

# Signs don't point to less use of libraries

IT MAY BE A myth that people just aren't reading any more because libraries are big news in our suburbs.

New libraries, library expansions and battles over library fees are making front page news in communities from Canton to Rochester Hills.

For example: In Farmington Hills, voters are looking at two library questions on their Nov. 7 ballot — a bond issue for a new main branch in the Farmington/Farmington Hills system and a millage for operations.

In the Rochester area, a new library in Rochester Hills will replace the small, centrally located one in the heart of the city — but where it will finally go — is still being determined.

Canton Township last year opened a new main library next to township hall.

Livonia last year completed a spanking new main library, and voted 1 mill forever to keep its three-branch system up to date.

West Bloomfield Township, which built a new main library in 1983, last year finished an expansion of both the main library and a branch.

Bloomfield Township last spring completed a major expansion



**Judith Doner Berne**

of its library, one of the two libraries of the Birmingham-Bloomfield system.

Surrounding communities, which must pay to use the Birmingham-Bloomfield libraries, are questioning the amounts being asked, while recognizing their value to their residents.

Of the Observer & Eccentric suburbs, only Westland voters have continually refused to pay for a community library at all and must contract for service from neighboring Wayne.

YES, IT'S true that hot growth areas like Canton, West Bloomfield and greater Rochester are expanding their libraries to meet their growing populations. But, then, how do you explain Livonia and Bloomfield Township, which have more stable populations?

To me, the answer is two-fold. People ARE reading. And libraries, rising to the needs of today's more social, visually oriented society, aren't the silent, grim places they have been in the past.

Besides books, their offerings include: lecture and discussion series, places for community meetings, video rentals, children's programs and services for the handicapped.

Last Thursday evening, for example, I attended a meeting of a community group in a downstairs meeting room at Birmingham's Baldwin Library. Above was a low hum of

enjoying as students researched papers, adults browsed for books or read past newspapers and parents helped young children find just the right story book.

After the meeting, about 15 minutes after closing, a few young people were still congregated on the steps.

Many of our communities bemoan the fact they don't have community centers, especially places for young people to gather. Maybe, we've had them all the time.

Judith Doner Berne is assistant managing editor of the Oakland County editions of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

## points of view

# More letters to the editor. . .

## Work to curb medical costs

To the editor: Medicare recipients now pay more of their income for out of pocket health care costs than before Medicare was created. All while doctors' incomes have surged.

That's why I applaud U.S. Sen. Donald Riegle, D-Mich., for taking issue with physicians' salaries.

Things as they are, I support the Michigan Citizens Lobby in urging Congress to require a 3-year "mandatory assignment" where physicians shall be forced to consider the Medicare payment as payment in full.

Plus, we need to prohibit doctor overcharges in cases where there is no meaningful choice of doctor made (radiologists, etc.)

And let's relieve our Medicare seniors from paperwork by requiring doctors to submit all claims directly to Medicare.

Let's hit hard to lower medical costs for those they hit hardest — our elderly and disabled citizens.

Timothy Lachowsky, Farmington Hills

equality and harmony does not mean tipping the scales in favor of his particular ethnic group.

If Mr. Success wants to be a hero to a cause, why doesn't he pursue something worthwhile, such as feeding the hungry or housing the homeless?

Marjorie Beck, Farmington Hills

## Coverage distorting

To the editor: This letter is being written Friday, Oct. 13.

I do not know how many people are going to actively participate in the now-infamous peace march (or is it a love parade?) on Sunday, Oct. 15 — or how many curious onlookers might give the event a few casual minutes.

I do know that the media will bombard me with stories and pictures and commentary — again — regardless of the number of active participants.

Why does the media — the Observer included — continue to distort reality? The time, frequency, and space the Observer has dedicated to these fringe elements has no relationship to the import, impact and/or community involvement of the people or the event.

During the last few weeks, when the Observer was loaded with successive stories concerning Success (and known reactionary fringe groups), we did not see one column inch, one picture, one story, nothing, about the:

- hundreds of multi-racial high school students building floats for Homecoming in neighborhood garages;

- hundreds of multi-racial high school students and parents who participated in an awards ceremony (honoring 3.3 GPAs);

- The '89/90 Junior Achievement Program that involved business volunteers and multi-racial students from each of the high schools;

- The Saturday, Oct. 14, parade that will involve hundreds of multi-

racial students and parents.

The Observer will jump on the minority of students, parents, business, etc., for not meeting their individual and collective obligations when they don't, but ignores the hundreds when they do, no stories, no lists of names, no pictures, nothing.

Reading the Observer during the past few weeks gives a gross distortion of what is happening in the Farmington community.

Why does the Observer seem to define reality as the extreme, the eccentric, the fringe, the exception or the weird? Why can't the Observer present reality — rather than distortions?

John Miller, Farmington Hills

## Citizens must get involved

To the editor: Recently, we observed United States Constitution Week, and on Sept. 24, commemorated the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the federal court system.

The importance of these events are self evident.

While we are remembering these vital past milestones, we must also recall the preamble of the Constitution that charges us to continue this incredible republic. It says in part, "We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union . . ."

In order for a democracy to flourish, it must have the involvement of the people. In the past, they had "a call to arms," now we might label it "a call to civic involvement."

Get involved in worthy causes such as the anti-substance abuse efforts, and by all means, vote in the rapidly approaching elections.

With this commitment on the people's behalf, our children will celebrate 300-year milestones.

