

editorial opinion



Hors d'oeuvres by Lynn Orr

Smile, you're a winner—or a loser

In 1974, North Farmington High graduate Brooke Jenks won a one-year scholarship to Oakland Community College as the second runner-up in the Farmington Founders' Day pageant. A student at Central Michigan University at the time, Ms. Jenks filed the certificate away for future reference.

This fall, Ms. Jenks, 22, decided to take advantage of the stipend by enrolling at OCC's Farmington Hills Orchard Ridge Campus to begin training as a dental hygienist.

Unfortunately, the disappointed young woman discovered that the scholarship, provided by the OCC Faculty Association Scholarship Fund, was no longer hers.

She was never informed of the stipend's time limit, so learned about it the hard way.

When a winner fails to take advantage of the scholarship the following year, the stipend reverts back to the fund, according to Allen Morrison, resident agent. But unfortunately, he admits, Ms. Jenks was never informed about any of the scholarship's details. Both the Founders' Day committee and the college officials involved deserve a tap on the hands for that error.

MS. JENKS isn't the only Founders' Day recipient to be disappointed.

Another runner-up had the same experience, Morrison says, which is why 1974 was the last year the faculty association participated in the annual July event.

"Not enough information is conveyed to the recipients," Morrison said. Winners were not informed that they needed a minimum grade point to take advantage of the scholarship, as well as the time limits.

If Ms. Jenks writes a letter of application to the fund's board, it may grant her the funds in any case, Morrison says. But her dilemma is one more example of ineptitude on the part of Founders' Day organizers.

A lot of planning and a lot of work are essential to pull off a successful event, such as the Founders' Day Festival. And sometimes the event lacks coordination in large quantities.

In Farmington, we sort of take the Founders' Day Festival for granted—some of us ducking out of town and others enjoying everything from the Ox Roast to the chintzy carnival. But we have to take care that the whole thing doesn't fall apart at the seams or deteriorate into one big bazaar.

PERSONALLY I think eliminating the festival beauty pageant would be a plus. Why anyone would choose to spread vaseline on her teeth and smile

all day is beyond my comprehension. I'd rather work through college than endure that kind of nonsense for the sake of a scholarship.

The whole idea that "Beauty, Poise, Talent and Personality" should be rewarded with a scholarship is dumb anyway, unless we can the hypocrisy and make it a scholarship to modeling school. Beauty, etc. couldn't get a student through freshman political science unless the professor had a warped grading system.

Why not reward "Initiative, Drive and Brains" with a scholarship and not limit it to the female gender for the Founders' Day Festival? I, for one, wouldn't mind interviewing a male smart, gorgeous or not, and brains would be a real plus.

Or perhaps a competition for inventions or welding or sewing, with scholarships to trade schools for the winners? The beauty thing was passe before woman's lib, and it's definitely an embarrassment now. The losers of today's pageants may actually be pleased with themselves sometime down the road.

As for scholarships, let's hope the festival committee gets their act together this year and in the future, so winners of any competition are aware of any strings attached to their prizes.



by Loraine McClish

New year thoughts coincide

Dawn Ingram, editor of the Universalist-Unitarian Church of Farmington's Magnet keeps me on the mailing list of the congregation's newsletter.

My name is on a couple of such mailing lists. This serves as an easy way for me to keep up with what's going on in different parts of our communities and sometimes I catch a piece of news some public relations person forgets to let the rest of us in on.

But this month's Magnet hit a personal note.

While I was simultaneously reading the mail and wondering where my head and heart were dwelling on the subject of the new year, and those many new years I've started out on, with joy, with hope, with trepidation,

with resolutions, the whole gamut. Not much different from any one else's new years. I'm sure.

So I was brought up short from my musings when I read Pastor David Pireman's message to his congregation at the close of 1977. His thoughts are as mine, but much more lucid.

With his permission, I am passing them on.

"I DO NOT generally share the common feeling of optimism that New Year's is supposed to mean. To me it has always been a combination: a sad-happy affair. For if New Year's means anything it means that the earth, and we with it, are all a year older. Though not necessarily a year wiser."

