

# editorial opinion

## Getting back in shape with very little finesse

My feet squirmed in the tight-fitting figure skates. Taking a deep breath, I stood up and readied myself for the challenge of the decade.

The last time a pair of ice skates graced my feet was 18 years ago. I was 13 and wasn't what one would label a hot-shot skater. But, in the name of good health, I recently decided to don a pair of skates.

Being tied to a desk is ruinous to the health. During the warmer months, a bicycle keeps the arteries free of rust. Ice skating was the safest activity I could think of to keep the heart pumping during the winter months.

A rink manager once told me skating was good for personal health. Being rather cynical, I figured he was just spreading gossip to boost his own business. But, after two years of deliberation, I decided to give it a shot.

So, about two weeks ago, I humbly re-entered the rink.

Things haven't changed much on the recreational skating scene. A lot of kids were hanging around, all looking like they were having a good time and skating with what I found to be an unconcerning air of confidence.

### SLITHERED ONTO THE ICE.

What? Could it be true that after these many years ice was more slippery? I know that ice skating is much more popular than in the past. Perhaps the increased popularity caused advocates to produce slippery ice, I told myself.

Being prudent, I started out slowly—so very slowly.

I crept along, wondering if I would make it full circle. Some kid half my size and a quarter my age whizzed by. I rocked precariously, fighting to maintain my balance.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, the skaters sped by, magnifying the inability of unused limbs to navigate ice in a respectable fashion.

Once around I made it.

My confidence inflated a bit.

My strides lengthened.

"I think I can, I think I can, at any rate I'll try," I told myself, mimicking the old children's tale about the little engine that could.

A smile creased my face, as I greeted fellow skaters with an air of confidence. Gosh it felt good. I breathed deeply and skated a little faster.

I stumbled across the surface. In former days I had skated with a pair of hockey skates. They don't have that wretched tooth-edged front as do figure skates. I had to remember that, or I would be sure to fail.



A friend told my not to have the toes ground down.

"If you really get good, you'll need the figure skating toe to do the fancy stuff," she said.

Sure.

Sweat creased my brow. Feeling a bit more confident, I unzipped my jacket and thrust my hands into my pockets. Now I was getting that old form back.

My imagination dazed my senses as I whirred along the slick surface.

"Here is the famous Olympic skating star, as he performs before thousands of adoring fans," I fantasized.

"Ladies and gentlemen, now coming onto the ice is that international hockey star . . ."

I was really going now. I crouched in a racing position, letting my feet fly around that silly little rink.

Who said I wouldn't be able to skate after all these years?

"Come on kids, just try to keep up with this ice skater."

Turn number four loomed ahead.

"I'll show 'em how to take a corner in style," I thought.

THUMP, BUMP, BANG, SCREECH.

I lay strewn across the ice in disarray, having thrown caution to the wind and forgotten about the tooth-edged toes.

Not only is the ice more slippery than it was before, it's a helluva lot harder, I found.

Dazed, I crawled to the edge of the arena and pulled myself up with the aid of the boards.

Suddenly, it was very cold in that ice rink. I crept to the side, diverting my eyes from those who tittered.

I shall return.

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## From our readers

### Student urges millage defeat

deserves more support? Was the medical record program moved to Garden City to provide administrative justification for a millage increase?

I for one, and I am not alone, would

urge voters to defeat any bond issue for Schoolcraft College, at least until they rectify the present situation.

MARY E. MILLER  
Schoolcraft Student

Editor:  
Just a note to thank you for the excellent coverage of our November club meeting on "Holiday Table Settings." It was a pleasure to have you

represent our club to our members.

MARION TANTON,  
North Farmington Garden Club

### Thanks from garden club

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MARION TANTON,  
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### Sweet Adelines send thank you

Editor:  
The South Oakland County (S.O.C.) Chapter of Sweet Adelines, Inc. certainly appreciated your fine coverage of our show, "Hats Off to Oklahoma," presented on Nov. 11, 18-19 at Our Lady of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills.

