

editorial opinion

Women deserve place in service club ranks

It's time for service clubs to take another look at their membership roles.

Ever since European man set foot on the North American continent, service clubs have been a way of life in large and small communities alike.

For the most part, they have served a useful purpose in allowing businessmen to get together to discuss community needs or, if nothing else, to give an hour's respite from the day's labor.

But in recent years membership has dwindled to startling lows, especially for the clubs which are located in the large metropolitan areas.

It would be a shame to see these clubs, which have done an admirable job in the past in helping the less fortunate and upgrading communities, disintegrate.

But that's the danger the clubs face if they don't change their philosophy on membership.

The American way of life is changing rapidly, with tens of thousands of women entering the job market and becoming leaders in the communities. Yet, they are banned from membership in most service clubs.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT is gaining impetus, with fair-minded men joining the ranks and questioning why women still are being excluded.

Meanwhile, the service clubs are being left be-

hind in the rush toward equality.

It's difficult for persons who believe in true equality to sit back and let the issue lay fallow. Yet local service clubs members find themselves hamstrung by charters issued from national and international organizations which mandate the exclusion of women.

The auxiliary system, under which a separate women's group is formulated mostly for service club members' wives, is demeaning, to say the least.

Auxiliaries relegate women to a secondary role and nearly exclude the working woman who either is single or whose husband doesn't belong to the service club.

Local service club members should speak out against this archaic system, if for no other reason than to preserve and reinvigorate the service club system.

Presently, the credibility of the Carter administration is being questioned because of the appointment of Griffin Bell as the U.S. attorney general. Bell found himself in the embarrassing position of holding membership in three private clubs which excluded Jews and blacks.

Service clubs which exclude women from their ranks force the same onus on their members.

STEVE BARNABY

C'ville residents support needed for school millage

Clarenceville School District voters will be asked to approve two property tax issues on next Monday's special election ballot.

One is for a renewal of an existing five mills (\$5 per \$1,000 of state equalized valuation) for 10 years. The second is for an increase of three mills (33 per \$1,000) for five years.

Both proposals, in view of the continuing money problems many suburban districts are facing, should be approved by the voters in the district, which includes parts of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford Township.

The support of the millages, particularly the tax increase, is made, however, with mixed emotions.

We are aware that homeowners in various ways have been telling public officials at all levels of government that they are paying too much in taxes—particularly property taxes and enough is enough.

But merely saying no to new tax levies doesn't solve the problems for districts like Clarenceville.

THE DISTRICT has been a victim of several factors: declining student enrollments; the state aid formula under which Lansing supports local schools; and the general economy.

Although the school board has been eliminating teaching positions and generally tightening its fi-

nancial belt to help offset the loss of students, the enrollment decline creates another problem.

The state aid formula is based, in large part, on the property tax wealth behind each student in a local district. If a district has a relatively high "wealth" per pupil, then the state provides less money than it would for a district with a "less wealthy" tax base.

So while salaries and other school costs continue to rise, the state cuts back on its overall support to Clarenceville.

Why?

Because the pupil enrollment decline, on paper, creates more "wealth" behind each remaining student. Although the state has been raising its per student allocation to local districts, it is simple arithmetic that there are fewer students on which to collect the extra funds.

The need for a millage increase may be compared to a car company experiencing a 10 per cent reduction in car sales and then raising the price on the remainder of the cars. It is selling to make up the difference and keep the total revenues at the same level.

OVER THE YEARS, Clarenceville has had a reputation for being a conservative district when it comes to finances.

The board has already made some refinements and reductions in educational programs that directly benefit students.

Since the renewal and increase on Monday's ballot are designed only to continue the existing level of programs and services and not for any expansion, it is obvious the voters should see the need for voting "yes" on both issues.

If both are rejected, the district will lose more than \$640,000 out of a budget of nearly \$5 million for next year. If the renewal is approved and the increase defeated, the board will still lose about \$240,000—about five per cent of its projected budget.

We realize the local property tax is probably the worst type and least popular means of taxation. Our support of the Clarenceville millages shouldn't be construed as enthusiasm for the concept or the administration of the property tax.

There still needs to be more work and thought given by the state legislature on other ways of financing public schools.

We don't stand up and cheer the thought of encouraging a tax increase for local homeowners and the resultant higher house payments for those whose taxes are paid through escrow mortgage accounts.

BUT SCHOOLS have been facing higher costs in all areas of spending and with about 85 per cent of the budget going into salaries, there is no way to make substantial cuts without cutting into educational programs and services.

There aren't many alternatives facing the voters Monday.

A yes vote on both millages is needed to continue the school programs that Clarenceville parents have taken much and deserved pride in over the years.

The tax increase is the first to be proposed by the board in nearly eight years.

Last January's millage renewal was approved by an 85-15 margin.

We hope voters will continue to demonstrate pride in their schools at the ballot box.

Close the doors for negotiators

It didn't work, probably because it couldn't work.

Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy pulled a public relations coup when he appointed a citizen observer, John H. King of Bloomfield Hills, to sit in on negotiations between county management and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Every time King walked into a meeting, however, the union bargainers would walk out. Negotiations failed to progress as they should have, and that delay may have been one of the causes of the current strike of 700 workers.

State labor mediator Leon Cornfield was on solid ground in upholding the closed-door practice of labor-management negotiations. Newsmen know that participants in a discussion often talk to the galleries rather than to each other.

There's a place for that kind of rhetorical debate—it's a constant practice between Republicans and Democrats on the Oakland County Board of Commissioners—but there's no place for pandering to the galleries in labor negotiations.

The mediator and negotiating teams need room to maneuver, to explore new options, to trade money to establish a principle, to correct old abuses. If they play to the galleries, they get themselves locked into a position with their constituents which they can't get out of.