"It means we all are a little less innocent, a little more worldly. I mourn that loss of innocence."

"New Year's is a time for new resolu-

tions (though they often go unfiled) and new beginnings. I can be an opportunity to take a new tack, to try something different. It can be a ripe and propitious time for growth."

"New Year is symbolized by the contrast between Father Time with his long white robe, long beard and scythe, and the roly-poly newborn baby; the old year and the new."

"Each year Father Time 'loses' to the new babe. It's worth pondering that image. Presumably each new babe becomes in his turn Old Man Father Time."

"But when and how does that happen?"

"When does the baby lose his innocence and become the stoop-shouldered old man?"

"No one ever speaks about that part of the changing of the years."

from our readers

Fire victims receive aid from Blue Cross

The crisis that recently confronted so many Valley View Condominium fire victims touched the spirit of many of their friends and relatives who offered housing, food, and other essentials.

Some of us have worked at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan with one of the victims, Vivian Adams, for as many as 15 years. We have known her mother, Dorothy Adams, nearly as long. So we mobilized our corporate troops and resources immediately after the devastating fire.

Surprise parties often don't turn out that way, but ours was an overwhelming surprise to Vivian and Dorothy.

As one of the quiet conspirators of the successful Dec. 18 event, I wish to express my gratitude to some very special people in my original home town, Ed Lane of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce provided good advice on how we could best achieve some community involvement.

Jack and Marge Grzema of the Farmington Wishing Well Restaurant, donated coffee, cream, and sugar for the occasion. Al Basch of the new

Friendly Restaurant donated soft drinks. John Anhalt of the Botsford Inn provided cake and cookies.

Too often we tend to forget that the spirit of giving to those in greater need than ourselves is heartwarming, whether that enthusiasm, blossoms during the Christmas holidays or at any other time of year.

Provost responds to resident's letter

Editor: By way of response to the letter which recently appeared in your Letter to the Editor column in the Farmington Observer, I offer the following extractions from letters sent to Mr. Doyle.

"We are pleased that you were able to use our road to your advantage; however, this is not less desirable alternative had to be used to forestall the very conditions you cited in your letter."

"Many people have a misunderstanding about Oakland Drive. It is only public in the sense that the col-

certainly Ed Lane and some of Farmington's finest merchants deserve a hearty public note of thanks for helping to make a good worthy Farmington residents very happy."

CAROLYN SMITH, Public Relations, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan

lege is a public institution. Neither Oakland County nor Farmington Hills have any legal responsibility for the drive, and therefore it is college property to do with as the college feels in the best interest of the students and staff.

"We hope to alter this awkward situation early next semester and with our students' cooperation, we may be able to cease such activity in the near future."

RICHARD T. THOMPSON, Provost, Orchard Ridge Campus, Oakland Community College

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tinkering around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Freeda Hills knows best

Blinking against the fluorescent lights that lined the office ceiling, Freeda Hills set about her task of cleaning the newspaper office.

Taking off her coat, she scanned with a mixture of familiarity and slight disgust at the condition of the office. Her eyes rested on one particular desk belonging to her young friend. It was all she could do to stop herself from dropping a match on the mess. She made a mental note to herself to give the young lady a lecture about neatness.

She knew as she did it though, that she was far from the only one who had that urge. She also knew that her young friend had the maddening habit of resisting advice about her life.

But she was sure she was alone on this particular evening—New Year's Eve. She walked along the rows of desks, wondering where to begin her chore—a medium sized figure in a business suit she bought in a uniform store. Her hands smoothed over a printed butcher's apron as she set about beginning to clean-up after the workers.

SHE WAS about to turn on her small electric broom when she noticed that the darkroom door was open. That was unusual, she thought.

But then she hesitated as she moved to investigate. She had heard stories about photographers using the darkroom to do other things than develop pictures.

It certainly wasn't her place to intrude, but being a creature endowed with curiosity, she finally decided to investigate.

"Hiya Freeda," came a young voice from the first room she entered in the photographers' lair. It was her friend.

