

Opinion

Robert Sklar editor/477-5450
Kathleen Moran assistant managing editor

33203 Grand River Ave./Farmington, MI 48024

Philip Power chairman of the board
Richard Aginian president
Dick Isheim general manager
Steve Barnaby managing editor
Fred Wright circulation director

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Tuesday vote will narrow election race

THE PURPOSE of the primary election Tuesday is to allow voters the opportunity to nominate a candidate from each major party for public offices. Voters will also select candidates from the non-partisan section of the ballot.

In a few races, candidates are unopposed in the primary and the general election.

The recommendations presented here are based on our knowledge of a candidate's record and experience in government, responses to questionnaires and answers at public election forums and, in most cases, personal interviews.

An endorsement is an informed recommendation, made with first-hand knowledge — it is not an attempt to pick a winner. Many voters go to the polls without having any contact with the candidates. We have met them. We have reported on their activities.

The Democratic and Republican winners Tuesday will face each other, along with candidates from other minor political parties and non-partisan races in the general election in November.

The importance of Tuesday's election is that the winners in some races will be the eventual winners in November.

We also remind readers that Tuesday's ballot is a party-nomination process. Therefore, voters must select one party or the other; voters in the Democratic primary cannot cast votes in the Republican column, for example. Ticket-splitting will void an entire ballot.

Because of the nature of this year's GOP gubernatorial primary, the Observer & Eccentric is endorsing the state contest for the first time.

Three of the candidates, Richard Chrysler, William Lucas and Daniel Murphy, live and work in this newspaper corporation's circulation area. We have covered them extensively throughout their political and business careers. Because we cover local state

legislators, we are familiar with Colleen Engler's work in the state House.

In the GOP race we believe Daniel Murphy and Colleen Engler are the most knowledgeable candidates and either would make a fine choice for governor.

Although her campaign has been hampered by lack of money, Engler is an asset to the Michigan GOP. She is articulate and offers solutions to problems.

Murphy, longtime Oakland County executive, has a reputation as an efficient, no-nonsense administrator. He has worked hard and has been an effective leader. Because of his administrative experience, we believe Murphy has an edge in the race.

In other races we endorse:

Jessica Cooper and Lawrence Ternan for Oakland County Circuit Court judge. Cooper has broad legal experience and has been a judge in Southfield's 46th District Court for the last seven years.

Ternan, city attorney for Rochester Hills, has practiced law for 21 years. He has the kind of expertise that would broaden the court's range of skills.

Incumbent Oakland County Commissioner David Moffitt in the 15th district. Moffitt is completing his first term on the county commission. He has a thorough knowledge of county and local issues. The Birmingham resident is also the elected GOP commissioners' spokesman to the county Republican Executive Committee.

In the 21st Oakland County Commission district, Democrat Alexander Perinoff and Republican Douglas Sokolowski deserve voters' confidence.

Perinoff has the benefit of 18 years' experience as a commissioner and plenty of community involvement to make him an effective representative to the board. Sokolowski has administrative training and a record of civic involvement.



Judicial arrogance A sickness that threatens justice

It's the arrogance that gets to you. I'm talking about the arrogance that has grown up and around the judiciary in this country.

Black robes and all, you get the feeling that these men and women think they're doing God's work and heaven help those who dare question a judgment or the process by which a judgment is made.

That was the situation recently in the Oakland County circuit courtroom of Judge Norman Lippitt.

Lippitt was sitting in judgment of a woman who was charged in the drunk driving deaths of two sisters — Lara and Vanessa Carloni.

It was an emotional case, for sure. Two young sisters, 15 and 16, killed in a head-on collision by a drunk driver. A family left in "desolation and loneliness." That's the way the sister's father, Juan Carloni, described his family's feelings.

NOW THAT'S an understandable emotion to most folks, including the thousands who have joined in the battle to rid the road of drunk drivers. Known as MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), this group has done more than any other to awaken our country to a national catastrophe — thousands of families victimized by drunk driving deaths.

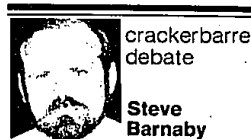
One bright day in June, we began stocking our feeder with sunflower seeds. Soon father cardinal and four little fellows showed up to dine.

Father cardinal cracked a sunflower seed, extracted the meat and popped it down the eager gullet of one youngster who shared the feeder rail with him.

