

Brain power is unused Michigan Week resource

Being patriotic about your state went out sometime between Robert E. Lee and high-button shoes. On sure, a few diehards such as George Wallace and Orville Faubus hung in there until the middle of this century. But for the most part, folks look upon themselves as U.S. citizens first and Virginians or Michiganders (Michiganders, if you insist) and so on second.

So when it comes to Michigan Week, the majority of Water-Winter Wonderland residents just sort of scratch their heads in bewilderment.

FRANKLY, I never heard of this rather neglected celebration until the fates directed me toward a career in journalism. This, by the way, is Michigan Week.

Created sometime back in the '50s, this festival of the glove state's attributes definitely has fallen into disrepair.

The core of the "big" week has boiled down to cities exchanging mayors for a day with the obligatory tour and luncheon for the visiting dignitaries.

A few productive ideas are spawned from the exchange, but for the most part the exchanges turn into a mildly interesting day away from the job for public officials.

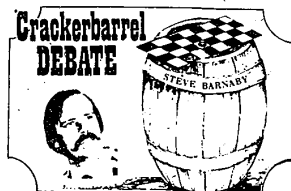
Some city officials have found the exchange totally worthless and refuse to participate.

DESPITE THIS spotty record, good reason does exist for Michigan Week. But it must be more than what it is today — much more.

The week should be used for our educational institutions, businesses, governments and other state organizations to re-examine the state's goals and progress toward same.

Forget the cheap rhetoric about being a "great" state and beautiful peninsula. Talk is cheap and so is baloney — and just about as nourishing.

Truthfully, Michigan is in a big heap of trouble,



and any tendencies we have toward greatness are rapidly fading.

Michigan has 13 state universities, more than three times as many community colleges and half a hundred private colleges. That's a lot of brain power

er that could be put to use in solving, or at least investigating, Michigan's problems.

Despite what the naysayers are mouthing, much of American industry does make its home in Michigan. And even though many of those industrial giants have snugly fit their world headquarters into a quiet corner of suburbia, they must be urged to come out of hiding and share their brainpower to improve our economic and social well-being.

Certainly, public officials must do more during Michigan Week than pontificating and proclaiming.

TO BE A USEFUL state resident I need to know more than that the robin is our state bird and the apple blossom the state flower.

Michigan needs an agenda for the future and a week in which to closely examine that agenda every year.

I move that next year Michigan Week be used for such purposes — despite the fact I jeopardize a free meal.



Tim Richard

Michigan getting its act together

Michigan has hit economic bottom, but the upturn is starting.

The upturn will take the better part of the 1980s, but the main ingredient is in place.

It's the realization that Michigan can't wait for the auto industry to rebound, that the old labor vs. management vs. government conflict has been killing us, and that we Michiganders must get our act together. That change in our frame of mind is in place.

U.S. REP. Carl Pursell is beginning to get attention with his idea of a "catalytic mechanism for the state's key decision-makers to sit down together and hammer out an agenda."

In his typical fashion, Pursell, R-Plymouth, views the problem not just as one for the chambers of commerce, not just as a state legislative task, not just as a labor phenomenon, not just as an intellectuals' exercise, not just as something for the media to report. It's a problem that all groups have a stake in solving.

Pursell is thinking in terms of a weekend retreat this fall at a college campus (not one of the Big Three). A Detroit paper is interested in supporting it. Our suburban newspapers will have a role.

THE SOUTHEAST Michigan Economic Development Council last week began raising \$1.4 million to finance the region's first industrial marketing campaign.

Chuck Muer, the restaurateur who heads the chamber, says metropolitan Detroit is practically the only major region in the country that has no such program. Well, we have one now.

The EDC has four legs — the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, Detroit Edison Co., the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and the Michigan Office of Economic Expansion.

HERMAN FRANKEL is a builder in West Bloomfield with a philosophical turn of mind. As first vice president of the Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan, he spoke last week at a Botsford Inn luncheon to BASM's marketing council.

