

editorial opinion

'Look what we're up to now'

The 1975 Farmington Founders Festival will have to overcome the memory of last year's successful Sesquicentennial and the 1976 Bicentennial to attract residents interest.

But the committee which steers the Festival has a good idea which will balance the historical themes of 1974 and 1976. The 1975 theme is "Look what we're up to now."

The 1975 Founders Festival will stress the progressive aspects of Farmington, to let residents and those who come to the area for the festival what's available in the Farmington area.

The main ingredients of the Festival will be similar to other successes. The pig-iron race on July 17 will kick off the preliminary activities, with official events beginning July 23 with the queen contest.

Other features carried over from previous successful festivals will be the Jaycee rodeo on July 25 and 26, and the parade on July 26. An expanded version of last year's "Sunday in the park" also will be featured.

Under discussion for this year's festival is several days of events in shopping areas outside downtown Farmington. Committee members are investigating scheduled appearances of the showmobile, with continuous entertainment, around the community.

The Festival committee has plans and ideas enough for a couple weeks' worth of events but needs one vital ingredient from the community—participation, either through donations of time or money.

The Festival is sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. Ed Lane is administrator of the festival. General chairman is Peter Prokop. Pat Fallon is first vice chairman and Bob Devyak is second vice chairman.

Other committee leaders are: Pat Smith, Sunday in the park; Dan Greenberg, publicity; Hildi Zetek, queen contest; Rae Rockafellow, executive secretary; Leon Serdyski, treasurer; Gerald Potter, board chairman; Charles Williams, finance chairman; Betti Huff, parade chairman; and Bob Beauchamp, advisor.

Make grants go the farthest

Farmington Hills city government can help hundreds of residents of the southeast section of the city by investing \$600,000 in federal grants in storm and sanitary sewers in the area.

A federal community development grant program, aimed at helping low-income persons and improving low-income areas, will give Farmington Hills \$600,000 over the next three years.

Spending the money in the southeast section is better than trying for programs over the whole city. There is a vast difference in socio-economic levels between different parts of the city, and the southeast section has more low income residents than any other area.

The concentration of senior citizens on fixed incomes and other groups hit hard by the country's economic problems

make the southeastern area a natural place to put the money. It will be a visible effort to make sure that residents of the area have services equal to other those offered other residents.

Storm and sanitary sewer development may not be the most glamorous way to spend the money, but those improvements are important to the health of the present residents and will insure future redevelopment.

City officials commented all the usual public improvements—paving, water and sewers—would cost more than \$12 million to install in the parts of southeast Farmington Hills which are without them. The limited money available will go the farthest when invested in the most basic improvements.

Agile in discrimination

With the emergence of the "brains over brawn" philosophy in modern law enforcement agencies, the need for agility or physical fitness testing seems an unnecessary and discriminatory formality.

The city of Troy, which whittled down more than 600 applicants to 190 for interviewing, is confronted once again with no eligible women. None of the 12 female applicants made it beyond the agility test.

It seems Troy is not unique in its requirement for applicants to pass a "basic" agility test, as many departments refer to it. Most local suburban departments have the same agility requirement, with slight variations in testing.

Locally, only Southfield and Bloomfield Township have a screening process which does not require running, swimming, leaping or dragging weights across the floor to demonstrate physical capabilities.

Needless to say, the agility testing is one reason local suburban departments have so few female patrolmen, and no ranking officers, with the exception of Pontiac which has a woman sergeant.

Many old school police officers will argue the disadvantages of female officers. Even modern law enforcement officials agree that women assigned to patrol duty are at a disadvantage.

But, we contend women can make good law enforcement officials—and brawn should not be a criterion.

As one police chief of an Oakland

County department argued, "A lot of times the job requires the police officer to drag a person or to pull someone out of a fire or to safety."

Such a demand seems reasonable. But it does not necessarily follow that a person unable to pass the agility test would be unable to perform this function in his or her everyday work.

WHILE DEPARTMENTS have upgraded educational requirements to a point where few departments accept applicants with less than two years of college, it would seem the next step should be elimination of the agility tests.

Southfield and Bloomfield Township require only that the applicant's weight and height be proportional.

As one Bloomfield Township lieutenant said, "I'd hate to have to pass one of those agility tests today after too many years on the department."

