite the good intentions of the historic societies that work so hard to see their goals materialize.

At its best, the registration of the district will mean important legal protection, funding for improvement and encouragement of further preservation. It is our hope that the city will reach this goal in preserving its landmarks and heritage.

Southfield has fine program

The award recently given Southfield's parks and recreation department recognizes what the thousands of residents who participate in the city's activities already know—Southfield has one of the finest programs in the country.

The Sports Foundation Inc. gave Southfield's parks and recreation department its highest honor when it awarded the city a National Gold Medal Award. The judges based their decisions on the scope of the programs. Did they operate for everyone in the community, from toddlers to the aged? Did they show leadership in planning and land acquisition? Did the program show cooperation between various governmental units?

WITH 16 per cent of the city's population older than 60, the parks and recreation department emphasizes a board program for senior citizens. The department has a full time coordinator for senior citizens and a recreation center exclusively for senior citizens. The department has 75 leisure and health programs for seniors.

At the other end of the age spectrum, the department has increased its services to teenagers. The city and the Southfield School District jointly employ a full time youth coordinator. Attend-

anced at teen programs has increased more than 300 per cent in the past five years.

The department also features a therapeutic recreation program for mentally or physically handicapped residents. Again, the school district and the city share in a program which provides activities ranging from crafts to physical education.

AN IMPORTANT facet of any community is its cultural affairs. The parks and recreation department sponsors many programs of cultural interest, sharing costs with nonprofit community groups. The program extends from fine arts classes to performances by symphonies, choruses and theater groups. A bond issue, approved by Southfield voters has allowed the city to acquire more than 800 acres of park land.

The city will plan 5,000 trees a year along streets and in parks. A group of teenagers called "Eco-Corps," supervised by the parks and recreation department, helps with environmental improvement projects.

The department of parks and recreation has made remarkable strides considering Southfield is only 15 years old. Residents can best endorse the department's work by continuing to participate in the wide variety of programs available.



Congratulations Warriors

Brother Rice High School won the Catholic League football championship and the mythical state championship Sunday by defeating Madison Heights Bishop Foley. Despite the fact that Rice head coach Al Fracassa's sons were playing for Foley, the Warriors marched to a 35-0

victory. Rick (11) started at quarterback and Dave (42) was the reserve halfback for Foley. Brother Rice won the state basketball title in March and becomes the first school to win back-to-back Class A basketball and football championships. Congratulations Warriors.

Eccentricities

by HANK HOGAN



The consumer in harness

Who has consumerism legislation really helped?

America was built on the free enterprise system. Unfortunately, part of free enterprise is the concept of "let the buyer beware."

In the last several years consumer advocates like Ralph Nader have brought attention to the fact that the buyer on occasion is not too swift, and hence may be taken advantage of.

While it is not universally true, there were enough examples to get politicians moving, and new laws were passed that supposedly would protect the consumer.

The problem was that the laws were enacted in a hurry and destroyed some of the aspect of the marketplace. They replaced such activities as competition with governmental regulation.

IT IS NOTHING new to say that government action is not always quick and that governmental agencies are more subject to special interest pressure than the traditional marketplace where supply and demand rule.

In many cases the consumer is now getting exactly what he wants but is paying a much higher price for it, because industry has incurred new costs.

Examples of this are found every day in super markets, where packaging is more precise, but the cost is passed on to the consumer.

Observation Point

by PHILIP H. POWER

Now that the election is over, the votes counted, the dust settled, there is enough perspective to plot some general trends in the voting.

Overall, Michigan voters—particularly in the suburbs—continued their remarkable tradition of independent-minded ticket-splitting.

Suburban voters gave heavy edge to Republican Gov. Milliken, and then turned around and gave even bigger margins to Atty. Gen. Frank Kelley and Secretary of State Richard Austin, both Democrats. Then in Oakland County, Livonia and Plymouth, the voters came right back and voted heavily for GOP congressional candidates.

The major criterion in an otherwise confusing pattern seemed to be that voters were willing, even eager, to cross party lines back and forth, voting for incumbents who seemed to be doing a good job.

