



To the editor: an assignment in writing

GOOD WRITING was the goal of an assignment last month that prompted eighth graders in Martie Ports' advanced English class at Power Middle School to send "letters to the editor" on a variety of issues.

Each student selected his or her own topic, then submitted it to a newspaper for publication. The Farmington Observer, the Detroit Free Press and the Detroit News all received letters from the students, said Ports, depending on whether the issue was local or more global in nature.

In doing the assignment, "we brought up different issues the kids were concerned about," said Ports. The students then discussed the is-

ssues together, did a rough draft of their letters, completed a final draft for submission, then put a copy of the assignment in their writing folders.

As part of a districtwide writing program, writing folders are passed along to each grade as a student progresses. A set number of writing assignments are to be done and copies placed in the folder each year. Educators use the folders to check a student's progress from one assignment to another, and from grade to grade.

Herewith are a few of the letters done by Power students and sent to the Observer. As with all "letters to the editor," some have been edited for content and space.



Power Middle School eighth graders Kristin McConaughy (left), 14, Erin Scheffler, 13, and Katie Gundlach, 13, work on their writing skills in Martie Ports' advanced English class.

Support bond issue

To the editor:
Overcrowding is a major problem in Longacre Elementary School. The people of the Farmington school system need to pass a bond issue to build a new elementary at 11 Mile and Halsted.

Currently, there are no elementary, middle or high schools north of 10 Mile and west of Farmington Road. Yet this is one of the fastest-growing housing areas.

Will people continue to seek housing in an area of our community where the classrooms are overfilled? I think not. The next time this bond issue is presented, vote yes!

Kristin McConaughy, Farmington Hills

City efforts a plus

To the editor:
I would like to congratulate the people responsible for helping to beautify the city of Farmington.

I've noticed the many new changes in downtown Farmington, such as the new street curbs, the pretty gardens in the parks, the new storefronts, the new lighting and the banners on the street lamps. These changes have really helped

to give Farmington a new look. Keep up the good work!

Keri Nicholas, Farmington Hills

Alcoholism a disease

To the editor:
What is the danger of drunk driving? What would happen if you're driving under the influence? What could happen if you get in an accident?

These are some of the questions that drunk drivers never think of. They read so many times that people are killed in alcohol-related accidents. These people just say, "Oh, it will never happen to me."

It does happen, especially around the holidays. Many young people die. I think that we need a lot more assemblies in schools to teach young people about alcohol and its dangers. In some schools, nobody tells the kids about it.

The problem is alcoholism is a disease that takes time to cure. It can be very deadly. I only wish it could be stopped.

Jason Baba, Farmington Hills

Open gyms on weekends

To the editor:
I am a citizen concerned about the

extracurricular activities of teenagers and youngsters. This may not strike Farmington as a big issue, but many young people spend their useful time doing improper and even illegal things.

If Farmington Public Schools were to open their gyms for recreational activities or start after-school, academic programs such as computer training, foreign languages, or creative writing skills, it would cut down the amount of kids roaming the streets.

Not only would this decrease the number of kids out on the streets, it would also better educate and broaden their minds.

Opening up the schools on weekends would also make better use of taxpayers' money.

Kristi Corawell, Farmington

Vote yes for kids

To the editor:
I'm worried about the quality of education in Farmington schools. The public schools are becoming overcrowded.

My brother attends Gill Elementary School. In the December newsletter, it says the district is using eight portable classrooms, and if we don't build a new school, funds will have to be used to buy more portables.

It would be lot safer and less expensive to have another school built. The problem is that more and more

families are moving into our community, and more children means more classroom space. This problem is not going to stop.

On Jan. 31, the residents of Farmington and Farmington Hills will be able to vote on the school bond issue. So please, if you're the parent of a child in Farmington Public Schools, vote yes!

Erin Scheffler, Farmington Hills

Slow down — and live

To the editor:
I'm concerned about speeding, especially this time of year.

In my neighborhood in downtown Farmington, there are a lot of older people who might get hit by speeding cars or uncautious drivers. Also, the kids at bus stops are endangered by these people.

If people could just leave five minutes earlier when they're going somewhere, they could get there on

time without speeding. So instead of taking someone's life, take the time to drive carefully.

