

from our readers**She'll do her own thinking**

To the editor:

I don't know about anybody else, but I am tired of being insulted by letters to the editor insinuating that Dick Headlee made me vote against the recent millage increase proposal.

I think it was fair to say that the majority of people living in the Farmington School District are mature, self-thinking, intelligent people, capable of making a decision-based on facts.

To suggest that the millage increase was defeated because we read a public information notice issued by Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co. seems to indicate that we who voted against a millage increase are nothing but people.

John Phelps' letter of March 7 is doing what she accuses Headlee of doing: thinking for us.

As Headlee points out, this is America and we are free to express our opinions. Obviously, the voters of the Farmington School District did just that.

Maureen Sutarski,
Farmington Hills

school taxes since age 16. I never made a lot of money because I never had a chance to go to college because I was poor.

I feel that relief from school taxes should be based on income and health of the individual. Many seniors are beset with illnesses and pay many medical bills.

I think that a gradual reduction of school taxes according to age and income would be appropriate and humane.

The reference to opening a can of worms is all poppycock and has no valid foundation. You're grasping at straws to support your prejudiced view of seniors, forgetting that if you live long enough you will be there also.

Charles Evans,
Farmington Hills**Thanks for a good story**

To the editor:

Thanks for a positive article on the Charter House nursing homes in the March 7 Farmington Observer.

Many employees of the area's nursing facilities needed a pat on the back for public recognition for the caring jobs they do for the aging population.

As a three-year employee of one of the Charter House facilities that Alexander Spirio purchased last December, I can tell you that he cares. He and his wife, Nora, are available to the staff and residents 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

They have set high standards for their facilities and employees. The effort shows not only in the improvements in the buildings, but also in the day-to-day care for residents.

The staff of dedicated workers at these facilities are caring and personally devoted to each resident they serve. They take pride in a job well done.

The aging population of our nation will require more and more facilities devoted to their needs. We need more places like Charter House.

Articles like yours can certainly help motivate the employees and owners to perform these needed services. Thanks for the recognition in the informative article.

Nursing homes need the help and understanding of the community.

Nancy Garela,
Farmington Hills**Need people like Headlee**

To the editor:

Those who are mad at tax-for-Richard Headlee should remember that he's a taxpayer like us.

I cannot understand where all the money collected for taxes is going. I am 70 years old. My house cost \$55,000 23 years ago. I am paying \$6,000 a year in taxes, and my assessment is up again this year.

Schools don't need more millage. With the increase in taxes, the schools are getting more automatically. School taxes are almost two-thirds of the tax collected and are paid by property owners only.

Businesses that own property must pass the increases on to their customers. This costs all of us a second time. Many states have no school taxes on property. All people in the state should share the cost.

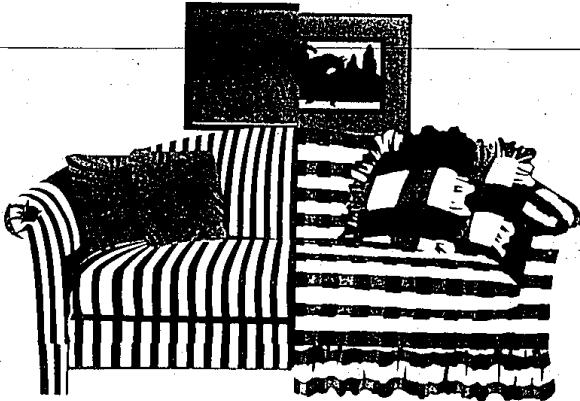
Another thing. Young people cry about supporting the old people on Social Security, but the old also support the young by buying products or services that have the cost of their health insurance and pensions and taxes added to the selling price.

Most of us are little people. It takes someone with money and power to change things. People like Headlee can change things.

For those who feel gyped because their taxes were not increased, I am sure the school board will accept their donations.

James T. Joseph,
Farmington Hills**CUSTOM FURNITURE
*Your Way***

Up to
60% OFF
Floor Samples!

**Style and Selection**

Choose Your Fabric from over 8000 designer patterns and textures.

Select Your Frame from over 140 sofa, sleeper, sectional, chair and chaise designs.

Delivery In 45 Days with Lifetime Warranty on frame and springs.

**Special Savings...
Sofas starting at
\$899**



EXPRESSIONS
BIRMINGHAM 930 South Woodward
(North of Lincoln) Phone: (313) 667-8885

Hours: M-F 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Thurs 10 p.m., Sat 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

Express
Credit Card
Now Available

points of view**Headlee: Don't still the 'contrary voices'**By Richard Headlee
special writer

The Observer covered extensively the school board's statements as well as the activities of Friends of Farmington Schools, the MEA, and the other pro-tax increase forces.

The paper printed many letters, editorials and columnists which endorsed the millage. The fact that they also gave significant coverage to those who were critical of the tax increase proposal only shows that they were doing their job, namely, covering both sides of an issue.

Stiffing contrary voices, which is what these critics are implicitly calling for, is hardly the proper role for a newspaper. They went out of their way to give the proponents the benefit of the doubt.

First, I'm proud of the fact that Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Company expanded by \$10,000 towards a series of informational ads which described the five-year trend in school district expenditures, property taxes, general fund surplus, enrollment and inflation.

Every number in these ads was absolutely correct, and indeed was taken from the latest available financial statements. In fact, many of the numbers were confirmed in the school district's own brochure.

We also printed in a big ad, the names of the company and the signature of an individual such as myself. Contrast this with the full-page ad purchased by the Friends of Farmington Schools the day before the election.

THEIR AD BEGAN with the breathtaking falsehood that "the district is not seeking new money." Furthermore, nowhere in the entire ad is an address or the name of a responsible individual. In fact, you have to hunt for several minutes to even find the name of the Friends of Farmington Schools.

Our ads were accurate and well identified. The same can't be said for the "Friends" of Farmington Schools.

Second, the accusation that the Farmington Observer slanted the coverage or refused to sell ad space is preposterous.

... the accusation that the Farmington Observer slanted its coverage or refused to sell ad space is preposterous.

—Richard Headlee
Alexander Hamilton Life

chosen the hard third choice, and encourage others to do as well. Michigan would be an even better state if every school district had a company so inclined to be involved.

Some call for corporate involvement in the community one day and then criticize that involvement the next. I say that corporations should get involved with their community, and that involvement cannot be a one-way street.

Paying taxes and making contributions goes along with having a say in how those dollars are spent. Nobody claimed it was "improper" for us to support the above worthy activities, or indeed to support the school bond issue in 1989.

To call it improper for us to oppose a school property tax increase in 1991 is not only hypocritical, it's discriminatory. After all, we pay \$10,000 per month in property taxes.

The defeated proponents have been beating their chest over getting 4,000 votes for the proposal. In light of the fact that the school board has 1,460 employees that probably is not such a significant achievement.

Paying taxes while being shut out of government decisions used to be called "taxation without representation." We fought a war about that once, and if we all stay vigilant, we won't have to again.

Richard Headlee, a Farmington Hills resident, is chairman and CEO of Alexander Hamilton Life. He opposed the recent school millage increase.

