33203 Grand River Ave./Farmington, MI 48024

Philip Power chairman of the board Richard Aginian president Dick Isham general manager Dan Chovanec advertising director Nick Sharkey managing editor Fred Wright circulation director

oral quarrel

Yes, we na-a-v-e potholes!

This week's Oral Quarrel asked our readers: Where is your favorite pothole and why does that particular one bother you most?
Following are the responses:

Barfield Drive at 10 Mile and Middle-belt. You should try driving down it if you want to know why it is my favorite.

discover Michigan

ESTABLISHED BY a glit from the late Mr. and Mrs. Alfred G. Wilson less than 30 years ago, Oakland University has grown rapidly to become one of Michigan's best recognized institutions of higher learning. The Wilsons contributed their 1,400-acre estate and \$2 million to start Oakland, initially as a branch of Michigan State University. The school became independent in 1970. It opened its doors to \$70 undergraduate.

pendent in 1970.

It opened its doors to 570 undergraduate students in 1959 and now has more than 12,000 students in undergradate and graduate programs. The university also has a non-credit continuing education division. The university's public service program includes two highly successful professional performing arts ventures, the Meadow Brook Music Festival, established in 1984, and Meadow Brook Theater, created in 1967. The Wilsons' home, Meadow Brook Hall, now serves as a major conference and cultural center.

You want to know where the biggest pothole is? The street, Barfield, is one big pothole. You can't miss it.

My bill is in the mail for my front-end alignment from the potholes between 13 Mile and 12 Mile on Farmington Road.

I don't like the pothole on Farmington Road between 12 and 13 Mile because there ARE so many of them. You can't avoid them.

The most annoying pothole is on Farmington Road north of 12 Mile, south of 13 Mile. The whole road there is a pothole. Let me tell you, it is not my favorite

There is no iron-clad rule that you have to have an Oral Quarrel question every time because the questions are getting pretty stupid.

My favorite pothole is on Nine Mile north of Grand River. It is not a new pothole. It's a little pothole. It has been there since who knows when but last summer the county and the city spent money improving the south side of Nine Mile but why couldn't somebody put in three scoops of pavement to fill the little holes. The cars go through there quickly.

The 85 million potholes between 13 and 14 Mile on Farmington Road. They have not fixed them for the last five years and

The whole street of Barfield is one great big pothole and it is annoying to drive down there.

How about the one between 12 and 13 Mile on Farmington Road, I lost a hub cap and bent the rim of my tire.

It has to be over on Columbia because it is so hot over there and it's really unbearable.

Well, it is my least favorite pothole and it is the entire section of Drake Road be-tween 11 and 12 Mile. It is absolutely the pits and is a disgrace to Farmington Hills.

It's Drake Road between 11 and 12 Mile. It tears your car apart. Please get it fixed

Cities have new tool to help downtowns

CONSIDER THE problems of down

CONSIDER THE PROBERS OF GOWELLOWS.

They are usually in the oldest part of town and have ancient buildings, inadequate parking and narrow streets. They can't offer protection from bad weather (as can mails). Town promotions are difficult since each merchant operates independently.

ficult since each merchant operates in-dependently.

Add a new problem: In the past few years, national firms have replaced the independents in many downtowns.

"A branch of a national organization like T.J. Maxx and Shoetown does not have the same local commitment as does the owner-operated business," said Jody Soronen, executive director of the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

"NATIONAL FIRMS promote through national advertising programs," said Bill Brownfield, executive director of the Birmingham-Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce. "They don't have much interest in working with other local merchants to promote this area."

After extensive lobbying by groups such as the Michigan Municipal League and Michigan Downtown Association, the state Legislature passed a bill on Dec. 13 which responds to some of the problems. Surprisingly, the action has generated little local interest.

The bill is an amendment to the Shopping Areas Redevelopment Act and among other things would:

Permit downtown associations to lan promotions requiring all businesses

Permit downlown associations to plan promotions requiring all businesses to contribute money. Currently, all promotions are voluntary.
Give money to merchants who include promotion of the downtown area in their store advertising.
Provide money for local merchants to recruit new businesses.

Nick Sharkey

SO FAR, LOCAL business leaders have done little to take advantage of the

new law.

"It's a great idea, but we haven't done anything about it." Farmington's Sorones aid. "We've talked about spiffing up things in the downtown area. Other communities with older downtown sections like ours consider it important to put on a new look and capture the eye of the consumer."

consumer."

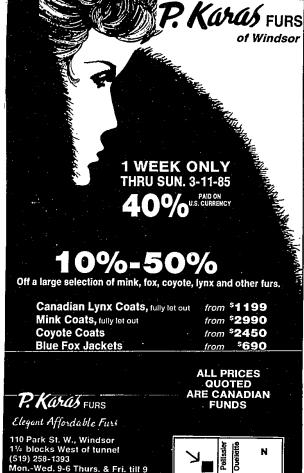
ROCHESTER HAS an active DDA which has spearheaded a redevelopment project in the downtown area. "So far, we've only been involved in 'bricks and mortar' work," said William Potere Jr., chairman of DDA. "But it sounds to me like we can now use our money for promotion."

Action must be taken by local government and merchants before the new state law will improve downtown areas. Cities which levy special assessments for the maintenance and promotion of downtown must set up boards to manage the projects. The mayor of the city, with the approval of the city council/conmission, appoints board members.

A majority of the board's members will be owners or operators of local businesses.

businesses.

Admittedly, downtown merchants have many woes. But it's time to stop complaining and start acting. Merchants must get together with local government officials to improve Main Street.



OPEN Sun. 11-4



focus on the Look of the Year Model Search Thursday, March 28 7 p.m. South Grand Court

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