

# Wylie Gerdes writes

## New Congressman's openness is impressive

How much difference does personal life make in the effectiveness of a politician?

Residents of the 17th Congressional district, which includes Southfield and Farmington, can see by watching U.S. Rep. William Brodhead (D-Detroit) that Brodhead made his first formal speech before a 17th district group last week. The speech was before a generally hostile group—the Detroit Citizens Club—and gave me a chance to see the new Congressman in action. I interviewed Brodhead during the general election campaign, after the district had witnessed Brodhead's finding victory in the Democratic primary. Brodhead beat Patrick McDo- nald, probably the strongest politician from the northwest Detroit part

of the district, and Joseph Levine, a man with lots of money and a familiar name.

I saw him as an unusually forthright politician, but I attributed much of that appearance to the fact he in essence had been elected already. The district is heavily Democratic and the nomination amounted to election.

His credentials were impressive enough. The primary victory was made by a two-term state legislator with only a liberal record and a pretty visage on which to base a campaign.

Last week, he again appeared to me as apparently open politician. He pointed his views vividly for an au-

## editorial opinion

dience which probably did not agree with most of them.

AT TIMES, he fidgeted while answering some pointed questions. Other questions stumped him entirely. He admitted, for example, that there is a need on the energy subcommittee, of which he is a member, for more knowledge about the field. He is a lawyer and lawmaker and not knowledgeable in the energy field, he said.

Seeing politicians subtly shift per-

spectives when speaking before different groups is one of the delights of covering them. I expected Brodhead to lose down some of his views for the oil and energy company executives.

Although his speech was different from one he would have given at the Northwest Center for Racial Justice, it wasn't that much different.

OTHER POLITICIANS—Martha Griffiths, the woman Brodhead re-

placed, for example—shade their material much more to flatter the groups they speak before.

Personally, in a few minutes of conversation with me and in lengthy exchanges with club members, Brodhead also was willing to exchange views. He showed no impatience in giving an American government lesson to one slightly lit member of the group.

Mrs. Griffiths and other politicians seem glad to talk to reporters as long as the subjects discussed are ones they feel comfortable with. Sometimes, they can brush off a reporter, as Mrs. Griffiths did to a staff writer recently, when the newspaper is not needed to promote their views. That Brodhead seems to be an at-

tractive fellow with a pleasing personality may not make much difference at all in his performance. Who is to say that a politician can't be more effective by being close-mouthed and evasive.

HOWEVER, BRODHEAD gives a picture of a man who respects his followers. He respects his constituents and others enough to be open and honest with them. His actions show that he feels no matter what disagreements may occur on issues, constituents are not his adversaries.

It's the kind of respect for voters that has been lacking from all levels of government lately. It led to the top officers in the government unmercifully exploiting the trust of voters.

# Jackie Klein writes

## A difficult decision ends 16 years of loving

It's hard to believe 16 years have passed since a tiny, black bundle of fur on tottering legs came into our home.

Misty didn't look much like a French poodle and a show dog he would never be. The hair on his chest and chin was white where it should have been black to match the rest of him. But we loved him, imperfections and all, and to us he was champion stock.

Misty gave us 16 years of love and he proved he was a champ until the end. Keeping him alive was a losing battle, but somehow we felt he knew we were trying. And he put up a tough struggle until his heart finally gave out.

Last week, my husband signed the papers to have Misty put to sleep. He didn't want to make that decision. None of us did but it

was the only humane thing we could do for a pet who was no longer able to function.

Misty slept under our bed every night. I still expect to find him there in the morning. As he grew older, we watched him stumble down the stairs and remembered when he was a puppy and had to be carried.

Misty had a distinct personality. He was a house dog who preferred curling up wherever we were to roving with the rest of the neighborhood canine population.

When he was younger, he occasionally ventured out, but never very far away. He hated to ride in the car because he associated the trip with the veterinarian or the poodle groomer.

He was a quiet animal with a special dignity. He never bothered anyone who didn't

show him affection and his affection was reserved for his family.

HE KNEW when we were packing for a vacation and he was ecstatic when we came home. He would literally cry with excitement and leap with joy when he was able. Later, he could barely wag his tail, but he felt secure when we were there.

The last time we went away, we boarded Misty in a kennel. He refused to eat for a week and we almost lost him then. But his heart was still strong and he recovered.

Equating a dog to a human family member is repugnant to some people. But the attachment is very real and it's something you

can't explain to non-animal lovers.

WE COMPLAINED about the price of dog food and the veterinarian bills and the four different prescriptions we had to fill for Misty. We were annoyed when he lost control and had an accident on the carpeting.

We yelled at him for barking in the early morning hours and for begging to be let outside at 6 a.m. It cost a lot to have him groomed and to board him when we were away.

But it was worth it all. We may get another dog, but he'll never be like the one we lost. He left us broken hearted but he gave us 16 years of love.

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Mon. 7:30 p.m.

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Mon. 10 a.m.—7 p.m.  
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