Katie Gundlach, Farmington

Show sports spirit

To the editor:
What has happened to strong athletic support? Granted, if your football, baseball, basketball or any other sports team is good at your school, you will get better spirit, but what about those times when your team is "down in the dumps?"

Where are the coaches, to bring the team up? Where are the teachers, to cheer the school on? Where are the students?

To me, this just seems to drag the school into unnecessary holes. Bleachers are empty, parking lots are waiting, and so are the players.

Sometimes what the team needs is a little confidence and pride. It sometimes can mean the difference

between a win and a loss!

Mike Raffle, Farmington Hills

Future of America

To the editor:
I am both shocked and horrified every time I turn on the television set every so often after school.

This world's ideas of entertainment are horrendous — with television shows filled to the brim with sex, violence, and drugs. We, without a doubt, have to change this.

Being 14 years old, I have come to the realization I am the future of America. The whole child population is, as well. A child need not live in a big city to get a street education, but just pick up the remote control.

We must all work together if we want to stop this. After all, does one drop of water put out a fire? Let's make this the best America possible.

Jennifer Challfior, Farmington Hills

inkwell

Inkwell provides news about Farmington-area primary and secondary students and education issues. The column appears monthly as part of the Observer's "School Page." Send news items to: The School Page, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. Include a telephone number where a contact person can be reached during the day.

● BLOOD DRIVE
A blood drive sponsored by the Farmington Public Schools Transportation Department has been rescheduled for 1-7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 12, at the district's administrative annex — the former Ten Mile School, 10 Mile, west of Power.
Walk-ins are welcome, or call 477-1300 to make an appointment to donate. The blood drive was originally scheduled in December.

● INAUGURAL TRAVELS
The North Farmington High School band and orchestra travels to Washington, D.C., this month to view the inauguration of President-elect George Bush and to participate in the All-American Music Festival.
The group will tour the capital city in addition to the competition and other festivities.

● OPEN HOUSE
Detroit Country Day School, a private school based in Beverly Hills, will hold an open house this Sunday, Jan. 15 for prospective students.
Students and parents from preschool through grade two can visit the Lower School, 3003 W. Maple, 1-3 p.m. and those from grades three to five can visit the Junior School, 36000 Bradley, 2-4 p.m.
Tours will be conducted and refreshments will be served.

● FLANDERS ACTIVITIES
Winter months already hold excitement for Flanders Elementary students, as PTA members work with staff to plan activities.
Television personality Mr. Wizard did a schoolwide science program for students Jan. 5, and an assembly on Abe Lincoln is planned for Feb. 8.

● PARENT EVENTS
The parents of North Farmington High School students have two functions open to them during the month of January.
A parent discussion of "Understanding Grier" is scheduled for Jan. 18 at 7:30 p.m., and a College Night for the parents of juniors is slated for Jan. 25 at 7:30 p.m., according to information from the school's guidance office.

● PARENT ACTION
Members of a political action committee supporting a school bond issue have swung into action just weeks before the scheduled Jan. 31 election.
Letters dated Jan. 4 are being distributed from the Friends of Farmington Schools asking for voter support for the \$7.3 million issue which, if approved, will be used to build a new elementary school on 11 Mile, east of Halsted.

Member Tina Jensen reminds residents that as a PAC, donations of \$20 or more must be in the form of a check or money order and can be sent to: Friends of Farmington Schools, 22555 Shadowglen, Farmington Hills 48024.

In addition, the district is distributing a brochure with information about the election and has devoted its winter newsletter to information about the bond election.

F U R F I N D

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Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.

King holiday curtains U.S. mail

The U.S. Postal Service will operate on a holiday schedule during its observance honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Monday, Jan. 16.

Farmington postmaster Kenneth Harris said there will be no regular residential or business mail delivery. Special delivery, Express Mail and Post Office Box service will be provided.

Limited caller service will be available only for customers who regularly pick up their mail at either the Farmington Office, 33200 Slocum, or the Farmington Hills Office, 32415 W. 12 Mile.

The service windows will be open 8-10 a.m. for those customers, however, there will be no financial transactions.

Mail will be picked up from all residential collection boxes as late in the day as possible to meet first class mail service standards. All business collection boxes, with the large 5 p.m. decal, will be picked up after 5 p.m.

Normal mail service will resume Tuesday, Jan. 17.