Michael J. Bouchard, Farmington Area Committee on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution

## Requests are called biased

To the editor: I read Vince Chiaravalli's letter (Oct. 5) regarding Mr. Derwin Success, and I couldn't agree more.

I would like to voice a few of my own observations.

Mr. Success wants to promote black awareness in Farmington. Does he really think there is anyone in the community who does not know there are blacks in Michigan?

Regarding his "bilateral task force," Webster's Dictionary definition of "bilateral" is: ". . . of, relating to, or involving members of two races." By his own choice of words, he has eliminated the possibility of having more than two races serve on such a task force. Kind of a bigoted approach, isn't it?

I find Mr. Success's requests insistent, biased and tiresome. Racial

march, also limited interviews to just me. We spoke during four, one-hour interviews.

You know, nobody has ever questioned me this heavily," he said.

The last time I spoke with Moriarty on Oct. 11, after I ran his real name, he seemed upset and I told him so. I asked him if he didn't feel he would be a sitting duck with INCAR planning to attend. He admitted that INCAR always outnumbered his group, 2-to-1.

"I don't know why (march organizer Derwin) Success doesn't cancel his march," Moriarty said, adding he had been threatened with a rifle. Friday, while I was on assignment, Moriarty called the media and canceled.

A source close to the Moriarty family, who I also interviewed, credited my call as an alarm that "probably averted some real tragedy."

MY REPORTER'S credo is simple: fairness, accessibility and an open-door policy for diverse ideas. I've done interviews in a helicopter, over bathroom washbasins, in smelly factories and in shelters for the homeless. Whether or not I agree with the subject's ideology misses the point.

For this issue, all three television news stations called me and hankered for information.

But I got it first. Susan Duck is a staff writer for the Farmington Observer.

# Interviewing — It's not as easy as it may seem

GETTING AN interview from some members of the counterculture is a coup. It's not taken lightly.

When a subject is controversial, it's especially significant. "We don't give interviews," gruffly said a man who calls himself Larry Goldbetter Oct. 2 the first time I called him for a response. "It's polley. They (interviews) don't turn out right. Nothing personal."

Goldbetter is a spokesman for the Interracial Committee Against Racism (INCAR), which gained notoriety during the peace march for racial harmony on Sunday in Farmington. One INCAR member from Detroit was charged with disorderly conduct.

The militant group believes in a six-hour day for eight hours pay; busing for integration; no deportation for immigrants; mass movement and violence to "smash" Nazis in retribution for historical white supremacy acts of violence.

WHEN THE neo-Nazi S.S. Action Group pulled out of Sunday's march, INCAR decided to come anyway to assert their views.

By Oct. 11, their media policy was reassessed and I received both a call and a visit from Goldbetter and three INCAR members.

I clearly had an exclusive. Goldbetter, a native New Yorker, is a 20-year INCAR member and full-time organizer. A product of a blue-collar

## Sue Buck

*Often times, an interview subject finds difficulty realizing that a reporter is not a friend.*

family, his father worked as a furrier in the garment district of New York.

True to his word, I was the only member of the media Goldbetter called after the peace march.

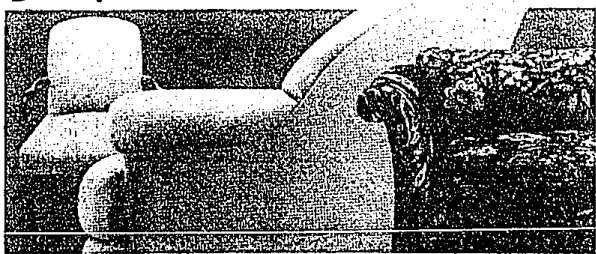
INCAR's next effort is a fund-raiser for striking coal miners in West Virginia. Sometimes, non-journalists don't understand why journalists even bother to talk to some people. Pretending these people do not exist or ignoring the situation doesn't make it go away or solve underlying problems.

Often times, an interview subject finds difficulty realizing that a reporter is not a friend.

FOR A time, S.S. Action Group founder John Moriarty, aka John Reich, who planned to protest the peace

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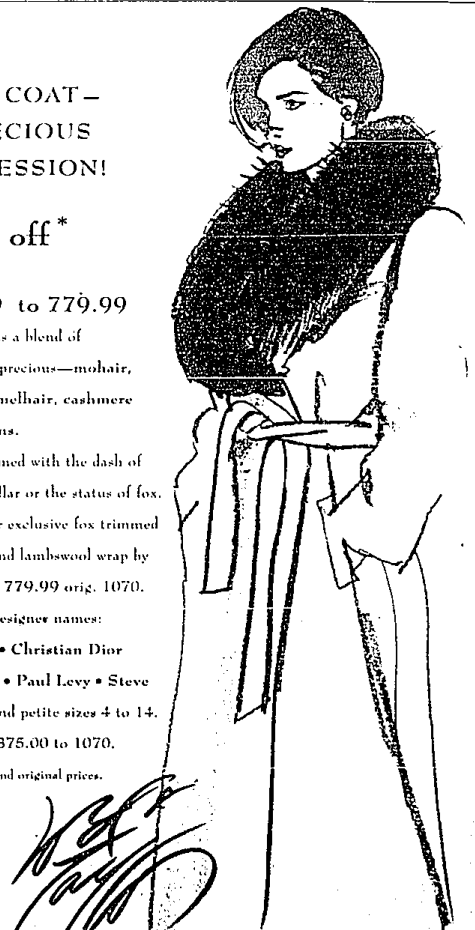
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