"Whatcha doin' here?" Freeda asked in disgust. "It's New Year's Eve. A young lady like you—educated and everything should have something-

better to do than sit around this filthy place."

"I'm thinking," came her answer. "What about? Get out of here, I always thought you were crazy," she answered, agitated.

"Well, I'm thinking about all the things that happened to me this year. I've returned to the scene of the crime, so to speak," her friend answered.

"What have you been drinking?" Freeda asked suspiciously eyeing her friend.

"Not much. I had a couple of beers. I'm OK."

"I'm thinking about all the things that happened this year. The people I've met. I wish I could tell some of them what I thought of them. Maybe it's lucky I can't."

The young friend settled down more comfortably onto the bar stool next to the light table. Moving a few negatives out of the way, she leaned an elbow on top of the table.

"I remember I did a story on a kid's art class. You know, just a bunch of elementary kids trying their hands at things. They were nice. But their teacher made them look nicer. She insisted on my talking only to the kids she wanted me to talk to. And she wanted us to take a picture of the kids that she wanted in the paper. There was one kid that was sort of in the corner of the library and I tried to talk to him and you know that lady raised a fuss I wouldn't believe. Later, I found out from another school employee that she's notorious for having favorites and the little boy I wanted to talk to and did talk to when her majesty left the room wasn't one of her favorites."

This non-stop verbiage left the speaker quiet for a few moments and Freeda took advantage of it.

"So, you think everyone should wel-

come you with roses?"

Guest Columnist

So, Bubby, you got a camera

Cyd Abatt is a professional photographer who is filling in for Harry Mauthe while he vacations in sunny California. She has some ideas in this column for those of you who are struggling over that nifty 35 mm camera you received for Christmas.

So you got a new camera for Christmas. And it's so pretty and shiny, and so confusing. This column is dedicated to those of you who got what you always wanted for Christmas, and now don't know where to begin to use it well.

So what if the only directions in the package are written in Japanese. We'll make sense of it.

All those little numbers seem as though they are stamped everywhere. Since 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) cameras work basically the same, and since this is the largest category of affordable—yet, takes good pictures—cameras, this is the type we will discuss. Yours is a 35mm SLR camera if the film size is 135 and you are looking directly through the lens when you put the camera to your eye.

Back to all those numbers. No matter how good a picture is, if it is too dark or light, for all practical purposes, it isn't any good. And to make sure your once in a lifetime picture isn't too dark or light, you now have basically three ways of controlling or adjusting the exposure or how much light actually reaches the film.

Before we go on, let me interject one important point. Photography, at its best, is the perfect balance of the technical sciences and the creative arts. The science part of the business is mostly learned from reading and from putting all that amassed knowledge to work. Again and again, until you feel sure that when you take a picture, you

are going to get exactly what you see. And this trial and error part is probably the most frustrating part of photography. But it's only after you master the technical part that you can begin to let your imagination go. And that's where the fun begins.

The shutter speed dial is on the top of your new camera, probably to the right as you are pointing to the object to be photographed. It is graduated in numbers from "B" to 500, 1000, or 2000. These are fractions of one second, and these tell you how long the shutter is open to let light reach the film. The other function they serve is to intentionally stop or blur action. If, for instance, you want to stop the action of a person running, and you are using the meter built into your camera, you would first set the shutter speed at 500, then center the needle using the aperture or "f" stop adjustment. One other helpful hint about shutter speeds (not meaning to sound like Eloise, you understand) is to try to avoid using a shutter speed slower than your lens is long. Example: if you use a 55mm focal length lens, use a tripod, or support your camera if your shutter speed is slower than 50. If not, you risk taking an out-of-focus picture.

Your f-stop or aperture ring is another means of controlling exposure. It is the numerical gradation on the lens. The series of numbers here will range from 1.4 or so to 22 or 32. This tells you how wide the lens is open. The larger the number, the smaller the lens opening, which controls the amount of light reaching the film.

