

editorial opinion

Inch and Rolnick merit seats on school board

Of the four candidates seeking election to the Farmington Board of Education next Monday, Jack Inch and Janice Rolnick merit the nods of voters.

They have demonstrated a working knowledge of the issues, concerns, and problems the board will

Trustees picked

All school board races should be this easy to evaluate.

Clarenceville voters will have a choice of three candidates seeking two four-year terms in Monday's annual board election.

The best choices are Lorene Erickson and Daniel Morrison.

Mrs. Erickson is campaigning to succeed her husband, who served 11 years on the board. She brings to the race a long list of qualifications and credentials.

Although we have expressed in the past our concern about teachers in one school district serving on boards of education in other districts, Mrs. Erickson has promised not to take a direct part in contract negotiations with the Clarenceville teachers' union.

Mrs. Erickson is a former English department chairwoman at Churchill High in the Livonia District and last year was honored as the state's best creative writing teacher. She is currently Churchill's Project ACTION coordinator, putting students in numerous community service projects as part of the learning process.

She has gone through what has been described as the annual trauma of being pin-slipped by the Livonia school board in the continuing financial crisis.

She, like Morrison, would put emphasis on the quality of the educational offerings in Clarenceville, which is also suffering the pains of student enrollment losses, pared staffs and program offerings.

Morrison, a veteran board member, has served well in past years in making sure Clarenceville's schools reflect what the community and parents want for their children.

The third candidate, Michael Zahn, admitted he moved into the district just six months ago and that he isn't familiar with the district's problems.

But Zahn, a Jaycee, said he got into the race when he read in The Observer in mid-April that a board member was stepping down.

face over the next four years. For the most part, they have done their homework, which is to their advantage over other candidates.

None of the candidates would qualify for the board based on experience or long-term commitments to the district. Of the four, Inch alone has donated volunteer time to the district as a member of the Task Force on School Organizational Structure. The others are basically new faces around the administrative offices and schools.

But we believe Inch and Ms. Rolnick are prepared to tackle the complex problems involved in overseeing a \$27 million budget and more than 13,000 students.

WE MAKE that endorsement knowing full well that many residents are asking: "What election?" "What candidates?" and perhaps "What board?"

To write that this spring's campaign has been low-key is overstating the case. The sole candidates event thus far was poorly attended, despite newspaper advertisement of the event and co-sponsorship by the Farmington Democratic and Republican clubs.

For some inexplicable reason, the West Bloomfield-Farmington Area League of Women Voters set their candidates' event for last night, past the deadlines of local papers and only five days before the election. It's a shame the league failed to schedule an important part of the election process to facilitate local press coverage.

Both incumbents William Gravius and Anne Struble waited until less than two weeks before the filing deadline to announce they would not seek re-election. Perhaps some potential candidates were eliminated because of this judgemental error.

After all, it's difficult to look at campaign financing and all the leg work required in entering an election with the thought that two incumbents might slide into their chairs again. Incumbency holds a decided advantage in most elections, particularly those where voter apathy is most prevalent.

WE HOPE Inch and Ms. Rolnick are up to the job. Both are teachers, although not employed with the Farmington system. The potential for conflict of interest as a board member has been raised, but we are convinced that both candidates can walk the broad-line separating professional career choices from their jobs as board members. We hope it's one they walk with ease.

Bedpan: Great denominator

It will be just six weeks Saturday since a golfing companion, hearing me panting like a wounded caribou as I dragged my cart up a steep hill, asked with a noticeable trace of concern, "Are you OK?"

I thought I was, or at least that the huffing and puffing would end by the time I knocked another long double-bogey putt into the cup. No one ever had told me what a collapsed lung would feel like.

But from every new experience, something should be gained, right?

Thus did I learn during a resultant stay in Bot-sford Hospital that when a medical type mentions a stool softener, it has nothing to do with a bartender handing you a seat cushion.

Nor does the request of a mid-stream specimen relate in any way to a political poll taken among canoeists languidly paddling their way down the Huron River.

THAT UTILITARIAN instrument, the bedpan, commands new respect in my mind as mankind's foremost common denominator. Football coaches, before the advent of artificial turf, used to refer to mud as the great leveler; they overlooked the bed-pan.

Let me tell you of another instrument of the devil.