This explains the Milliken-Kelley-Austin pattern. It explains why Oakland County voters swept U.S. Rep. William Broomfield back into office and elected Republican Dan Murphy county executive in the face of a strong challenge from Gene Kutyh. And it gives thrust to the heavy votes for such Republicans as U.S. Rep. Marvin Esch and State Sen. Carl Pursell in Livonia and Plymouth.

FOR REPUBLICANS, the election results were bittersweet. Bill Milliken is still firmly seated in the governor's chair, but when the new Legislature convenes next year he will be surrounded by a surly and hostile majority of Democrats. The State Senate, until now controlled by the GOP, has been invaluable to the governor in acting as a buffer between the Democratic majority in the House and the administrative board. This buffer will be gone in 1975.

Clearly, Gov. Milliken will have to come to some kind of working relationship with legislative Democrats in order to see any progress in state government. This, however, will be tough, as inflation and unemployment may well encourage Democrats to take essentially partisan positions to help their constituencies.

ON THE OTHER hand because of consumerism legislation, the customer in many cases is getting more than he wants and more than he is willing to pay for, and hence is not buying. The result is a downturn in the sales of many businesses.

The automobile business is a good example because it is so close to home.

There is no secret that people are not buying cars like they used to. The fact that they cost a lot more than they used to hasn't helped.

A good portion of the increased costs is a result of federal regulations brought on by consumerism legislation.

THE ORDINARY driver, even though he knows it will save lives, doesn't like to strap himself into a shoulder harness every time he starts his car.

Because of federal regulation, he has had to pay, up until its repeal last month, more than \$100 to have an interlock system installed, and an additional \$10 or \$15 to get someone to disconnect it.

It's an old adage in legislative bodies that the law that doesn't get passed seldom hurts anybody.

Laws passed under the pressure of the heat of the day normally have to be altered in the future because no one had time to measure the full long term effect of the action.

Many consumerism laws are not bearing up too well when viewed by their total impact on people's lives.

The bittersweet returns

In broader terms, Michigan Republicans now need to put out some real effort to find a palatable successor to the governor.

In an interview with this newspaper before the election, Gov. Milliken explicitly refused to rule out running for Sen. Philip Hart's seat in 1976. If he does so, there could be trouble for the state GOP, since Lieut. Gov.-elect James Dammann of Troy has been badly damaged—rightly or wrongly—by published allegations of conflict of interest.

On the scene to succeed Milliken's unique blend of quiet, decent thoughtfulness could be Sen. Pursell, who represents Plymouth, Livonia and Redford Township, and who is now in a position to take the minority leadership in the State Senate—if he wants it.

FOR MICHIGAN'S Democrats, the aftermath of their sweep is nearly as mixed.

On the one hand, they now have a lock on the State Legislature. On the other, they lost the governorship once again.

The lock on the Legislature will be important, because it means Gov. Milliken has to come to them rather than the more even-handed situation which obtained for the past two years.

But the pressure will be on Democratic legislative leaders. The voters expect them to perform with the state's economy in such sad shape, and no state legislature can do very much about a national recession except try to cushion the blows.

On more exalted fronts—the Senate and the governorship—Democrats face problems. If Sen. Hart, as rumored, decides not to run in 1976, a wild scramble for the nomination will be on; if he does run, an equally intense scramble will take place for the gubernatorial nomination in 1978.

Despite the thoughtful and constructive campaign that Sander Levin waged, Michigan's Democrats have yet to find a man on the white horse who can replace G. Mennen Williams and John Swanson in firing the public imagination.

That will be tough. In times of trouble it's hard to make heroes.

From our readers

Semi-annual taxes

To the Editor:
Semi-annual tax collection for schools, which has been eagerly anticipated for years, has finally become a reality.

On behalf of my fellow Bloomfield Hills Board of Education members and the administration, I wish to publicly express our gratitude to the entire community for their support which ultimately inures to the benefit of our school children.