We are grateful and support our charitable endeavor helped us reach and entertain an enthusiastic audience totaling nearly 4,000 during the four presentations of our unique barbershop musical. We were pleased that you could be a part of that audience,

too. We were delighted to share our thrilling style of music with your interested Observer readers. In the future, we will be proud and pleased to share a portion of the proceeds with The Oakland County Easter Seal's, our official chapter charity.

Please, accept our behalf of our entire cast and crew, The Oakland County Easter Seal's Society, and your readers, our warm and hearty thank you.

MARY BUGIS,  
S.O.C. Chapter

### Is Hogan a bad pop?

Editor:  
It was with amazement that I read Mr. Hogan's Nov. 17 column and discovered that he is still living in the Victorian Age when a father was also from his children and often functioned as a family deposit?

Mr. Hogan states that he spent his life competing with his father to prove that he was just as good a man in his mother's eyes as his dad was. Isn't it bad enough that we must all compete in the outside world? Must this also be carried into the home?

It is true that no father should ever become a strict "pal" to his son, for their talents, interests, and ages are quite different.

However, a father can and must show his son he cares, that he is there to help, that he is a model the child can emulate. If the son is to learn, not only must the pattern be set by the father, but the father, of necessity, must be closely associated with the son in the boy's world.

By becoming a part of the son's work and play, the father can set examples for him to follow.

It's obvious that Mr. Hogan has no experience or knowledge of the YMCA Indian Guide program, which is based on the philosophy that by sharing com-

mon experiences, parents and children can understand each other better without sacrificing their roles as parents or as leaders of their families.

In addition, joining the Indian Guides gives the children another distinct advantage, he can see other fathers with their sons (which isn't a bad idea for dad to see, either) and learn things from these dads that his own father may not be adept in: archery, fishing, wood working, camping and crafts.

Through this group concept, dads assist each other in teaching their sons the elemental lessons of character, courage, and righteous living, and also help their sons make growing up adjustments just a little bit easier.

Mr. Hogan's excuse for not sharing experiences with his son evolve around being home at 5 because he was changing the world for the better. Fine, but isn't the home and the family the basic place where changing the world begins?

Sorry, Mr. Hogan, but your column was a cop-out, an excuse for not doing anything with your son that would show him that you are interested and concerned about him as a person, not a competitor.

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## Hors d'oeuvres by Lynn Orr Energy crunch cracked



The snap-crackle-pop of the energy crunch propaganda by now is like a non-stop buzzing in our ears. If Nancy Dickerson isn't reminding us of the energy crunch's worth, then these embarrassing green commercial commercials belabor us about how much they care about the environment and the energy supply.

But for all their verbiage, those who make the buck off this country's power grid have failed to convince me of their sincerity. All they have to do is watch Christmas ads on TV.

The power is in our hands—and out of our hands. If Edison had been well, we'd be dialing down every night but cramping the kitchen cupboards with such energy-consuming items as hot dog cookers, donut makers, and hamburger fryers.

If Edison was sincere about its energy pitch, why don't the big wheels take such items off the market, so consumers have to go back to brushing their teeth by hand?

IF SHELL Oil was so concerned about protecting our resources, why does it mail catalogs crammed with energy-wasting devices to its charge

card customers every Christmas?

Obviously, there's a discrepancy between the output of the marketing and public relations segments of the companies, which really isn't anything

PR people seldom know what's going on behind the doors of those making the decisions. That's why our office is inundated with press releases that have little in common with what's going on in the marketplace.

For instance, Michigan Consolidated Gas Co. has been diversifying its interests by buying into films and other non-power businesses. Speculation tells me that top management wants to get out of the energy field somewhere down the road. Perhaps in 1990, Michigan Consolidated will sell off all of its gas altogether. But why does the Michigan Public Services Commission allow a utility company to invest in this manner? Why shouldn't a publicly regulated business be directed to invest in the energy future or spend money on energy research?

Instead, we have the feds spending our tax money on grants to researchers to come up with alternate energy sources, and the utilities researchers are developing new machines to make

donuts. My grandmother fried donuts in a black iron pan with a large supply of shortening, and I guarantee they were better than anything that came out of one of these donut makers.

