

points of view

Some local towns are back in the saddle

A HORSE! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!

Well, in a turnabout of time, the safety of some of our kingdoms now appears to depend on these four-legged creatures. Police responsible for patrolling the business district in Birmingham and at the Northland Center in Southfield have recently hit the saddle in a combination PR (public relations) and RP (robbery protection) move.

Birmingham has appropriated "Spanky" from the Detroit Police Department. The 14-year-old horse began patrolling downtown Birmingham late last month with Officer James Heppner aboard. The Birmingham-Bloomfield Eccentric, in conjunction with the Birmingham police, is running a "Name the Horse Contest" for youngsters to rename "Spanky" to perhaps a trendier, more Birminghamish name — and the suggestions have come galloping



Judith Doner Berne

The prizes aren't hay — \$200, \$100 and \$50 U.S. Savings Bonds for the

top three "handlers." The winning moniker, however, may turn out to be more official than practical. After all, if you had answered to Spanky for 14 years, how would you react? And is it only rumor that at the same time he must get used to a new diet — oatbran?

BIRMINGHAM POLICE sold the idea for a mounted steed to the Birmingham City Commission — no easy task — on the basis that a horse and rider patrolling the shopping district would be a good way to police a crowded area, a good public relations tool — and cost effective.

"A horse is cheaper than a car," according to police Lt. Peter Kauffman. "And the risk management people loved it, because a horse can't get involved in a high-speed chase."

A letter this week from a Birmingham resident confirms that the commission exercised good horse sense. Fawcett writes, "The first benefit is better public relations between the community and the police department. . . . And, 'In Spanky's

first day of duty he helped sort out a fender-bender, and his rider wrote two traffic tickets."

Southfield city officials deny that recent crime at Northland Center and the nearby Americana Theater spurred mounted patrols there.

But each weekend through Christmas, 10 horseback riding officers of the Oakland County Sheriff's Division are keeping watch over Northland's parking lots, assisting Southfield police and Northland security officers.

SOUTHFIELD'S PUBLIC safety chief, Rollin G. Tobin, says that in reality the crime rate has dropped 40-50 percent since 1986 in the area that includes Northland. He realizes that the perception is otherwise — yet too much security scares people off. The solution? The mounted deputies.

"This is a kind of positive security," Tobin says. "What's more exciting? People love people on horseback."

But PR aside, Tobin says an offi-

cer on horseback has advantages over foot patrols: he/she is more mobile and can be seen from a distance. The officer also can look down into cars and crowds to see what's going on.

Southfield's Downtown Development Authority has considered using horses full time, Tobin said. Perhaps it can use the Northland experience, coupled with Birmingham's, as positive fodder.

The bottom line, however, is that getting the horse may be the easy part. Training an officer is not. Birmingham's Mountie, Heppner, is the only local officer so far to successfully complete the 10-week training. Yes, others have tried. Since he is now on vacation, so is Spanky. They won't be back in the saddle 'til January.

Maybe that's significant, since the upcoming Chinese New Year is "The Year of the Horse."

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

Curricula need outside review

Dr. James Doyle is an assistant superintendent in the Troy School District. The answers provided

here are the opinions of Doyle and not the Troy School District. Questions for this column should

Please include additional comments on a separate sheet of paper.

1. The responses to questions are written in easy to understand language as opposed to educational jargon.

Strongly agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly disagree

2. The educational column has helped me better understand the inner workings of school systems.

Strongly agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly disagree

3. I have found the column interesting.

Strongly agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly disagree

4. The column has offered a "balanced" perspective of parents, educators, policy makers and research.

Strongly agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly disagree

5. Please complete the following sentence: If someone asked me what I thought of Doc Doyle's column, I would say it

6. My question for a future article is

In order to help interpret the responses, please complete: Male Female Age Employment

Mail to Doc Doyle, 16249 Old Bodford, Northville, MI 48167



Doc Doyle

be sent to Doc Doyle c/o the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Q. IN ONE of your articles you said that you believe long range curriculum decisions should be based on research and program evaluation. You stated that this is the best procedure and the first step in generating meaningful information for program improvement. What is the best process for evaluating a subject area such as math or science?

I believe that each curriculum subject area should be evaluated every few years internally by staff and by bringing in an outside educational program evaluator or auditor. Without the outside educational evaluator we educators sometimes end up talking to ourselves and telling ourselves how wonderful we are.

In light of this belief and since this week marks my first anniversary of writing this column and in the spirit of a person who believes in evaluation, I am seeking the support of those who have read my column to do me a favor. It would help me to better serve the readers by determining the timeliness and appropriateness of the format I use.

City, 'burbs: 'a separate people'

"A RACIAL divide, cavernous, pervasive." These words paint bleak, shadowy portraits of a metropolitan area striving to survive.

But that's the way our area has drawn itself in a recent survey recently completed by researchers at the University of Michigan.

We, in the suburbs, are a separate people from our brothers and sisters in the city. I guess no one is surprised that white suburbanites make more money than inner-city minorities. We could have guessed that with the money comes a higher level of education.

But shocking is the rapidly growing disparity between the haves and the have nots in metropolitan Detroit. The white median household income is \$32,500. For blacks, it is \$16,000. Since 1980, the increase in median income for whites has risen nearly \$10,000. For blacks it has increased only \$2,300.