Frankel literally sits up at night worrying about the future of this region. He remembers how Detroit became the "arsenal of democracy" during World War II and wonders aloud if we have the inner drive to be great again.

He's telling builders to preach quality to suppliers, subcontractors, tradespeople.

"Use every opportunity, in every business and social contact, to talk about the advantages of living and working in Michigan," he said.

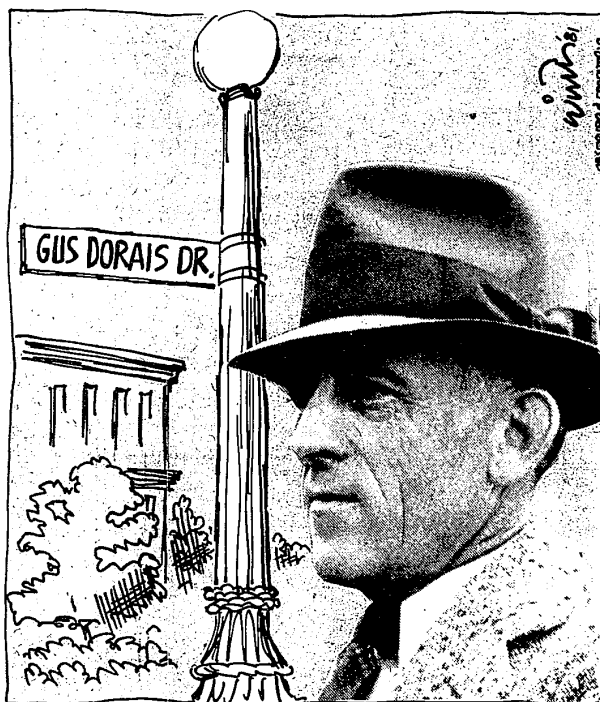
He's preaching cooperation with government and labor.

WALTER J. MCCARTHY Jr., the new president, chairman and chief executive officer of Detroit Edison, made much the same speech as Frankel last week at the Downriver and Western Wayne County Conference on Federal Export and Procurement Opportunities.

Michigan, he said, has skilled workers, an inventory of quality industrial parks, plenty of water and plenty of Edison's own coal-fired electricity.

Underline water. The "sunbelt" doesn't have it. Florida is developing sinkholes because the water table is so low. The Albuquerque Journal warns of dry years because mountain snow was light.

Michigan's problems are many — high production costs, high government costs, the image of hostile labor relations. Yet when you consider that the single largest impediment — our smug, independent frame of mind — is crumbling, you have to believe that we are on our way to getting our economic house in order.



Recycling centers

Victims of the bottle law

Where have all the recycling centers gone? Do they share the same fate as flower children and Vietnam War protesters? Are they out of date in a conservative society more concerned with jobs than ecology?

Not really. True, there are fewer recycling centers today as compared to the many thriving in the early 1970s. But that's more the result of Michigan's effective bottle return law, which went into effect on Dec. 3, 1978, than lack of interest in the environment.

With deposits of five cents on small bottles and 10 cents on cans, not many can be found on roadides, parks and in basements ready to be taken to a recycling center.

IN RECENT years, once-thriving recycling centers in Troy, Bloomfield Township, Livonia, Westland and Redford have been closed. Besides the drop-off in business, there were many other difficulties associated with running recycling centers. The former director of the Livonia Environmental Awareness Center, Laura Toy, now cheerfully recalls that she "gave birth to a recycling center — but not without many pains."

The Livonia center was at the corner of Farmington and Five Mile. During peak periods in 1972 and 1973, two to three bins of glass were hauled out of the center every week.

"But we had many problems with vandalism from kids," Ms. Toy said. "Adequate supervision got to be very difficult."

One result of this work was starting the Livonia Ecology Commission, which continues today.

BIRMINGHAM has one of the few recycling centers left in this area.

"It's not thriving, but we're holding our own," reports Elaine Morse.

Birmingham's recycling center is unique because it was started later than most, in 1976. Yet while others are closing, Birmingham's became self-sufficient last fall.