OBVIOUSLY, there's a paradox here. Whether it's intentionally designed that way, I leave to further speculation. I prefer to believe that the paradox is the result of public pressure for conservation versus company concern for profits.

There's nothing wrong with profits, but it seems that the desire to present an unpolished image to the public negates the need for advertising.

I'm not advocating a return to the butter chum. I like my blow dryer and curling iron, but I refuse to buy or accept hot dog cookers. I would like an egg poacher since I've never been able to manage an unstrung poached egg in a sauce pan, but I can manage without in the same way I can survive without a car.

Perhaps if the public refuses to buy most of this junk, at least Edison will get the message. I'd like to see the company pay Nancy her fees in unloaded water picis.

## Tinkering Around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

### Friends, hucksters and cars

"I haven't seen a place like Detroit where a car is so important," mused my friend from his place behind the wheel of his own vehicle.

We were winding our way through the northern suburbs, talking with other drivers who were strung straight ahead into the night through their dashboards as if hypnotized.

"Yeah," I answered, wearily, "getting your first driver's license here amounts to a route of passage."

"Hmmm," commented my friend whose experience on the road has been mainly out of the Automobile State.

He didn't say the subject any longer, but dejectedly looked out the car window as the rain that glistened in the street lights.

I DIDN'T have a car and I was getting mighty tired of being shunted around by friends as if I were an over-aged orphan.

My friend is right. Cars are a little too important in the urban Apartment complex, too much distance from shopping centers, drug stores and grocery stores.

In my old home town, if you were without a car, you hopped on a bus to your destination. Or, if you were one of the hardy young, it used to walk eight miles to get to a downtown shopping area and my only complaint was that the weather was too cold.

I'd walk in the suburbs, too, except there isn't any room on the hill-roads for pedestrians.

The almighty car takes up all the room and its drivers never set foot on solid ground long enough to realize that there are people for human feel as well as street dope leave.

But I digress. What I really wanted to talk about is what happens to some one who finds himself outside of the stream of activity because he's lost his car. That's tantamount to bucking the system and strangely akin to being quadriplegic. At first people are sympathetic, then dutiful and then they begin to treat you in the same way they'd handle a difficult child.

CAR RENTAL places have found a special place in my heart. I'm sure they're the logical successors to snake

oil salesmen. Once they know they have you in their clutches, they're willing to do whatever it takes to make sure you poor unfortunate will end up paying for not being four-wheeled like everyone else.

Phone conversations with car rental personnel have a tendency to resemble "Let's Make a Deal."

"When do you need a car?"

"Today," answers the customer.

"Well, we have a car we can give you today. What kind do you want?"

said Rent Four Wheels.

"Economy."

"Well, that'll cost you \$14 a day and 13 cents a mile. But we don't have an economy car today, we can give you a luxury car for twice the amount. What kind of credit card do you have?"

Aha. Catch 22 of the banking world. Credit. If you don't have a car and have studiously managed to pay off all your debts and most of your car's value, you're really bucking the system.

IF BANK AMERICARD has certified that you have the ability to honestly get into debt and scrupulously avoid paying for your purchases, you can use enough credit to be trusted to one even more money.

I had forgotten about that little hitch. I haven't even applied for a major credit card. I didn't think I'd need it.

Another friend of mine, who has a good idea of my rather straightforward payment practices, likes to remind me that there are a number of suburban grocery stores where the owner knows you personally and will trust you to owe him for the week's food supply.

Get a checking account, will you," she told me in exasperation as she drove me back to work.

"I will," I said.

I will because I usually get bank checks or money orders and I live too far from banks and post offices to sink in and out fast with the necessary paper.

Getting a checking account now.

### READERS' FORUM

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Limit letters to 300 words.

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## Farmington Observer

Many people are probably unaware that as a result of other bond issues the Applied Science Building was erected on the Livonia campus in 1972. This building was to house the medical record program, along with other programs. Unfortunately the Schoolcraft College administration has seen fit to remove medical records after nine years. Is this the kind of policy that

should be adopted? I'm looking forward to being self-published so I can print my free time. With all this shuffling around, I haven't had the time to take an after-dinner walk.