Our position on legislative meetings, however, is as vehement as ever: They must be open to the public, and violators should be ousted from office.

SOMEONE ALWAYS PICKS UP THE TAB



We're all saloon keepers when it's 'free lunch' time

There is no such thing as a free lunch.

Long ago, saloon keepers used to lay out spreads of meats and pickles, breads and cheeses to entice customers in off the streets. The sign there by the mustard proclaimed "Free Lunch." But that lunch wasn't really free; somebody had to pay for it. Either the saloon keeper paid for it out of his own profits or the customer paid for it with higher drink prices.

Lunch, anytime, anywhere, anyway you slice it, is not free.

You can argue that there is such a thing as a free lunch. There are fish you can spear, apples you can pick, rabbits you can snare, berries you can gather.

While these things don't cost money, they are not free. They are not free because you have to work to get them.

And work is the basis of any economy. The starting place for any and everything we have. Somebody had to work to invent it, work to gather the raw materials, work to pay for it, work to put it together.

It is such a basic law, and the principle seems so obvious when you think about it, why then don't more of us accept it? Why do we keep forgetting? How come more schools don't teach it? Why do so many have to learn it the hard way? And some never at all?

For one thing, we were taught just the opposite when we were little. Just about the biggest things in our lives were Santa Claus, the tooth fairy and the Easter rabbit. The idea that there could be something for nothing was drilled into our wee heads. Our earliest books were full of it, promising us pots of gold at the end of rainbows and golden eggs from magic geese.

The world really would be a nicer place, wouldn't it, if there were golden eggs and magic geese, if every once in a while you picked up something for nothing—a little free lunch?

But you can't, and most people are awfully slow to realize that.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, there are those who believe that the government can

Ford's gift

True to himself, true to the public

Next week, Gerald R. Ford will leave the White House, the only man from Michigan ever to hold the presidency and only the second man in modern times to have lost it in an election while an incumbent.

Conventional wisdom is that he will go down in history as merely a mediocre figure, beset by three main problems.

One was of his own making. Shortly after assuming office, Ford pardoned Richard M. Nixon. This single act, motivated according to Ford by a wish to get Watergate and Nixon out of the way to allow attention to be directed toward more important things, kicked away all the political and emotional capital the new president had available for the remainder of his term.

FORD was a minority president, facing an overwhelmingly Democratic Congress, without a mandate of his own, facing very difficult decisions. Unable to accommodate his program to the Congress and unwilling to act by executive dictatorship, a la Nixon, Ford was forced into vetoes and holding actions.

Further, Jerry Ford's very naturalness in office made him an easy target of opportunity for a snobbish press which always has been unable to distinguish style from substance. He fell down on the ski slopes; he ate catnip on his french fries.

I think conventional wisdom will turn out to be wrong in Jerry Ford's case.

FORD DID not seek the office of president. He succeeded an egomaniacal neurotic who left the institution of the presidency in tatters.

Ford occupied the position with candor, with openness, without guile, and with a plain and successful intent to rehabilitate the institution of the presidency to a position of moral respect so his successors could use it to govern. An index of how he succeeded is that the office which Jimmy Carter will assume next week is a far cry from that which Jerry Ford entered three years ago.

HOW DID he do it? Mostly by remaining true to himself and to the nature of the office.

Eccentricities

by HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.



provide free lunches if it really has to and that this trusty old economic law doesn't apply quite as vigorously in Washington, Lansing, or down at the city hall.

There was a recent story about a welfare recipient who had "borrowed" a country ham from a neighboring farmer's smokehouse. He sold it to a grocer for \$27 and used \$20 of that to buy \$80 worth of food stamps; he then bought \$51 worth of groceries and used the other \$29 worth of stamps to buy back the ham which he then sneaked back into place without anyone noticing.

The writer concluded that the grocer made a profit, the welfare recipient wound up with \$7 in cash and \$51 worth of groceries and nobody was the loser.

Nobody was the loser? What about the people who paid for the stamps? Your money and mine bought them and that man was taking advantage of our labor. He cost us at least \$80 worth.

I have often wondered if all of us might not pay more attention to our government if our taxes were not withheld from our paychecks and we had to pay our taxes directly. Then when federal spending was announced, we would know more clearly where the money was coming from.

As we enter into a new era in federal government this month, we must remind our congressmen that there is no such thing as a free lunch when they are looking into new programs or new legislation that affects business.

When the government spreads a free lunch, remember the taxpayers are the saloon keeper who has to pay for it.

Observation Point

by PHILIP H. POWER



The office of the president requires a presumption by the public that the occupant is acting solely in the national interest and not for narrow or parochial purposes. This presumption is the lynch-pin of any president's authority; any man who violates this rule will have a hard time governing as Nixon did. Ford followed the rule.

He was able to do so because he remained calm and consistent within himself while in his exalted role. Gone were the puffed up White House guards with their fancy uniforms; gone were the faceless and sinister aides hissing words of advice from dark corners. Instead, Ford's tenure was characterized by simplicity, humanity and a willingness to show human emotion while trying to do a decent job.

An example of this attitude occurred just a few weeks ago, when Mrs. Ford received an honorary degree from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. My wife was placed next to the president on the platform. After she had read the citation for Mrs. Ford's degree and sat down, the president turned to her.

"You have no idea how much this means to Betty and to our entire family," he said, and a single big tear rolled out of his right eye and down his cheek.

A man who loves his wife and can happily devote a full day to her honor, even while being president, and who can show his emotional reaction to her success in a natural way is a good man.

Jerry Ford is a good man, who by this humane quality helped restore the institution of the presidency to its proper role. What greater gift could a single man bestow on the American people?

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