Several officials, including Troy's Chief Forrest Fisher have argued that almost anyone can pass the agility test with practice.

If the process is so easily trained for, it seems logical to stress an area besides physical fitness in the screening process and to include the physical shape-up with the basic training.

Some male sensibilities may be offended, but a woman officer just may perform more effectively than a man.

Eccentricities



The depression deathwish

Everybody is moaning about the present recession and asking whether it will reach the seriousness of the depression of the early 1930s.

The more people talk about it, the more it becomes a sort of death wish that is bound to happen.

There is more money in people's pockets today than ever before in the history of the country. Inflation has eaten into the buying power of this money, but the money still exists.

A recession is caused when people don't spend their money. If products aren't bought, manufacturers lay off employees, employees without jobs have less money and, in a circular circle, the recession gets worse.

ECONOMIC EXPERTS tell us that except for unemployment, we have probably bottomed out and the first signs of recovery are appearing on the scene. They expect a major recovery to occur in the third quarter of this year.

There is a difference of opinion among the experts as to how fast the economy will recover, but they all agree that the unemployment rate will not go down very quickly after the recovery, because manufacturers will use up their unused capacities before they hire new people, meaning a lag of possibly six months.

The unemployment figure, which is 8.2 per cent of the nation's labor force, is the flag that the doomsayers use to show how bad off is the country.

IF THERE IS not some unemployment in the nation there will be new inflation, because the labor force is in a position to bargain for higher wages, which starts the inflation spiral.

In the 1930s the target for what is acceptable unemployment was 4 per cent. Because of the change in the complexion of the labor force, economists now say full employment is closer to 5 per cent unemployment.

But the present 8.2 per cent unemployment figure is very misleading. The jobless rate for adult

men is only 6 per cent, which is well below the highs of 7 per cent in July of 1933 and 7.9 per cent in October of 1949.

In other words, the unemployment figure was pulled up to 8.2 per cent largely by the joblessness of teenagers and adult women. These two groups make up a relatively larger portion of the labor force than they did 40 or 50 years ago.

While many women and teenagers are the chief family breadwinners, many are not.

PROTECTION FOR the unemployed has changed since the early 30s, with unemployment compensation, social security, welfare and other socially oriented programs that have been initiated or expanded over recent years.

The annual rate for these payments, which are called transfer payments by the government, in January of this year was \$18.3 billion. This compares to a figure of \$23.5 billion in 1930 and \$9 billion in 1970.

The buying power of these transfer payments is equal to all of the retail sales in the nation for about three and one-half months.

Locally, our Michigan recession is caused by people not buying automobiles.

THE RESISTANCE to the purchasing of automobiles is claimed to be the increased cost.

It is certainly not due to the lack of money in people's pockets.

As long as people want to believe that we are in a recession, heading for a depression, they keep their money in their pockets and help accelerate it.

The nation as a whole and Michigan in particular must overcome this death wish and get back into the marketplace and buy.

This will generate an early upturn in the economy, will produce jobs and will actually help keep the inflation rate down because all of the government borrowing to fund its welfare programs will in the long run, create more inflation later.

Wylie Gerdes writes

Geiger is star of MEA circus

The Michigan Education Association might never have held in lower esteem than now. Its trials, however, may have won a measure of state-wide prominence for its president.

Keith Geiger, a Livonia Livonia High School teacher, made television news during the Crestwood School District strike. He tried to look reasonable through a bunch of teachers and a bunch of parents were intent on embarrassing themselves.

I met Geiger while he was president of the Livonia Education Association and I worked in Livonia. The association had about 200 members at one time, making it the second largest "EA" in the state.

Geiger was still teaching math at Stevenson at the time besides his union duties.

I admired the union's choice of a leader. There is hardly a human on the earth more the picture of a wholesome teacher than Keith Geiger. He's

young, tall, slim, with an attitude of confidence and good nature apparent to all.

He seemed a little stilled delivering position papers to the school board, and he still seems that way on television. Geiger stars answering questions in a more relaxed format. At press conferences, he is a whiz because he is so obviously telling you his true feelings.

In the Detroit area recently, Geiger said there has been some pressure on him to seek another term as MEA president. The MEA constitution recently was changed to give the president a two-year term and allow him two consecutive terms.