During its early years, the Birmingham city government gave financial support to the center, which



Nick Sharkey

operates at the city's DPW yard at Elton and Holland. It's open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday.

"We've developed a core of people who have continued to recycle over the years," Ms. Morse said. "As other centers have closed, we've attracted cyclists from a wide area from Royal Oak to Bloomfield Township and surrounding communities."

Expenses of the center are paid from money gained through recycled newspapers. Newspapers now bring in about \$20 per ton, compared to as little as \$2 a ton in recent years. The center recycles about 23 tons of paper a month.

Ms. Morse has ambivalent feelings about hauling glass to a bottling plant in Charlotte.

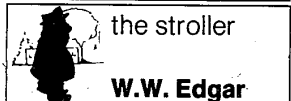
"Sometimes you wonder if you're using more energy in the gas it takes to truck the glass as is saved by the reuse of the glass," she said.

Expenses for the Birmingham recycling center include salaries for an adult manager and high school student staff.

AT LEAST one site for area recycling will never return. National Can Corp. placed a big dumpster outside its Livonia office for consumers to drop off cans.

When the bottle law campaign was being battled in the fall of 1978, the company threatened to leave Michigan if the law passed. The law was approved overwhelmingly by voters, and the company kept its word.

Yes, recycling centers are fast disappearing. But when one looks at the relatively litter-free highways and roads of Michigan, maybe that's not so bad. It's just one side effect of a good law.



Gus Dorais remembered by U of D

No longer will Gus Dorais be the forgotten man at the University of Detroit.

Thanks to university officials, members of the football alumni association and survivors of his famed undefeated 1928 football team, Dorais will be remembered by the naming of a drive through the heart of the campus. It is one of the most unusual monuments ever to honor a football coach.

It has been 38 years since the man who made the forward pass an integral part of the game of football left U-D after leading it out of the darkness of intercollegiate competition to a peak where it was considered Rose Bowl material before the pact was signed with the Western Conference.

AS A PLAYER, Dorais stands out, along with Knute Rockne, the famous Notre Dame coach, as the man who took the favored Army team by surprise on the plains of West Point in 1913 when he passed the Fighting Irish team to victory.

But when he left U-D, the school was planning to abandon football. Dorais took over the coaching job with the Detroit Lions, and soon he was forgotten on the campus.

Other members of the athletic group were honored, but not Dorais. The stadium is now a parking lot. The athletic building was named Calhoun Hall to honor Robert Calhoun, the basketball coach and former all-America player.

The basketball field was named for Lloyd Brazil, the all-America halfback and spark of the undefeated 1928 team.

At a recent luncheon, the oversight was discussed, and a few of the players decided something should be done. But what?

There was no money for a statue, and no place to put it.

Then Nate Goodnow, an end on the 1928 team and a top lawyer, took a trip to the campus and came up with an idea. A road that crosses the campus went past a frame house that once held Dorais' office.

"Why not call it Dorais Drive?" Goodnow asked.

THE IDEA met with a great response. The good Jesuits admitted they weren't part of the school when Dorais was athletic director and coach, but they agreed.

They even went a step further and decided to landscape the entire drive from McNichols Road. Trees, bushes and flower beds will change the appearance of the entire campus.

Following dedication of the drive June 10, the football alumni will hold a dinner at the Roostertail. Toastmaster will be Vince Banonis, the all-America center developed by Dorais, and Nate Goodnow the main speaker.

It will be a great tribute to the man who once was considered too small for football.

AFTER HIS graduation from high school in Wisconsin, Dorais reported for football at Minnesota, only to be told he was too small.

Undaunted, he went to South Bend, made the Notre Dame team as quarterback and became the main spring in the passing attack with which Rockne changed the game forever.

He made the history books but was forgotten at the University of Detroit, where he developed a great series of teams.

But now, after all these years, the Titan alumni have come forth with the slogan: "We remember Gus."

Editor's note: The meeting at which the plan to remember Gus Dorais was developed was the direct result of The Stroller's column pointing out that Dorais' memory had been neglected at U-D.