A special thanks to the respective P.T.O. Councils, the Superintendent and his staff, this newspaper which endorsed the concept, the Bloomfield Township officials who agreed to put the matter to a referendum and finally the electorate which went to the

polls and overwhelmingly endorsed semi-annual tax collections. We Salute You.

James K. Graham
President
Bloomfield Hills
Board of Education
Nov. 11, 1974

Troy newcomers

During the month of November the Troy Newcomers Club will be celebrating its fourth birthday. Since its inception, this organization has offered an opportunity to new residents of the City of Troy and surrounding area to become acquainted with their new, exciting city.

The purposes outlined in the Con-

sultation of the Troy Newcomers Club are:

- To take an active interest in the civic, social and spiritual welfare of the community.
- To promote and encourage good citizenship, as well as good government.
- To aid our country and community through the gift of our time and energy for worthy purposes.
- To undertake and promote charitable and humanitarian projects within the community.

The members of Troy Newcomers Club are proud of these purposes, take them very seriously, and successfully endeavor to fulfill them. Since our family moved from Troy in July, I have come to realize more fully just how vital a healthy organization like the Troy Newcomers Club is to new residents. I proudly wish them

well, and pray that they will continue their fine efforts in behalf of their city and its Newcomers.

Nancy P. Andersen (Mrs. John W.)
Bellevue, Washington
Nov. 5, 1974

Fine mail service

To the Editor:
We are lucky in having the new U.S. Postal Service assign a man of Donald Ashton's talents as officer-in-charge of Birmingham. He sees his job as a traditional American service to be rendered as a courteous response to local needs.

At some risk to himself, he adds services rather than cutting them back. The friendly lobby is open midnight where many local users enjoy the xerox machine, stamp dispensers, mail drops, rental boxes, pay-phone and zip book, even after window services are closed.

WE ARE A city of commuters, professionals, self-employed, volunteers in many after-hour activities. It has been pointed out to Mr. Ashton that he could cut costs if he locked up the whole building every day after the windows close. Many other post offices in Oakland County have done so, but not Birmingham.

I write this letter in support of Mr. Ashton's decision to remain responsive to our needs.

I hope that his superiors will agree

that that is what his job is all about. Let us all thank Mr. Ashton and his wonderfully courteous, friendly staff.

Irene E. Murphy
Birmingham
Nov. 11, 1974

Evils of alcohol

To the Editor:
Recently, we learned that Turkey has decided to return to its production of drugs in spite of pressure from the United States to desist. There's too much money in it for Turkey.

But there's more money in it for the smugglers and drug pushers here in the States. And there's more grief than money or pleasure for those who fall prey to the seductive spell of narcotics. We outlaw these harmful drugs and we fight the peddlers. We pale as we watch lives blighted by this evil and pray that it will never darken our doors.

But many Americans invite the shadow of an equally vicious drug into their home—and think nothing of it. I'm talking about alcohol. It's a drug too.

AMERICANS ARE hitting the bottle harder than ever before, even while they frown on those who turn to the drugs of heroin, marijuana, the pick-me-ups and put-me-downs. It's the in thing to have a drink when you come

home from work or when there's any kind of social gathering, or when you need a lift to get the day started. Teach our children to drink in the home, some say, and we won't have any problem.

Don't kid yourself. The problem is in the bottle, not in the place where one drinks it. And it is rapidly becoming America's number one problem. Thousands of innocent, sober people die annually because of alcohol. They die because someone thought that he could handle his drink, that he was the only one "taking the chance."

The man or woman who kills with his automobile is as guilty as the drug addict who kills in order to get money to feed his habit. Neither one really knows what he is doing. And both die drug addicts.

THAT'S SOMETHING to think about. I've done a lot of thinking about it since the Seventh-day Adventist church here made me Temperance Secretary. And it's because I've been thinking about the well-being of our people here in Troy that I'm writing this. If I can help just one young person understand that drink is no substitute for adulthood, but a ball and chain that can mutilate, murder, and drive men insane, if I can lead just one person to freedom from alcohol, I'll be well repaid for any effort.

Kurt Becht
Troy

Oct. 17

Farmington Observer & Eccentric

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