No. 2 youngster sat atop the feeder and got his seed a minute later.

No. 3 on the fence and No. 4 on a small tree branch were duly fed.

SHORTLY AFTER the Fourth of July, the youngsters began cracking



crackerbarrel debate

Steve Barnaby

At first commended by the legal profession for its effort, MADD has nudged its way under the nerve endings of many judges who are being bird-dogged by the group.

Lippitt is one of those who seems annoyed.

MADD representatives Greg and Penny Blen made a dramatic plea to Lippitt, urging him to take into consideration the "callous disregard of victims in the judicial system."

Severe sentencing, they said, would demonstrate that drunk driving deaths are being taken seriously by the courts.

Neither plea from family nor MADD did Lippitt heed.

The sentence — two years probation, six months in a work-release jail program, \$400 in court costs and 200 hours of community service work.

Imagine that, 400 lousy bucks in exchange for two lives. What a farce, judge. A bad call, real bad.

IN HIS sentencing, the judge noted that he didn't permit sympathy for the victims to influence his decision.

No kidding. To add injury to insult, Lippitt found it necessary to scold the Blens because the judge resented "the attack on me and my colleagues and the fairest system of justice."

He went on to say, "you have no right to tell this court how to decide a case, or to interfere with a decision."

Well, judge, we do have a right. You really ought to remember that in this "fairest system" judges are elected, and unelected, by folks like the Blens and the Carlonis and the rest of us out here who resent judicial arrogance and who want judges on the bench who have a little more sympathy for victims.

That's how the people make judicial decisions in this country — at the ballot box.

We'll make sure that we put your name on the list of honor along with Wayne County Circuit Judge Charles Kaufman who sat on the Vincent Chin case and who thought probation was good enough for someone who took another's life.

keeping up with government

LOOKING FOR information about state government? The League of Women Voters has a toll-free telephone service (1-800-292-5823) that may be helpful.

The league's Citizen Information Center in Lansing offers to help people find out about such things as pending legislation, the state constitution, elec-

tion laws, voting regulations or tax information.

The telephone is answered from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. weekdays.

The telephone service is paid for by the league's education fund. The League of Women Voters is a non-profit organization that works to keep voters interested and informed about governmental issues.

Feathered friends need a summer snack



Feeding our feathered friends in summer is good logic. Some species have hard work raising their young in a competitive suburban environment. If you can make mom and dad birds' dining easier, they have more energy to feed the babies.

NATURE BOY, my nickname for columnist Tim Nowicki, surprised me with one of his missives a year ago.

We long have stocked a bird feeder in winter along the fence outside the kitchen window, but Nowicki suggested feeding our feathered friends in summer, too, and with good logic.

Some species have hard work raising their young in a competitive suburban environment. If you can make mom and dad birds' dining easier, they have more energy to feed the babies.

IT WORKED, and with one of our favorite songbirds — the cardinal.

One bright day in June, we began stocking our feeder with sunflower seeds. Soon father cardinal and four little fellows showed up to dine.



Tim Richard

their own sunflower seeds.

For a spell they could be intimidated away from the feeder by an adult sparrow. In recent days, however, even the young cardinals can scare off the sparrows.

A bird feeder is a paradise for personality study. There is a pecking order, just like at a country club cocktail party or a Democratic convention. Bigger, older, more important birds like the adult grackles get theirs first.

The fun comes as baby birds learn they're tough enough to take control of the feeder from adults of other species.

We're pioneer residents — the first and only householders on our lot. That's the definition of a pioneer.

For a few years, there was a cornfield behind us, and a giant groundhog tunneled in the side of the hill. Beau the Head Poodle (1984-88) would amuse himself for hours excavating the groundhog's tunnel into an open trench in his frenzied attempt to catch a banquet.

A bulldozer came along one day, flattened the cornfield and demolished Beau's and the groundhog's digs. Rabbits and most of the birds disappeared, too.

BUT NOW that our bushes are big enough to provide nesting spots, the birds are coming back. And we're helping nature a bit by tilting the food balance in favor of young cardinals.

Beau's spot in the household has been filled for the past five years by Kirsten, a comical, curious, courageous Norwegian elkhound. I have to drive her a few miles to hunt four-footed game. Although birdlife is richer than ever, wild animals aren't as plentiful as in the pioneer days, when Beau ruled the subdivision.