It's called a bronchoscope, nowadays a flexible metal tube that is inserted through the nose, thence down the windpipe, coming to rest in the area of the lungs where seemingly a TV crew of six planes to set up on-site lights and cameras.

The process is called bronchoscopy.

If the medics send the lights and cameras and all their helpers into you through the other end, it's labeled a colonoscopy. That's what the guy on the other side of the curtain was experiencing the morning I took the pipe.

While lying there, I thought of a wonderful promotion idea for florists: "Don't trust your relatives. Order your own flowers. Pay Now—Die Later." My doctor said I dreamed it all.

THIS WAS THE SECOND time this year our family had experienced hospital care, and I have something to say about it.

Many of us are prone to aim critical verbal barbs at the medical profession in general for the



wealth seemingly amassed by some doctors, for what they deem exorbitant fees and for the flaunting of these riches through fancy cars and the like.

But when Mother Goose had her emergency surgery one night in January at St. Mary Hospital, I didn't give a damn whether Dr. Robert Lilly had 10 or 20 Cadillacs in his garage. Competent, professional medical treatment was all that mattered, and that is what she got from Dr. Lilly and the entire St. Mary staff.

The same was true of the care I received at Bot-sford, from the staff in general and from Dr. Earl Hecker and Dr. Jack Belen in particular. Besides that, the food was magnificent.

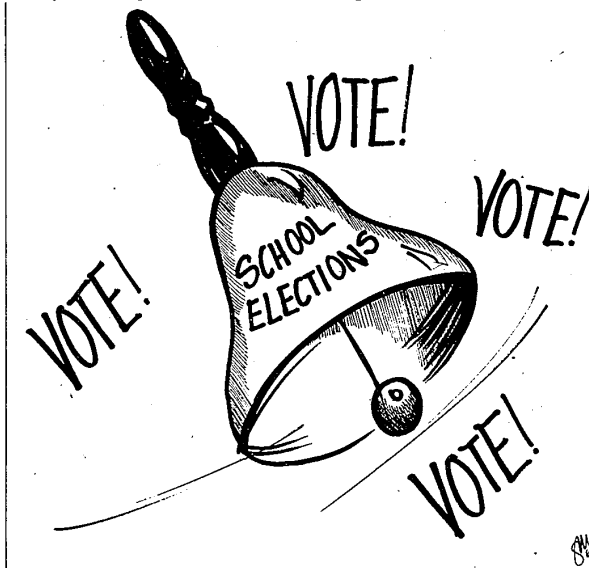
My point is, when the chips are down, when the emergency arises, who is it in whom you place your trust and confidence? Your doctor, of course. Thank God for his skills and understanding.

THROUGH THIS RECENT medical chapter I had one goal: Be back at work, back in the swim of people by Friday, June 9, at the latest. That would be tomorrow night, and I beat the deadline with room to spare.

You see, the only daughter by which our marriage has been blessed will graduate from high school that evening. As parents, we are among thousands upon thousands across the United States who have June graduates on our minds.

There is rightful pride in every household, and nowhere will it be greater than our own. Congratulations, Betty. May your life always be as glorious as you find it now.

DON'T BE TARDY—OR ABSENT!



In a period of change, OCC needs first-rate trustees

Under the late President Joseph Hill, Oakland Community College has pioneered in tailoring two-year college education to the needs of individual students.

OCC has also tended to be isolationist in its dealings with other community colleges in southeast Michigan and uncommunicative with its public.

Voters June 12 will select two persons to the seven-member board which will pick Dr. Hill's successor and set OCC's route through the decade of change ahead. From the field of seven, we can recommend two.

LILA R. JOHNSON, an incumbent from Huntington Woods, deserves another six-year term. A director of communications for a trade association, Mrs. Johnson has been on the OCC board since the founding days 14 years ago. Her experience, combined with an apparent adaptability to change, will provide depth to the board.

We also appreciate her stout defense of the building program going on in the southeast corner of Oakland County, where the college has worked from a maze of old buildings while other areas have full-fledged campuses.

Governing a sprawling college with 19,000 students requires a decentralized system of committees and input points. Mrs. Johnson seems to know where the buttons and listening points are.

ROBERT L. NEWTON, of West Bloomfield, would make an excellent addition to the OCC board. He has been a student at two of OCC's campuses, lectured in business at a third and is acquainted with the fourth.