What is disheartening is that whites, the segment of society in control, show such a high inclination towards racial prejudice.

NEARLY 40 percent of whites surveyed were deemed to be highly racially prejudiced. Only 5 percent of blacks were so labeled.

Detroit NAACP president Arthur Johnson calls it "our own form of apartheid."



Steve Barnaby

And he is right. We are a society living apart, with little understanding of one another.

The white suburbs are still just that, white. Overall, the suburbs are 93 percent white. The central city is 75 percent black.

Blacks suffer from a 19.9 percent unemployment rate. For whites, it's 6.6 percent.

Recently, University of Michigan president James Duderstadt entered the fray by taking a shot at state priorities by saying we should spend more money on education than we do on building prisons.

"I sometimes refer to corrections as the new system of higher education because (prisons) are educating the next generation of criminal leadership," he said.

Bitter words, but ones that should leave an unforgettable taste in our mouths.

OUR PRIORITIES are out of

whack when considering that 34.9 percent of blacks don't complete high school, that only a third as many blacks hold four year college degrees as whites.

Lack of education and opportunity mixed with discrimination make for a gristy brew of crime and poverty.

In this season of good will we must realize that running from the problem is no solution at all.

This year on Christmas day or during Hanukkah, when you are enjoying the holidays with your family, take a minute to think about those who, if the trend continues, will never have a chance to enjoy such freedom and wealth as does white America.

And then, when you celebrate the New Year, the new decade, resolve that this is the time we will stop depriving others of the privileges we all should have an opportunity to strive for and enjoy.

Resolve that this is the time we will bring a whole new group into the mid-stream of American society where their talents can be used to build a healthier and freer society.

And finally, let us resolve that metropolitan Detroit, instead of following, will take the lead in showing the rest of the nation how we can live in an integrated America.

Steve Barnaby is managing editor of the 13 Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

0 The pulse of your community 0 The pulse of your community 0 The pulse of

Special Holiday Savings

Sale \$69.

Teak Magazine Table

Reg. \$95.

Sale \$87.

Teak Bookcase

Reg. \$138.

70" x 30" x 11 1/2"

3 for \$249.

house of doyle inc.

CLEARANCE Center

Only at Kregg Harbor 3325 Orchard Lane Rd. #111 North of Long Lake Rd. #82-7600.

*Cash and Carry Prices.

March Tire Co.

Westland. 35235 W. Warren 721-1810
(Across from Westland Shopping Center)

Plymouth. 767 S. Main 455-7800

Farmington. 33014 Grand River 477-0670

Southfield. 28481 Telegraph 353-0450

Canton. 5757 Sheldon Rd. 454-0440
(Next to K-Mart)

GOOD YEAR

CERTIFIED AUTO SERVICE

M-F 7:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
SAT. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

All Season Steel Belted Radial Tiempo Radial

WHITWALL SIZE	EVERYDAY LOW PRICE With old tire
P185/60R15	29.99
P185/60R14	32.99
P185/60R13	34.99
P185/70R14	40.99
P185/70R13	41.99
P185/70R12	51.99
P185/70R11	53.99
P185/70R10	59.99
P185/70R9	64.99

LUBE, OIL & FILTER \$14.88

Regular \$19.00

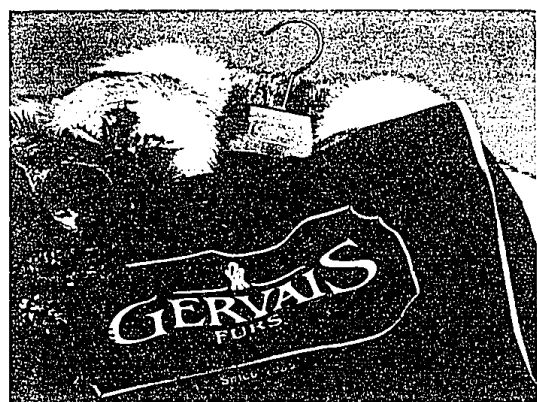
UP TO 5 OILS, KENDALL PREMIUM ALL-SEASON OIL AND FRAM FILTER

WITH THIS COUPON - COPIES 12-31-89

COMPUTERIZED FRONT END ALIGNMENT \$24.88

WITH THIS COUPON - COPIES 12-31-89

A GERVAIS LABEL ON CHRISTMAS MORNING...



SHE'LL KNOW IT'S THE VERY BEST.

YES, THERE REALLY IS A DIFFERENCE!



When you express your love with a beautiful fur coat, you'll create a moment that will last forever. Gervais Furs has been a part of Christmas morning memories for over 55 years. Our tradition of quality, value and styling is your guarantee of the perfect gift.

ALL CHRISTMAS PURCHASES MAY BE EXCHANGED OR REFUNDED.

Full Premium On U.S. Funds • Sales Tax Refunded • Duty Free

762 Ouellette Ave., Downtown Windsor
(519) 253-2111 or (313) 496-1895

Free Parking at Rear of Store.

Holiday Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9 A.M. - 9 P.M.
Saturday 9 A.M. - 6 P.M.

January Sale Prices
Now in Effect