The other use for aperture is depth of field. Depth of field in any picture is how much is in or out of focus in front of or behind your subject. An example for choosing depth over shutter speed would be when you intentionally wish to run a foreground or background out of focus for an aesthetic reason, as in a close-up of a face or a flower with foliage background. The green blur would be a lot less distracting than the definite shapes of leaves.

In your 35mm camera, there will be either a depth of field preview switch or the lens will have a lever to flip it from manual to automatic. It is this lever that you use to see your depth of field exactly. Leave the lens on "m" to see your depth of field, turn your aperture ring until you like the what's in and out of focus, flip the lever to "a", set your shutter speed to match the needs, and shoot away. And it really is that easy with a stationary object.

"No, but it really burns me to think of all the really pretty people out there. Someday, they'll get their's."

"YOU know there are enough nice ones out there, don'tcha," Freeda said. "Sometimes I wonder, I wonder a lot about that. The nice people are overlooked sometimes. You know, I know this great little lady, I met her over at Mercy Center. I remember once I was talking to her and I asked if I could be another officially adopted granddaughter. And she said, yes, I certainly could and gave me the nicest smile and the hug. She has such nice friendly blue eyes, too."

"She's not a senior citizen. Hell, some people my age are senior citizens," the youngster said to Freeda. "Senior citizen, my eye. You can't even ride a horse properly." Freeda said.

"I thought you wouldn't mention that," her friend winced. "These Jaycees told me that the horses were OK. I didn't know they were going to tell me to ride an equine Godzilla."

"Hah," laughed Freeda.

"You think the world is going to Hell in a handcart," the older woman said. "You think that nothing anybody does is going to improve it. Ha. For all that education of yours I know something that you're just learning."

"What's that?" the young lady picked up her elbow from the light table.

"YOU'VE got to start cleaning up your own section of the world before you reform everyone else. You've got to make your section of the world livable for everyone."

"And you've got to decide how much of the world you live in before you start cleaning," she said cryptically as she started out of the darkroom.

"So get out of here and have a Happy New Years. And if you haven't made a resolution yet, I've got one for you—you'd better pullies for the love-dipete clean that eyesore you call a desk."

Concerning film speed, be sure to set the ASA dial each time you change rolls of film. The dial is usually inside the shutter speed ring, and the ASA (film speed) is printed on the film box, and on the cartridge itself. This is your third way of making sure your exposure is correct. The ASA dial is tied right into your metering system, and plays an important part in determining the end results of all your hard work. This is easy to overlook, so be careful.

It's easiest when learning photography to practice on non-movable subjects. Try flowers, faces, interiors, or arrange your own still lives by window light. Vegetables especially are neat to photograph because the colors can be beautiful, and you can enlarge your photos and hang them in the kitchen if you are successful. And you can always eat the vegetables if you aren't.

If you decide to start out with still lifes, now is a good time to familiarize yourself with the practice of bracketing. This is a word you'll come to love if you pursue photography. When you get your photograph set up, get your meter readings all together. You are ready to take the first picture. Then ignore your meter for two or three more frames, and take some more pictures, but change either your shutter speed or your aperture (not both). By doing this, you are covering your bases, because camera meters have been known to be wrong. And bracketing is a good habit to get into.

A few final hints about picture taking, not in any particular order. Try Kodachrome 25 film. That film and any Agfa color film will be the best color rendition of any product on the market today—opinion, of course—but if you are looking for quality color, try those. Also try window light from the side. It's great for faces, especially young ones.

Watch your backgrounds, and be fuzzy. If you are setting up your own pictures, you have complete control as to what goes in and what stays out. There is no reason to settle for less than exactly what you want. This is a good way, also, to get to know what looks good to you. The business of professional photography is, in essence, very subjective.

And if all this is still confusing to you, the Time-Life series of books on photography is excellent. Concepts are explained simply, and the photographs inspiring. The Kodak mini-books on light and specific subjects are also good. Last, and most important, use up the film. It's the best way to get to know your camera, and your eye.

READERS' FORUM

Letters must be original copies and contain the signature and address of the sender. Limit letters to 300 words.