

Farmington readers' forum

Letters must be signed, original copies and include the address and telephone number of the writer. None can be returned. Names will be withheld from publication only for sufficient reason. Letters should be limited to 300 words in most cases. We reserve the right to edit them. Send letters to Readers' Forum, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River Ave., Farmington 48024.

Entertainment spurs concern

To the editor:

I would like to comment on the Founders Festival entertainment this year, particularly in the area of dance.

Jody Soronen and Eric Johnston have control over the entertainment in the downtown showmobile. Could they tell us why they feel it is fair for the Betty Johnston Dance Studio to be the only studio allowed to perform?

I have seen many of this area's dance studios. It is my opinion (shared by many other Farmington/Farmington Hills residents) that the Betty Johnston Dance Studio is not the best this city has to offer. If they are not, far and away,

the best, why are they the only ones up there?

And what should I say to my daughter when she asks again next year, "Mom, why can't I dance up there? I can do what they do!"

Mrs. Soronen, Mr. Johnston, perhaps you would like to answer her?

Kim Dennis,
Farmington Hills

Column shows his 'arrogance'

To the editor:

I was appalled at Mr. Barnaby's recent column regarding Judge Lippitt's decision, as well as some of your readers' responses.

As I understand it, a work-release

program is a jail sentence with the prisoner being released only during the working hours of his/her employment. Furthermore, while serving two separate periods of jury duty, I have learned that a judge must rule based on the law, and the law alone.

I am not a lawyer, nor do I know the law well enough to judge the change in the charges of this particular case. Does Mr. Barnaby? However, what would our judicial system be, and what would happen to our democracy if all judges began ruling based on their personal feelings, sympathies and prejudices?

Mr. Barnaby's lack of legal facts and emotionally inflammatory article displays an arrogance of greater than that suggested of Judge Lippitt.

S. Frank,
Birmingham

Fouls safeguard against danger

To the editor:

This is written to parents of youth soccer players.

A few weeks ago a young man broke his leg in a soccer game. It was raining hard, and the young man had to lie in the rain, his leg grotesquely deformed, trying hard not to cry in front of his teammates. This unfortunate player could have been your son or daughter.

Think about this for a minute. Picture your child writhing in pain, clutching a now useless limb. Now think of all the times you've abused a referee for calling a foul against your team, indeed, against your child, in a game. Fouls are the only safeguard against a game becoming dangerous and, called right or

wrong, they protect your child from injury.

I write this not to protest the treatment of officials, but to awaken you to a serious problem: Winning has become the number one priority in youth soccer. Win at all costs. The desire to win has replaced fun, it has replaced sportsmanship, and has surpassed safety as the number one goal of parents, coaches and players.

I have a few examples, all taken from personal experiences within the past three weeks:

1). At a boys 12 and under game, I was inspecting a cast on the arm of one of the players. The coach, seeing me doing this, became irate and threatened to pull his team from the field if I didn't allow him to play. No thought was considered that the boy might injure himself or others. When the parents heard their coach, they too, protested my action.

2). At a recent women's high school soccer game, a group of parents began chanting "kill the ref" after a close call. Later, they identified the referee by name. These were adults, 30 of them to my estimation. Sportsmanship? Not in this stadium.

My last example took place in a 6 and under (years of age) game. After a close tripping call, a man on the sidelines stepped onto the field, spewing abusive language and shaking his fist. He hadn't stopped to consider that being tripped can result in broken ankles and torn ligaments. His only concern was that his 6-year-old daughter might lose her game because of my incompetence.

When winning becomes a top priority, bones and spirits are broken. Where enjoyment and sportsmanship dominate, the consequence is winning, no matter what the score is.

Parents and referees must try to work together to promote safety and sportsmanship. As always, each of you is invited to take up your whistle and improve on our mistakes. But until then, let's work together to see youth soccer reach its fullest potential: a fun game.

Laura Mansfield,
USSF soccer official

His spunk is like a kid with a new toy

TO SAY THAT Charles A. Walby is outspoken is characterizing him mildly.

At least in part, Chuck's penchant for saying exactly what he thinks at anytime, to anybody — is one reason the upcoming 1986 Michigan State Fair may be one of the most pleasant to attend in the fair's 138-year history.

Among those impressed by the rough-hewn Walby's habit of calling the shots just as he sees him was the then congressman from Pleasant Ridge a few years ago, James Blanchard, on the occasion of a series of hearings that concerned possible congressional aid to small businesses.

WHEN BLANCHARD became Michigan's governor he appointed Walby to the Michigan Exposition and Fairgrounds Council, of which he is now chairman. The council is a wing of the Department of Natural Resources, the State Fair being its main showcase.

As a volunteer civic servant, Walby has vigorously spearheaded efforts to improve the character of the fair, which is the nation's oldest, and to make fairgrounds facilities among the best. Lord knows, deterioration had



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been so bad that for years they were among the worst.

You can see for yourself the job that has been done during the run of the fair, Friday, Aug. 22 through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1.

A man who stands 6 feet 3 inches tall and weighs close to 220 pounds, Walby bubbles with enthusiasm like a kid with a new toy as he interrupts his business day to tell how the Fairgrounds have been physically upgraded and of innovations in programming.

At the same time, he praises the cooperation of the full nine-person council, the department, and of people such as the fair's general manager, O.J. Scherschligt, Harold Arnold, Dennis Silber, Wade Shows and others "who have done more than their share to improve the image."

In addition to the over-all cleanup, the Coliseum has been redone and all rest rooms miled. The grandstand has

been improved. There are new exhibit areas. We have a 400-seat theater in the Community Arts Building. The picnic area and band shell have been renovated, and a new entranceway off Woodward Avenue has been built.

"ALL THAT is just the start. We're planning a Fair Museum and are forming an organization to be called 'Friends of the Fair' for people who want to help in any way. A home once used by President Ulysses S. Grant is being refurbished as an attraction and we plan to build a grassy hill as a Pine Knob-type facility.

"We even have a marketing division now that solicits business from organizations that may want to use the Fairgrounds throughout the year.

"We have about 170 acres but are acquiring 50 more to build a campground for recreational vehicles. We've even drawn up plans so that the Formula One Grand Prix could be held at the Fairgrounds if it becomes necessary to move it from downtown Detroit.

"The rides on this year's Midway will be thoroughly checked every day for safety and new standards have been instituted for food stands. Security personnel will include state police,

Detroit police and our own force.

"There's always something going on and one admission entitles a person to all of the free daily entertainment, even the Willie Nelson Show," Walby said.

Quite likely you would recognize Walby if you saw him, particularly if bowling is your sport for he owns Thunderbird Lanes and Emerald Lanes, both in Troy; Red Run Lanes and Bowlero Bowl, both in Royal Oak; Pioneer Lanes in Sterling Heights, Fiesta Lanes in Westland, Wildwood Lanes in Southgate and Woodhaven Lanes in Woodhaven.

A HEARTY, ROBUST man in his late 50s, Walby lives with his wife, Alice, in Bloomfield Township and bears scant resemblance to the gaunt 98-pounder he was liberated from a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp at the end of World War II.

It's a delightful success story and as far as I can find out Walby has been bounced from only one job in his life. That was when he was "suspended" from the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame board of directors by the group's commissioner, W. Nicholas Kerbow.

That's a yarn that will have to wait telling another day.

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