A man who earned his degrees 30 years after starting college, Newton appreciates the emerging class of "mature adults" who are joining the recent high school graduates on our campuses. He

has a record of civic service in the March of Dimes, Lions and scouting.

He loves OCC. He has no axes to grind, no grudges, no desire to do anything but serve.

A Bank of the Commonwealth branch manager, Newton would add financial acumen to a board which must grapple with a nearly \$23 million budget. He, too, supports the building program. Though a political neophyte, Newton has a first-name familiarity with decision-makers of OCC that will compensate for his lack of governmental experience.

WE REGRET we cannot endorse Dennis Rogers, of Troy, an incumbent (by appointment) for nearly two years. He has good business experience in his electric company, some fine ideas on college policy—and some bad attitudes.

Rogers delivers an innuendo that some candidates have "potential conflicts of interest," but he lacks the political courage to recite facts and name names. That kind of campaign does OCC no good.

Rogers also is coy when asked what he would look for in a new president—the most important decision the board will make for another decade. His alibi is that as chairman of the presidential search committee he should remain "neutral." Nonsense and rubbish! The consuming and voting public shouldn't have to guess about a trustee's intentions on such an extremely important question.

Community colleges in general and OCC in particular have come a long way since the days of the old junior college. They are getting greater attention from the Michigan Legislature and from the public. Trustees get no pay. The adventure of the job is its own reward.

Suburbs: Ethnic clusters

Before setting a speed limit on a highway, traffic experts usually monitor traffic flow to see at what speed traffic naturally travels. If traffic flows at a certain speed and the speed limit is set differently, you end up with either an enforcement problem or an area of high accidents.

I think there is an analogy here to the recent developments of government-subsidized housing in Birmingham.

Years ago, it would have been unthinkable that a community like Birmingham would seek federal funds. After all, federal funds were for poor communities, and with federal funds came federal rules and regulations.

AFTER A WHILE, it became apparent that people in a town like Birmingham were paying a lot into Uncle Sam's coffers, but other people and towns were using the money.

It was also felt that federal shared funds were better spent by local authorities than by Washington bureaucrats. All of a sudden, federal funds became respectable.

But the rules and regulations that come with federal funds are written by people with political motives far removed from the areas where they are to be effective.

There are many people who don't live in the suburbs who feel the suburbs were created so people could escape minorities in the core city.

Peter Muller, an urban sociologist at Temple University, has completed a study on how suburbs are created. Rather than being a negative migration, he says, suburbs are actually ethnic ghettos where people cluster to be around other people of similar culture in order to preserve that culture.

Rather than escaping, they are clustering.

BECAUSE BIRMINGHAM is an affluent community, it is condemned for its cluster. Yet there are many suburban communities which are not havens for the affluent, but havens for national,



religious or educational groups.

People have clustered because they want to raise their children according to their traditions, which were diluted in a core city environment.

Candidate Jimmy Carter used the expression "neighborhood ethnic purity." He was condemned for it, but he was stating a fact of life.

America was founded because many old countries would not allow people various freedoms.

Following the speed limit analogy, communities are developed by people with common goals and understandings. When the complexion of a community changes, its residents change, seeking what they had in a new area.

IF THE GOVERNMENT desires to create artificial intrusions on a cluster, the cluster will move, leaving an unstable community.

This just creates a continuous movement farther out into the suburbs.

Possibly they should monitor a community as they do speed on a highway and allow the natural flow of residents.

Obviously, they should fight discrimination when it appears, but not create the unnatural when the natural is doing a job of maintaining stable communities.

Those who try to punish the suburbs by trying to withhold federal funds because they march to a different drummer could possibly unleash a hitherto quiet political force of united suburbs that could end up changing the government's thinking on all issues.

A Division of
Suburban Communications Corporation

Farmington Observer

"Successor of the Farmington Enterprise"

Steve Barnaby
Editor

2210 West Nine Mile
Southfield, MI 48075
(313) 552-5400

John Reddy, General Mgr.

Thomas A. Riordan, Executive Editor

George J. Hagan, Advertising Director, Fred Wright, Circulation Mgr.

Philip H. Power

Chairman of the Board

(on leave of absence)

Richard D. Aglione

President

Chief Executive Officer