Allowing longer service by a president will give the MEA more identity, Geiger feels. Everybody knows who Albert Shamber is, for example (Shamber has been the leader of New York teachers for years.)

Being MEA president and traveling around the state, hasn't altered Geiger's pace of life. While teaching and leading the Livonia union, he also refereed sports events and participated in many civic affairs. Now the scope is wider but the speed is about the same.

SPEAKING of education associations, the Farmington union is trying to fill its executive director's job. Among the applicants who made it to the interviewing process was Aldo Vagnoni.

Vagnoni is Mr. Democrat in the Farmington area and maybe Mr. Union since he works for the AFL-CIO. He said applying for a job at his age was an interesting experience. He had trouble deciding what to wear.

Other applicants included a Livonia resident, Bill Joyner, an unsuccessful state representative candidate whose wife, Paula, teaches in Farmington.

From our readers

A long shot bet

Editor:

I read with interest the article by Wylie Gerdes which reported upon my recent appearance in Southfield. I was very pleased to have such coverage. It was an excellent series. The article adhered to the high standards I have come to expect in the Observer & Eccentric.

I do wish to elaborate upon one statement which appeared in the Feb. 17 article. I was quoted as saying I "bucked" Representative Udell for president. What I meant to indicate was that I thought Mr. Udell was a good bet but to be successful.

I believe that there are a number of fine Democratic candidates already in the field and that more will enter.

I think it is too early for me to make a decision on which particular candidate I will support.

Again, I want to stress that I thought the article very well done, and I am most appreciative of your excellent reporting and kind comments about me.

WILLIAM M. BROODHEAD
U.S. Representative,
7th District

Good Samaritan

Editor:

I too was impressed by Mr. Maxwell's letter concerning a Mr. Miller's unselfish act and would like to nominate Jack Langschwager as a good Samaritan of the week in any future news story.

Returning from my cabin last Thanksgiving weekend, my horse trailer backing failed near the Zilverde Bridge. I suppose it was a blessing in disguise for had I continued I would have hit the blizzard that paralyzed Detroit.

Anyway, I managed to make it to the nearest gas station, but they had no parts and being late they couldn't get parts until the next day. So what to do with two horses, a cat and a German shepherd dog?

I happened to remember the name of a person from a previous trail ride who lived in the vicinity and who in turn put me in touch with Langschwager.

Fifteen minutes later after calling him, in near zero weather, Jack came out to meet me, rode one of the horses for me to his house, and provided food and shelter for us during the two days wait for parts and the snowstorm to be cleared.

I was never more regally treated during my stay with Jack and his

wife Beverly. The trailer was fixed and we returned to Farmington without further incident.

I have since wondered if, whether the roles were reversed there lives a good Samaritan in the Farmington area who will be as unselfish as Jack Langschwager. I would like to believe there is.

CLARK A. RIDDEL
Farmington

A step backwards

Editor:

I am a 19-year-old physically handicapped student, a senior attending Harrison High School. Staying in the chair and the men's give chair of this fine school has been the most enriching experience of my high school years.

I am writing this letter to your newspaper to urge voters living in the Farmington School District to pass new findings when the time comes.

I think this is imperative because if the school budget is not increased some of the valuable educational curriculum which Harrison has now will probably be discontinued and other parts drastically altered.

This would mean a tragic step backwards for education.

However, if the voters do not do it my way, I offer a sensible alternative. I suggest that the board of education no longer hire so many administrators and coordinators. Also there could be fewer teachers' workshops and special teachers' meetings.

Well-prepared teachers should not need so much help in developing their class work and plans need not change in frequency.

If my suggestion were followed probably the program of Harrison would not have to change and students would continue to receive all the benefits now available. I strongly urge you to give this matter your utmost consideration and full attention.

STEPHEN EDLE DEER
Farmington

'Nauseating scene'

Editor:

My nine-year-old son and I witnessed one of the most nauseating scenes I think we will ever encounter in our lives. The Detroit Red Wing Old Timers were playing a benefit hockey game in a local hockey arena against our area All Stars.

The arena was packed, a few people in the grandstand began to throw paper airplanes, rubber bands and coins on the ice. As a result of this the ice, James Powers, a Red Wing Old Timer, slipped on a rubber band and injured himself.

An individual who throws anything

Farmington Observer & Eccentric

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